Welcome to the Applied Plant Sciences (APS) graduate program at the University of Minnesota. We anticipate you will take advantage of the numerous opportunities available in APS and will enjoy your graduate career at the University of Minnesota. The APS faculty and staff are here to help you be successful.

This document contains the following information to help you navigate through the expectations, milestones, and timelines in APS:

- Best Advising Practices for Graduate Student Success (page 2)
- Graduate Student Rights (page 3)
- Research Assistantships and Fellowships (page 4)
- M.S. Degree Milestones and Timetables (page 5)
- Ph.D. Degree Milestones and Timetables (page 8)
- Appendix A: Preparation of a Thesis Proposal (page 12)
- Appendix B: M.S. Degree Completion Steps (page 13)
- Appendix C: Ph.D. Degree Completion Steps (page 14)

In addition, please be aware of the official degree requirements of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and the Graduate School. The APS program adheres to the Policies Governing Graduate Education at the University of Minnesota, which outlines the principles of what students should expect from their graduate program, and what programs should expect from their students to achieve excellence in academics, research, and scholarship.
Best Advising Practices for Graduate Student Success

CFANS wants graduate students to be successful and recommends the following Best Practices for graduate students and their advisers. Please contact your graduate program office for requirements specific to your program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best practice</th>
<th>Student’s and adviser’s joint responsibility</th>
<th>Adviser’s responsibility</th>
<th>Student’s responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Establish milestones for academic and research progress** | • Within 60 days: Discuss and agree upon milestones to track student progress  
• By 2nd semester for M.S. student and no later than 2nd year for Ph.D. student: Establish advisory and/or exam committee(s) (program dependent) and develop a course work plan  
• Annually: Document and review student progress | • Communicate expectations with respect to independence, and how student is to function in the fairly unstructured graduate school environment  
• Clarify availability of continued funding (e.g., Assistantship or Fellowship) | • Clearly understand your own motivations for going to graduate school!  
• Seek alternative or supplemental funding, as needed  
• Consult Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Plan Level Coordinator (PLC) to ensure that program requirements are met on time |
| **Maintain open lines of communication and provide timely feedback** | • Discuss an optimum meeting frequency and meet regularly  
• Establish written expectations and schedules; update as necessary as the degree program progresses, or with changing circumstances | • Comment on student’s work (reports, draft posters, seminar presentations, manuscripts, etc.) within 30 days  
• Communicate developments that may impact time to degree (e.g., planned absences or sabbaticals, or termination of funding)  
• Understand cultural differences that might affect communication | • Submit progress reports, draft posters or seminar presentations, manuscripts, thesis drafts and other research work in a timely manner  
• Inform adviser of changes in schedule, including any paid or unpaid leave  
• Seek help from adviser or from other sources (see next page) to resolve difficulties |
| **Understand the terms and conditions of Graduate Assistant employment** | • Ensure that offer letters and terms of employment are understood  
• Comply with business practices of the department | • Understand graduate student rights (see next page)  
• Provide a safe work environment free from intimidation, humiliation, or harassment | • Complete any required training (e.g., safety, responsible conduct of research, ethics) in a timely manner |
| **Develop research ideas and graduate student career goals** | • Agree on the scope and sequence of thesis research (thesis proposal) and engage at all stages  
• Clarify expectations for multiple tasks (e.g., teaching, work/life balance)  
• Develop student career goals; revisit and revise periodically | • Give constructive feedback on student’s research ideas  
• Mentor students as they apply for jobs and advise on effects to their degree plan | • Keep a journal of research ideas and activities  
• Seek professional development opportunities |
| **Connect with the larger campus and professional community** | • Recognize and respect cultural differences  
• Seek opportunities for leadership and professional development skills such as: public speaking, research ethics, working across differences, collaboration, conflict resolution and data management | • Help students network with colleagues at other institutions  
• Support student participation in scientific conferences, campus seminars and on committees within the U of M and CFANS | • Attend campus seminars and events  
• Serve on committees within the U of M and CFANS  
• Participate in graduate student orientation and recruitment activities  
• Participate in scientific conferences (find external travel funding, as needed) |
Graduate Student Rights

- An academic environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation, and harassment
- Working within the number of hours appropriate for your appointed position
  - The standard 50% assistantship requires an average of 20 hours of work per week at the discretion of the faculty advisor when school is in session (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, UMN Graduate Assistant Employment Policy - [policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment](http://policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment) and [policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment-appg](http://policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment-appg)). This work requirement is in addition to time spent on coursework and/or thesis work.
- Timely review and return of manuscripts and thesis drafts (i.e., 30 days)
- Paid and unpaid leaves (i.e. parental, holiday, sick, bereavement, military, court appearance, jury duty, voting) (Policy: [http://policy.umn.edu/sites/policy.umn.edu/files/appendix/gradstudentemployment_appf.pdf](http://policy.umn.edu/sites/policy.umn.edu/files/appendix/gradstudentemployment_appf.pdf))
- Leave of absence in emergency situations (Policy: [http://policy.umn.edu/education/gradstudentleave](http://policy.umn.edu/education/gradstudentleave))
- Reasonable religious and disability accommodations (Policies: [http://policy.umn.edu/hr/religiousholidays](http://policy.umn.edu/hr/religiousholidays) and [http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/DisabilityServices.pdf](http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/DisabilityServices.pdf))
- Completion of an agreed upon CFANS Scholarly Work Agreement, to resolve issues with regard to research or academic performance
- Assistance when dealing with difficult situations, without concern for retaliation or punishment

Additional Help for Students

Use available resources if you have concerns about your academics, faculty adviser, or work environment. Do not wait to seek help. In case of an emergency, call 911 or UMN Police (612-624-2677).

- Speak to your faculty advisor first if you are comfortable doing so; address problems directly and honestly.
  - To discuss a matter confidentially, please contact the Student Conflict Resolution Center.
- When you feel it is inappropriate to contact your faculty advisor, consult your Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Program Level Coordinator (PLC), College Coordinator, or the Student Conflict Resolution Center for assistance. Use your best judgment in deciding which course of action is right for you.
- International students should consult with International Student and Scholar Services when dealing with conflicts or concerns.

Counseling and Mental Health Services:

University Counseling and Consulting Services
http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/ (612) 624-3323
Boynton Mental Health Clinic
http://www.bhs.umn.edu/east-bank-clinic/mental-health-services.htm (612) 624-1444

Disability Resource Center

drc@umn.edu (612) 626-1333

Graduate Assistant Employment Services
http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae (612) 624-8647

Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) Office
http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students/gssp (612) 625-3490

International Student and Scholar Services
http://www.isss.umn.edu/ (612) 626-7100

Reference Guides

Tips for Dealing with Difficult Behavior — [http://gradvising.umn.edu/difficult-behavior.html](http://gradvising.umn.edu/difficult-behavior.html)
Preparing for a Difficult Conversation — [http://gradvising.umn.edu/difficult-conversations.html](http://gradvising.umn.edu/difficult-conversations.html)
Resources for RAs & Supervisors — [http://wbt.umn.edu/pdf/RAs%20and%20Research%20Faculty.pdf](http://wbt.umn.edu/pdf/RAs%20and%20Research%20Faculty.pdf)

SafeU (Safe Walk & Ride Service)

Walking Escort Service (612) 624-9255
Gopher Chauffeur (612) 388-6911

Student Conflict Resolution Center

http://www.sos.umn.edu/ (612) 624-7272
RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Most APS graduate students are supported by research assistantships or fellowships. Regardless of your funding source, be sure to meet the registration requirements for the type of appointment you have. Information about registration and residency requirements can be obtained from http://policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment.

Research assistantships are annual, renewable appointments (usually beginning July 1) or are separate appointments for the academic year and summer term. Reappointment to a research assistantship is contingent upon making satisfactory academic progress towards the degree, timely progress in thesis research, and satisfactory performance of assistantship duties as evaluated by the advisor. Any exceptions to this policy will be outlined in the initial letter of offer for the research assistantship. The APS program expects students to maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

Fellowships are non-service appointments, and fellows are expected to make strong academic progress towards the degree, demonstrate timely progress in thesis research, and meet any other conditions stipulated by the fellowship. Fellows are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5. The terms of the fellowship (duration of award, area of work, etc.) will be stated in the student’s letter of offer.

Annual performance evaluations will be conducted prior to annual reappointment of research assistants and fellows. Students and advisers will receive instructions for completion of the annual review, which should be conducted prior to April 30 each year. Students should review their progress with their advisor and advisory committees, preferably through a face-to-face meeting to discuss individual items in the review (e.g., academic performance, timeliness in meeting departmental and Graduate School milestones, progress on thesis research, professional development, and performance of assistantship activities, etc.).

The adviser’s certification of satisfactory performance and progress in the review is necessary for renewal of the student’s appointment. The student will receive notice of appointment renewal in a letter from the Department. Failure to complete the annual review may result in a termination of employment on June 30. A student who will not be reappointed the following academic year will be notified at least one month prior to reappointment.

If a student’s progress or performance are not satisfactory, the advisor must describe the deficiencies and the specific actions or performance objectives for completion by the student within a specified time period. Responsibilities of both the student and the advisor(s) to meet the expectations of the APS program will be specified in the deficiency letter. Failure to correct these deficiencies may result in the revocation of the research assistantship or fellowship.
M.S. DEGREE MILESTONES AND TIMETABLES

1. Advisory Committee: Within three months of arrival, the advisor(s) and student should form an advisory committee for the student. This advisory committee is most often, but not always, the same as the Final Examination Committee described in item 7. The advisory committee assists the student in many ways, but specifically helps to:

   1. Select courses the student needs to take;
   2. Prepare and review a thesis (Plan A) or project (Plan B) proposal;
   3. Assist in the evaluations of student progress; and
   4. Support and facilitate the overall graduate education experience.

2. Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS): GPAS has two parts that work together: the planner, and the audit. The planner allows graduate students to map out the future coursework that they plan to complete for their degree. The audit, or advisement report, displays the progress the student is making towards the degree requirements, based on current and planned coursework. A GPAS planner student guide is at [https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/how-use-gpas-planner](https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/how-use-gpas-planner). Each APS student needs to submit a GPAS planner at the end of the first semester of coursework. The list of courses submitted through GPAS needs to be approved by the adviser and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

3. Thesis proposal (see Appendix A): By the end of the second semester of coursework, the student should have completed a thesis (Plan A) or project (Plan B) proposal. The proposal should be developed in conjunction with the advisor and advisory committee and should include the following:

   1. Rationale for the study
   2. Literature review
   3. Statement of objectives
   4. Proposed materials and methods
   5. Outline of experimental approach and proposed analysis of the data

   The student’s advisory committee will review the proposal for scientific merit and feasibility. The student should register for the APS seminar (APSC 8270) and schedule a thesis or project proposal seminar during the second semester or third semester in residence. A copy of the thesis proposal with the signatures of the advisor(s) and advisory committee members should be provided to Lynne Medgaarden (302 Hayes Hall) to document completion of this milestone.

4. Thesis credits: Students completing a M.S. Plan A degree are required to have a minimum of 10 thesis credits (APSC 8777). Students with half-time research assistantships or fellowships should
register each semester for the maximum number of credits covered by the tuition benefit (currently 14 credits per semester). Students should register for thesis credits (APSC 8777) to reach the maximum number of credits allowed. For example, a student registered for 9 credits of course work should register for 5 thesis credits to reach the 14 credit limit. After completing all course work and thesis credits, the student may apply for advanced status and register for one full-time equivalent (FTE) credit in APSC 8333 each semester to retain full-time student status with reduced tuition.

5. **Teaching experience:** M.S. students in APS are strongly encouraged—but are not required—to actively participate in an educational activity such as being a teaching assistant, or in outreach and extension programming.

6. **Time to degree completion:** M.S. students should make timely progress towards completing their degrees. Full-time graduate students usually complete an M.S. degree within 2 to 2.5 years.

7. **Final Examination Committee.** The composition of the Final Examining Committee should be submitted at the Graduate School web site (http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-masters/assignmasterscommittee) after the student has finalized the committee membership and at least one month prior to the anticipated examination date. The committee must consist of at least two APS graduate faculty and one member from either the minor field or outside APS. An APS graduate faculty member holding appointments in more than one graduate faculty can serve as an outside member for the committee. Faculty members from the APS graduate faculty chosen to serve as an outside member on the examining committee must reflect different departmental affiliations or areas of specialization.

8. **Final examination (thesis defense):** When the advisor(s) and the student agree the thesis is ready to be defended, the student must download a Graduation Packet from the Graduate School https://idp2.shib.umn.edu/idp/umn/login. The Graduation Packet contains the following:

   1. Thesis Reviewers Report Form
   2. Graduation Instructions
   3. Application for Degree
   4. Final Examination Form

The student must give the Final Examination Committee at least two weeks to review the thesis and sign the Thesis Reviewers Report Form. The student should schedule the final examination at the convenience of the committee. The examination is coordinated by the committee Chair (who may be the student’s advisor). Most M.S. students in APS publicly present the results of their thesis research or project as an open seminar as part of the final examination. After the public presentation, the committee will privately continue the examination of the student. The signed Thesis Reviewers Report Form and the Final Examination Report must be submitted to the Graduate School in a timely manner.
9. **Graduation:** Graduate School degrees are awarded monthly. The intended graduation month must be indicated on the Application for Degree form. Instructions are at [https://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/application-degree](https://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/application-degree). The Application for Degree form is completed via MyU through the “Academics” tab > “Degree Progress” and clicking on the Apply to Graduate link. All other Graduate School requirements must be completed by the last working day of the intended month of graduation. Current Graduate School requirements are:

1. Return of the Final Examination Report form
2. Submission of the final thesis

10. **Letter of resignation:** A letter of resignation from the research assistantship should be given to the appropriate departmental administrator (Jeanne Davy in Agronomy and Plant Genetics, or Samantha Grover in Horticultural Science) at least two weeks prior to resignation and departure. The letter should include the official resignation date and the date office space will be vacated.

11. **Departure:** Keys, purchasing cards, and other items belonging to the University should be returned to the department office prior to departure. All belongings should be removed from office and lab space. Ensure that materials in laboratories or storage areas are properly disposed of or labeled if they are to be used by other students or staff.

A checklist summary of these milestones and timetable is in Appendix B.
PH.D. DEGREE MILESTONES AND TIMETABLE

1. **Advisory Committee:** Within three months of arrival, the advisor(s) and student should form an advisory committee for the student. This advisory committee is most often, but not always, a subset of the Preliminary Examination Committee (item 4) or Final Examination Committee (item 10). The advisory committee assists the student in many ways, but specifically helps to:
   1. Select courses the student needs to take;
   2. Prepare and review a thesis proposal;
   3. Assist in the evaluations of student progress; and
   4. Support and facilitate the overall graduate education experience.

2. **Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS):** GPAS has two parts that work together: the planner, and the audit. The planner allows graduate students to map out the future coursework that they plan to complete for their degree. The audit, or advisement report, displays the progress the student is making towards the degree requirements, based on current and planned coursework. A GPAS planner student guide is at [https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/how-use-gpas-planner](https://onestop.umn.edu/academics/how-use-gpas-planner). Each APS student needs to submit a GPAS planner at the end of the first semester of coursework. The list of courses submitted through GPAS needs to be approved by the adviser and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

3. **Thesis proposal (see Appendix A):** By the end of the second semester of coursework, the student should have completed a thesis proposal. The proposal should be developed in conjunction with the advisor and advisory committee and should include the following:
   1. Rationale for the study
   2. Literature review
   3. Statement of objectives
   4. Proposed materials and methods
   5. Outline of experimental approach and proposed analysis of the data

   The student’s advisory committee will review the proposal for scientific merit and feasibility. The student should register for the APS seminar (APSC 8270) and schedule a thesis or project proposal seminar during the second semester or third semester in residence. A copy of the thesis proposal with the signatures of the advisor(s) and advisory committee members should be provided to Lynne Medgaarden (302 Hayes Hall) to document completion of this milestone.

4. **Preliminary Examination Committee:** The Preliminary Examination Committee conducts the Ph.D. written and oral preliminary examinations. The members of the committee will be determined jointly by the student and the advisor, approved by the DGS and the CFANS
Graduate Programs Coordinator, and reported to the Graduate School via the Graduate School website (http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-studentsgraduate-student-services-progress-doctoral/assign-prelim-committee). The committee has at least four faculty members, three from APS and one from the student’s minor field or supporting program. If the student has co-advisors, the committee will have at least five members with one member from the minor field or supporting program. The preliminary examination committee must have at least three tenured or tenure-track University faculty, with at least one being tenured. The APS graduate faculty holding appointments in more than one graduate program can serve as minor or supporting program members of the committee. The chair of the committee must be a member of the APS graduate faculty. The advisor can serve as chair of the committee.

5. **Written Preliminary Examination**: Please see the separate APS document entitled *Guidelines and Procedures for the Written Preliminary Examination* for details. The committee chair needs to report the results of the examination to Lynne Medgaarden, who will then enter the results with GSSP.

6. **Oral Preliminary Examination**: Shortly after successfully completing the preliminary written examination, the student should schedule the preliminary oral examination via the Graduate School website http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/preliminary-scheduling. The preliminary oral examination must be scheduled with the Graduate School at least one week prior to the examination. The Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) office will verify that the student has met the requirements for taking the preliminary oral examination. The signed Oral Preliminary Examination Report Form must be filed with GSSP upon completion of examination.

7. **Thesis credits**: Students completing a Ph.D degree are required to have a minimum of 24 doctoral thesis credits (APSC 8888). Students with half-time research assistantships or fellowships should register for the maximum number of credits covered by the tuition benefit (currently 14 credits per semester). For example, a student registered for 9 credits of course work should register for 5 thesis credits to reach the 14 credit limit. After completing the written and oral prelim examinations, all course work, and the 24 doctoral thesis credits (APSC 8888), students may apply for advanced doctoral Status and register for 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) credit (APSC 8444) each semester to retain full-time status with reduced tuition.

8. **Time to degree completion**: Doctoral students should make timely progress towards completing their degrees. Full-time students usually complete both the M.S. and Ph.D. programs within 4.5 to 5 years. Students entering with an M.S. degree from another institution or program usually obtain the Ph.D. degree in 3 to 3.5 years.

9. **Teaching requirements**: All Ph.D. students in APS are required to take GRAD 8101-Teaching in Higher Education and to actively participate in an educational activity, such as being a teaching assistant for a semester or participating in a substantial manner in outreach and extension programming.
10. **Assign or update the Doctoral Final Examination Committee:** The Doctoral Final Oral Examination Committee is assigned or updated (from the Preliminary Examination Committee) using the electronic form [http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-doctoral/assign-doc-final-committee](http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-doctoral/assign-doc-final-committee). The form is routed to the advisor, DGS, and CFANS for review and approval. The committee must consist of a minimum of three faculty from APS and one faculty from either the minor field or outside of the APS program. The committee must have at least three tenured or tenure-track University faculty, with at least one being tenured. The advisor(s), one additional faculty member from the APS program, and the faculty member from the minor or outside field must serve as thesis reviewers. APS faculty holding appointments in more than one graduate faculty can serve as outside members of the committee but should reflect different departmental affiliations and areas of specialization. The advisor may not chair the final examination committee.

11. **Final examination (thesis defense):** When the advisor(s) and the student agree the thesis is ready to be defended, the student must download a Graduation Packet from the Graduate School [https://idp2.shib.umn.edu/idp/umn/login](https://idp2.shib.umn.edu/idp/umn/login). The Graduation Packet contains the following:

1. Thesis Reviewers Report Form
2. Graduation Instructions
3. Application for Degree
4. Copyright Agreement
5. Survey of Earned Doctorates

The student must give the Final Examination Committee at least two weeks to review the thesis and sign the Thesis Reviewers Report Form. The Thesis Reviewers Report form should be submitted to the Graduate School prior to the final examination. The student should schedule the final examination at the convenience of the committee.

The final oral examination consists of a public seminar in which the candidate presents the thesis and to which the scholarly community is invited, followed by a closed meeting between the candidate and the Final Examination Committee. Students will need to return the Final Examination Report Form signed by the committee to the Graduate School.

12. **Graduation:** Graduate School degrees are awarded monthly. The intended graduation month must be indicated on the Application for Degree form. Instructions are at [https://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/application-degree](https://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/application-degree). The Application for Degree form is completed via MyU through the “Academics” tab > “Degree Progress” and clicking on the Apply to Graduate link. All other Graduate School requirements must be completed by the last working day of the intended month of graduation. Current Graduate School requirements are:

1. Return of the Final Examination Report form
2. Submission of a signed (by the advisor) copy of the thesis abstract and thesis

3. Signed copyright agreement form

4. Completed Survey of Earned Doctorates

13. **Letter of resignation:** A letter of resignation from the research assistantship should be given to the appropriate departmental administrator (Jeanne Davy in Agronomy and Plant Genetics, or Samantha Grover in Horticultural Science) at least two weeks prior to resignation and departure. The letter should include the official resignation date and the date office space will be vacated.

14. **Departure:** Keys, purchasing cards, and other items belonging to the University should be returned to the department office prior to departure. All belongings should be removed from office and lab space. Ensure that materials in laboratories or storage areas are properly disposed of or labeled if they are to be used by other students or staff.

A checklist summary of these milestones and timetable is in Appendix C.
Appendix A
Preparation of a Thesis Proposal

A good research plan is essential to complete a successful thesis. Preparation of a comprehensive thesis proposal is a required first step in conducting thesis research. Most information included in a thesis proposal can be used in the writing of the thesis.

1. Choosing a thesis subject: Selecting a thesis topic is the responsibility of the student and is generally selected from a range of potential topics in concert with the goals of the research project and funding sources of the student’s advisor(s). Reading the scientific literature, learning the current state of knowledge, understanding the researchable objectives, and appreciating the experimental procedures and protocols are imperative. Dialogue between the student and faculty, staff, and other students knowledgeable in the chosen area of research is highly recommended.

2. Writing the proposal: A thesis proposal should include a rationale for the study, literature review, objectives of the research, and how the objectives will be accomplished (Materials and Methods). The following format may be useful:

   i. First paragraph should broadly identify the subject matter area and state the relevance or benefit of the proposed research

   ii. In the following paragraphs, review the pertinent literature related to your thesis research. Emphasize the methods, results, and interpretations of the data in the literature, and cite the authors appropriately. The length and depth of the literature review will depend upon the extent of previously published results and the current state of knowledge.

   iii. After the literature review, set the appropriate stage for your proposed thesis research by indicating how it relates to what has been done previously (cited early in literature review) and what you intend to generally accomplish with your thesis research.

   iv. State your research objectives explicitly and succinctly, preferably in the form of testable hypotheses or scientific questions.

   v. Approaches to writing the proposed Materials and Methods section will vary considerably based on the nature of the research. Nevertheless, the Materials and Methods should have sufficient detail to allow a knowledgeable colleague to repeat the experiments.

   vi. Some students may be asked by their advisor(s) and/or advisory committee to prepare a budget and research timetable for the thesis research.
## Appendix B
### M.S. Degree Completion Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Planning and Audit System (GPAS)</td>
<td>GPAS planner submitted by the end of the first semester of coursework.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis proposal</td>
<td>Completed and approved by Advisory Committee by the middle of the second semester in residence and filed with APS Graduate Program Coordinator. Thesis proposal seminar scheduled in APSC 8270.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign examination committee</td>
<td>At least one month prior to the anticipated final examination date, via the online form at the Graduate School website</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Application for Degree</td>
<td>Apply by the first day of anticipated month of graduation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>Submit Thesis Reviewers Report Form and the Final Examination Report Form to the Graduate School.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit thesis (Plan A only)</td>
<td>Submit thesis to the Graduate School by the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation. Consult the Graduation Packet for formatting guidelines.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C
### Ph.D. Degree Completion Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis proposal</td>
<td>Completed and approved by advisory committee by the middle of the second semester in residence and filed with APS Graduate Program Coordinator. Thesis proposal seminar scheduled in APSC 8270.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign preliminary examination committee</td>
<td>At least one semester prior to the anticipated examination using the online form at the Graduate School website.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written preliminary examination</td>
<td>Preliminary Written Examination Report form filed by the Graduate Program Coordinator with the Graduate School after completion of the written preliminary examination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule oral preliminary examination</td>
<td>Scheduled with the committee and with the Graduate School after completing the written preliminary examination and at least one week prior to the oral examination date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral preliminary examination</td>
<td>Oral Preliminary Examination Report submitted to GSSP after the examination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign final oral examination committee</td>
<td>At least one semester prior to the anticipated examination using the online form at the Graduate School website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download Graduation Packet</td>
<td>Obtain Thesis Reviewers Report Form and instructions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule final oral examination</td>
<td>At least one week prior to the examination, via the online form at the Graduate School website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit application for degree</td>
<td>Apply by the first day of anticipated month of graduation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Thesis Reviewers Report form</td>
<td>Signed by the thesis reviewers and filed with GSSP before the final oral examination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final oral examination</td>
<td>Submit the signed Doctoral Final Examination Report Form to GSSP after the examination and no later than the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit dissertation</td>
<td>Submit dissertation and associated copyright forms to the Graduate School by the last business day of the anticipated month of graduation. Consult the Graduation Packet for instructions and formatting guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>