

**FNR Graduate Program Policy Manual  
February 2013, Revised 2019**



**Page 2**

**FNR-GCP-1: Time to Degree for Ph.D. and M.S. Students in FNR**

**Page 3-14**

**FNR-GCP-2: Graduate Student Selection and Admission Process**

**Page 15**

**FNR-GCP-3: Admission of Unfunded Students to Graduate Study in FNR**

**Page 16-18**

**FNR-GCP-4: Required Course Credits for Thesis and Non-Thesis MS Degrees in FNR**

**Page 19-20**

**FNR-GCP-5: Minimum Cumulative Grade Index Requirements for FNR Graduate Students**

**Pages 21-22**

**FNR-GCP-6: FNR Ombudsman – Standard Operating Procedures**

**Page 23**

**FNR-GCP-7: Stipend Levels for Graduate Students in FNR**

**Page 24-27**

**FNR-GCP-8: Graduate Examinations in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources**

**Pages 28-30**

**FNR-GCP-9: Period of Funding and Extension Requests for M.S. and Ph.D. Students Funded on Departmental Assistantships**

**Pages 31-32**

**FNR-GCP-10: Allocation of van Eck Assistantships for recipients prior to January 1, 2019**

**Page 33-35**

**FNR-GCP-11: Required Course Credits for PhD. Degrees in FNR**

**Pages 36-37**

**FNR-GCP-12: Assigning TA Duties to FNR Graduate Students**

**Pages 38-40**

**FNR-GCP-13: External Membership for M.S. and Ph.D. FNR Graduate Advisory Committees**

**Pages 41-42**

**FNR-GCP-14: Extension and Outreach Requirements for Graduate Study in FNR**

**Pages 43-44**

**FNR-GCP-15: FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar**

**Time to Degree for Ph.D. and M.S. Students in FNR****Date: Effective October 1, 1993**

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**Time to Degree**

Ph.D. Degree – The total elapsed time of a completed Ph.D. program in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University, from admission to the Ph.D. program to the completion of the Final Examination, shall be no more than **eight** calendar years. Extensions of this limit may be granted by the Departmental Graduate Committee and/or Department Head upon recommendation and justification by the students Advisory Committee. Funding may only apply to three years of the degree program, and additional funding is not guaranteed beyond three years.

M.S. Degree – The total elapsed time of a completed M.S. program in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University, from admission to the M.S. program to the completion of the Final Examination, shall be no more than **five** calendar years. Extensions of this limit may be granted by the Departmental Graduate Committee and/or Department Head upon recommendation and justification by the students Advisory Committee. Funding may only apply to two years of the degree program, and additional funding is not guaranteed beyond two years.

**Graduate Student Selection and Admission Process**  
**Date: Effective ca. 1998 w/subsequent amendments**

**Externally Funded Students**

1. Faculty members are encouraged to recruit top-quality students with interests overlapping their own, well in advance of departmental deadlines for applications. January 15 is the application deadline for the fall start date. September 15 is the application deadline for the January start date.

2. Externally-funded students can be admitted for graduate study in FNR with demonstration of funding to the FNR business office and approval of the Graduate Committee Chair. Approval of the Graduate Committee Chair requires that the student meet the minimum academic requirements for admission into FNR (GPA of 3.2/4.0) and that no potential problems are identified in the Chairs' review of the remainder of the application materials. International students also must meet the language proficiency requirements set forth by the Graduate School to qualify for admission.

Students funded on external funds can be admitted at any time, subject to the pre-semester deadlines of the Office of the Registrar and the Graduate School.

The deadlines for international students are as follows:

Fall Session	July 15 if outside of U.S.
Spring Session	November 15 if outside of U.S.
Summer Session	April 15 if outside of U.S.

The department must submit all other admission recommendations to the Graduate School no later than the end of the first week of classes for each academic session.

However, it is highly recommended that faculty recruiting students for fall and spring admission have their highest ranked applicants complete their applications for graduate study prior to the departmental deadlines (January 15 and September 15 respectively), so that they can be evaluated as potential fellowship nominees (See fellowships below).

**Fellowship-Funded Students**

1. Fellowships from the University come in three types: a) those allocated to the Colleges across campus for dispensation, b) those administered and allocated by the Graduate School, and c) those provided to interdisciplinary graduate programs for recruitment.

a. Fellowships allocated to the College of Agriculture (CoA) are awarded through a competitive process requiring alternating weeks of nominations and reviews of nominees beginning in January and ending in April of each year.

i. A limited number of Andrews, Ross, Purdue Doctoral, and Bilsland Dissertation fellowships are allocated to the CoA each year for recruitment

purposes. The departmental representatives to the Graduate Council in Agriculture are allowed to submit nomination materials for review by the council, and nominees are assigned a numerical score by each member of the council. After reviewing the scores of the nominees, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs awards a subset of the fellowships every other week until all are allocated.

- ii. The FNR Graduate Committee Chair reviews the applications (including those competing for departmental assistantships as well as those to be funded externally) for each fall semester and selects those who have the best potential to be awarded a fellowship from the CoA based on 1) past experience, 2) quality of applicants, 3) fit of applicants to the intent of the available fellowships, 4) discussions with the prospective major professor regarding the commitment to recruiting the student, and 5) discussions with the Department Head regarding commitment of departmental funding towards the fellowship.
  - iii. When a student is nominated for a fellowship by FNR, our department is essentially agreeing to 1) admit and completely fund the student even if they are not awarded a fellowship and 2) fund the remainder of the students' stipend after the first or second year recruitment fellowship has been expended. Thus, the nomination of students for fellowships is not a trivial exercise, and each decision is considered carefully.
- b. Fellowships administered and awarded by the Graduate School (e.g., Bilsland Strategic Initiative, George Washington Carver, Charles C. Chappelle, David M. Knox, and Ludwig Kruhe) generally require an application from an individual student or the nomination of a student by a faculty member – usually the one who wants to serve as the students' major professor. Applications of students who are awarded such fellowships must be reviewed by the Graduate Committee Chair to ensure that the student meets the minimum GPA requirement for admission into FNR and that no potential problems are identified in the remainder of the application materials. Details regarding all fellowships that are administered by the Graduate School can be viewed on the Graduate School webpage.
  - c. Fellowships provided to interdisciplinary graduate programs for recruitment (e.g., Lynn fellowships) are administered and awarded by each interdisciplinary graduate program (e.g., PULSe, ESE, etc.). These students are screened and admitted by the individual interdisciplinary graduate programs and become associated with individual academic departments in their second year at Purdue. Because such students are already admitted to Purdue, no formal review of their application by FNR is required. However, the FNR Graduate Committee Chair reviews the application material of each interdisciplinary student that joins the FNR graduate community to ensure that these students meet the minimum admission requirements and takes appropriate action if they do not. The first-year grades of such students are also reviewed to

ensure that students are placed on academic probation if they do not meet FNR’s minimum GPA requirements.

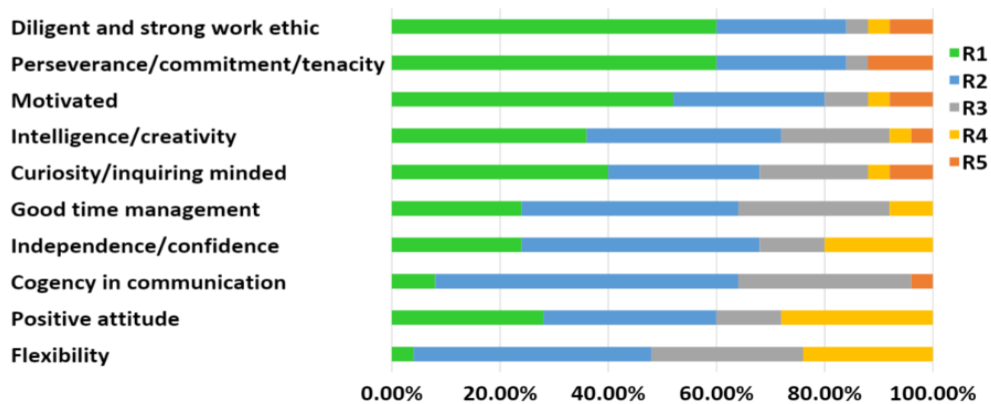
**Departmental-Funded Students**

1. Faculty members are encouraged to recruit top-quality students with interests overlapping their own, well in advance of departmental deadlines for applications.
  
2. Students submit application materials (Graduate School SLATE Application, Statement of Purpose, official transcripts, three letters of recommendation, responses to five FNR questions, and if required, English Proficiency exam scores and/or Diversity Essay) prior to departmental application deadlines (Spring - September 15 or Fall - January 15). *The GRE is no longer an admission requirement for the FNR graduate program.*

**Amendment to Statement of Purpose and Letter of Recommendation format and content Rationales:**

The FNR Graduate Committee members proposed changes to the FNR faculty at the 2018 faculty retreat. FNR faculty discussed the key attributes that make a good graduate student and a revised admission policy that would be more inclusive and result in an increase in diversity in the graduate students both applying and admitted to FNR. Application materials submitted prior to spring 2019 do not provide the needed information that allows the Graduate Committee to evaluate these favored attributes of each applicant. The committee was charged to come up with a new application guideline to address the needs.

**Ranking on ‘What Makes a Great Graduate Student’ by FNR Faculty**



**Actions taken:**

- Sept 17, 2018 - The Graduate Committee members met and combined these attributes into five categories.
- Sept 26, 2018 - A Qualtrics survey was sent to the faculty for candidate questions (survey open for 2 weeks and received 11 responses).
- Oct 15, 2018 - The Graduate Committee members met again to generalize the responses.
- Oct 16, 2018 - These questions were sent to current and former graduate students for comments.
- Oct. 22, 2018 - A finalized list of questions was submitted to the full faculty for review.

**Department of Forestry and Natural Resources Questions**

In addition to the Statement of Purpose, all applicants are required to provide responses to the following questions (limit of 250 words per response).

1. Describe a situation that demonstrates your work ethic and ability to complete complex tasks in a timely manner.
2. Provide an example of a work/academic situation that typifies how you handle adversity when striving to attain a goal.
3. What motivates you to pursue your proposed graduate studies, and how will completion of these studies prepare you to achieve your career goals?
4. Please describe a specific example from your work/academic experience that demonstrates your curiosity and creativity.
5. What are your strengths and weaknesses with regard to achieving goals individually and in collaboration with others?

**Letters of Recommendation**

Letter writers will be asked to address the same key attributes. Here is the proposed language to letter writers.

We request applicants to answer the following five questions in their application materials (note words in bold are the key attributes that will be evaluated). Please address each of the key attribute in your reference letter.

1. (**Diligent and strong work ethic**) Describe a situation that demonstrates your work ethic and ability to complete complex tasks, and how these attributes will help to address the time demands of graduate school.
2. (**Perseverance/commitment/tenacity**) Provide an example of a work/academic situation in which you overcame adversity to reach your goals.

3. **(Motivation to succeed)**What motivates you to pursue your proposed graduate studies, and how would that prepare you to achieve your career goals?
4. **(Creativity/curiosity/inquiring mind)** Please describe a specific example(s) from your work/academic experience that demonstrate your curiosity and creativity.
5. **(Ability to work independently and collaboratively)** Describe your style and preferences with regard to achieving goals individually or in collaboration with others. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

3. Once each application is received by the Graduate School, information is entered into the FNR Graduate Program Database with a copy of the application materials. The materials are routed to the applicant’s specified prospective faculty advisor(s). The specified prospective faculty advisor(s) (a) complete(s) an online evaluation to rate each of the application items, (b) specify whether there is interest in serving as the faculty advisor(s), (c) provide a comment explaining their level of interest in the applicant and why, (d) indicate whether they have external or other funding or whether they would like the student to be considered for departmental funding, (e) and commitment level (e.g., source of research funding, matching funds for stipend support, etc.).

In effect, it is up to the faculty member to demonstrate to the Graduate Committee that a departmental assistantship offered to the student would be a good investment of departmental resources and would result in a successful thesis or dissertation.

4. When completing the SLATE application, the applicants list specified faculty advisors. The specified faculty advisors are sent via email the electronic application materials for review, evaluation, and ranking (first and second choices). Graduate Committee members review, evaluate, and rank all applicants’ application materials who were ranked first or second. The following evaluation rating chart is used by specified faculty advisors and Graduate Committee members.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Max Points</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
GPA (3.2 or higher)	Not Rated	Indicator of classroom skills and work ethic
Statement of Purpose	+1 to +5	Indicator of interest in specific faculty and programs, as well as indicator of writing skills
Evaluation of Recommendation #1	+1 to +5	How do peers, supervisors, colleagues view the applicant’s potential? Are the references consistent regarding applicant’s potential?
Evaluation of Recommendation #2	+1 to +5	
Evaluation of Recommendation #3	+1 to +5	
Research/Professional Experiences	+1 to +5	Indicator of applicant’s motivation, maturity, and ability to see project through to completion.
Responses to FNR Questions (GRIT)	+1 to +5	Indicator of applicant’s level of GRIT
Course Deficiencies	-1 to -5	Time needed to build foundational knowledge

The sum of the ratings for the Statement of Purpose, three letters of recommendation, experiences, and responses to FNR questions minus the course deficiencies provides each evaluator's score. The Graduate Committee Chair will convene a meeting of the Graduate Committee members to review the Graduate Committee members' numerical score to each applicant's application materials based on eight criteria, each allotted a maximum point total. The applicant scores are discussed to determine the assignments of departmental assistantships.

### **Amendment to the FNR Assistantship Allocations**

#### **Rationales:**

As presented by Dr. Wagner at the 2018 FNR faculty retreat, the current policy and practice for FNR assistantship allocation has two limitations: 1) it creates a strong asymmetry of assistantship allocations among faculty and 2) it does not have specific mechanism to enhance minority enrollments in FNR. The committee was charged to come up with new assistantship allocation policies to address the needs.

#### **Actions taken:**

- Sept 17, 2018 - The committee met and drafted a preliminary guideline
- Sept 30, 2018 - Committee chair consulted the business office for financial feasibility
- Oct 12, 2018 - Committee chair presented the draft to Dr. Wagner for feedback
- Oct. 15, 2018 - The committee met again to improve and revise the guideline
- Oct. 22, 2018 - A finalized FNR assistantship allocation guideline was sent to the full faculty for review

#### **New Policies:**

The new FNR funding allocation policies will be implemented starting with the fall 2019 admission. All faculty members will begin with a clean slate (i.e., funding history and productivity prior to fall 2019 admission will not be used in future evaluations).

1. Caps on FNR supported graduate students per faculty
  - Each faculty member will be capped to one (1) graduate funding line that will be fully supported (100% FTE) by departmental funds. Note, this does not guarantee each faculty will have one graduate funding line at a given time, as all applicants need to compete for the available funding lines at a given admission period.
  - Each faculty member can also have a maximum of two (2) additional graduate funding lines that will be supported 50% FTE by departmental funds and 50% FTE by funds outside the department (all college, university, state or federal funds qualify for the match)\*.
  - Co-advised student will be split between the co-advisors for purposes of cap accounting
  - Each faculty member cannot receive over 200% FTE departmental funds for a given academic year.

- Start-up funds, faculty retention funds, and special agreement funds made between department head and individual faculty member will not be counted against the aforementioned caps.
- During each admission period, only those applicants, whose proposed major advisor has not reached the aforementioned caps, will be considered for FNR funding. Exceptions can be made through the Graduate Committee for exceptional outstanding applicants.

\*Faculty member need to demonstrate to the Graduate Committee the availability of extramural funds at the time of candidate evaluation. A list of the Graduate School fellowship/assistantship opportunities can be found on page 10 of the Graduate School manual. No departmental funds (start-ups, special agreements, etc.) can be used for the 50% FTE match.

## 2. Diversity fellowship

FNR will dedicate 1-2 diversity assistantships, which will NOT be counted against the caps specified above. Note, diversity here is broadly defined including but not limited to race, gender, ethnic background, social background (e.g., first general college graduates), etc.

## 3. Faculty accountability

The Graduate Committee will keep track of the following two metrics that demonstrate effectiveness of faculty advisors:

- Finishing students in a timely manner. Note, students who don't pass prelims will be evaluated differently as it is not necessarily faculty's fault.
- Publications of student research
  - MS students should have at least one manuscript submitted within a year of graduation
  - PhD students should have at least two manuscripts submitted within a year of graduation
- If there is a repeated pattern of delayed graduations and lack of publications, the Graduate Committee will take that into consideration in future funding allocations

## 4. Hypothetical examples

To illustrate the new policy, here is an analogy followed by two examples. Each funding line is a chair and total available FNR funding is the amount of space around a table that we can place these chairs. Each faculty member has one full chair (100% FTE) and two half-chairs (50% FTE, cannot be combined) for his or her students to occupy. If a chair is empty or expected to be empty at the time of new student enrollment, the chair is eligible to be placed around the table for his or her student to sit, but not guaranteed depending on the availability of space. The examples provided below are not meant to be exclusive.

**Example 1.** Dr. Finley currently (year 2019) has no student that is on FNR funds, she is then eligible to get one 100% FNR supported student. If she has external graduate funding, she is also eligible for additional two 50% FNR supported students. However, given the funding lines FNR has and given that the evaluation process is competitive and merit-based, it will be unlikely that Dr. Finley will be able to receive all three funding lines.

**Example 2.** Dr. Nagel currently (year 2019) has only one FNR funded student (100%), Joe Adams, who is expected to graduate in fall 2020. Dr. Nagel is then eligible to put forward a candidate to compete for FNR funding (100% FTE). If the candidate was recommended for funding and accepted the offer, and if Joe does not finish on time, Joe will be automatically taking off the funding support for fall 2020, unless Dr. Nagel has external funds that place the new student on his 50% FTE funding line. It will be a decision between Joe and Dr. Nagel to solve the funding issue. They do have an opportunity to appeal to the Graduate Committee for unforeseeable circumstances.

The major attributes of the new policies are:

- 1) It is a hybrid of student-centric and faculty-centric model that centers on the merits of both the applicants and faculty advisors
  - 2) It places caps on the maximum FNR assistantships per faculty to ensure balance among faculty members for funding allocation
  - 3) It has a strong mechanism to enhance diversity
  - 4) It incentivizes faculty to leverage external funding opportunities
5. The number of available assistantships is determined based on the fiscal year budget and anticipated graduation of current students. As part of this determination of available assistantships two additional processes are considered:
- a. Faculty members who have been promised assistantships as part of their startup package can notify the Graduate Committee Chair that they wish to fill one of their promised assistantship slots. This must be done in writing prior to the application deadline for each semester. Once this request has been made, available assistantships for allocation will be reduced by the number of dedicated startup assistantships requested.
  - b. Any faculty member who wishes to request an extension of departmental funding for their (see policy on Extension Requests FNR-GCP-9 for how to do this) or who wishes to request that the department assist with the continuation of funding for a current student requiring additional stipend support (e.g., grant dollars have been exhausted, unexpected circumstances, etc.,) must make the request to the Graduate Committee Chair in writing prior to the application deadline for each semester (January 15 for fall semester and September 15 for spring semester) and March 15 for summer session. The Graduate

Committee chair will approve extension requests. All other requests will be commented upon by the Graduate Committee Chair and forwarded to the Department Head for approval or denial. Once these commitments have been decided upon, available assistantships for allocation will be reduced by the number of incidences where additional assistantship support has been approved.

6. The Graduate Committee Chair will convene a meeting of the Graduate Committee to review the ranked (by score) graduate student applicants and make assignments of departmental assistantships.

*Effective January 1, 2019, the Fred M. van Eck Assistantship has been paused until future notice.*

The Fred M. van Eck assistantships also are awarded by this committee at this time (see Policy FNR-GCP-10 for details). While quality is the leading factor in consideration of admission of graduate students, the Graduate Committee also allocates departmental assistantships using a predetermined set of factors (set forth in a departmental memorandum dated October 2, 2001):

<b>Factor</b>
Preferential allocation of assistantships to junior faculty in terms of academic rank
Concern for gender and cultural diversity among graduate students
Concern for balance between foreign and domestic students as well as geographic distribution of foreign students
Concern for a distribution of graduate students among Areas of Specialization in the department
Consideration of the desired mix between M.S. and Ph.D. students in the department
Concern that faculty potentially receiving graduate students with departmental assistantships have demonstrated the ability to obtain outside funding to support student research and have demonstrated the ability to successfully supervise graduate students to the successful completion of their degree program in a timely manner
Discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other protected status is prohibited by Purdue University as a matter of policy and shall not be a factor in allocation of graduate assistantships

7. Effective fall 2019, all faculty members will begin a clean slate (i.e. funding history and productivity prior to fall 2019 admission will not be used for future evaluations).

- a. Caps on FNR supported graduate students per faculty
  - Each faculty member will be capped to one (1) graduate funding line that will be fully supported (100% FTE) by FNR departmental funds. Note, this does not guarantee each faculty will have one graduate funding line at a given time, as all applicants need to compete for the available funding lines at a given admission period.

- Each faculty member can also have a maximum of two (2) additional graduate funding lines that will be supported 50% FTE by FNR departmental funds and 50% FTE by funds outside the department (all college, university, state or federal funds qualify for the match)\*.
- Co-advised students will be divided between co-advisors for purposes of cap accounting.
- A faculty member cannot receive over 200% FTE departmental funds for a given academic year.
- Start-up funds, faculty retention funds, and special agreement funds made between department head and individual faculty member will NOT be counted against the aforementioned caps.
- During each admission period, only those applicants whose proposed major advisor is under the aforementioned caps will be considered for FNR funding. Exceptions can be made through the Graduate Committee for outstanding applicants.

*\*Faculty member needs to demonstrate to the Graduate Committee the availability of extramural funds at the time of candidate evaluation. A list of the Graduate School fellowship/assistantship opportunities can be found on pages 10-20 of the Graduate School [manual](#). No FNR departmental funds (start-ups, special agreements, Wright, van Eck funds, etc.) can be used for the 50% FTE match.*

- b. Diversity fellowship -- FNR will dedicate 1-2 diversity assistantships that will NOT be counted against the caps specified above. Note, diversity here is broadly defined including but not limited to race, gender, ethnic background, social background (e.g., first generation college graduates), etc.
- c. Sources of departmental funding
  - Funding sources from the department for assistantships will be identified to the faculty member and graduate student ahead of allocations through the offer letters.
  - It is the responsibility of the faculty member receiving department funds to ensure that the proposed graduate research is consistent with the purpose of the funding sources.
  - The chair of the graduate committee and department head will work together to align available departmental funding sources to the objectives of the graduate students' research.
  - Faculty members receiving departmental support from Wright or van Eck funds for graduate assistantships must ensure that the graduate student's research project is consistent with the stated purpose of these funds.

Wright funds must be used to advance forestry, wildlife, fish, or aquatic ecosystems in Indiana forests (or related Central Hardwood Forest) and van Eck funds must be used to support the strategic directions of HTIRC.

- d. Faculty accountability -- The Graduate Committee will keep track of the following two metrics that demonstrate the effectiveness of faculty advisors:
- Finishing students in a timely manner. Note: PhD students that do not pass their preliminary exam will be evaluated differently as that is not necessarily a faculty member's fault.
  - Publications of student research:
    - MS students should have at least one manuscript submitted within one year of graduation
    - PhD students should have at least two manuscripts submitted within one year of graduation
  - If there is a repeated pattern of delayed graduations and/or lack of publications, the Graduate Committee will take that into consideration in future departmental funding allocations
- e. Hypothetical examples -- To illustrate the new policy, here is an analogy followed by two examples. Each funding line is a chair and total available FNR funding is the amount of space around a table that we can place these chairs. Each faculty member has one full chair (100% FTE) and two half-chairs (50% FTE, cannot be combined) for his or her department-supported students to occupy. If a chair is empty or expected to be empty at the time of new student enrollment, the chair is eligible to be placed around the table for his or her student to sit, but not guaranteed depending on the availability of space. The examples provided below are not meant to be exclusive.

**Example 1.** Dr. Finley currently (year 2019) has no student that is on FNR funds, so she is eligible to receive one 100% FNR supported student. If she has external graduate funding, she is also eligible for two additional 50% FNR supported students. However, given the funding lines FNR has and given that the evaluation process is competitive and merit-based, it will be unlikely that Dr. Finley will be able to receive all three funding lines.

**Example 2.** Dr. Nagel currently (year 2019) has only one FNR funded student (100%), Joe Adams, who is expected to graduate in fall 2020. Dr. Nagel is then eligible to put forward a candidate to compete for FNR funding (100% FTE). If the candidate was recommended for funding and accepted the offer, and if Joe does not finish on time,

Joe will be automatically taken off the funding support for fall 2020, unless Dr. Nagel has external funds that place the new student on his 50% FTE funding line. It will be a decision between Joe and Dr. Nagel to solve the funding issue. They do have an opportunity to appeal to the Graduate Committee for unforeseeable circumstances.

The major attributes of the proposed new policies are:

- 1) It is a hybrid of student-centric and faculty-centric model that centers on the merits of both the applicants and faculty advisors
- 2) It places caps on the maximum FNR assistantships per faculty to ensure balance among faculty members for funding allocation
- 3) It has a strong mechanism to enhance diversity
- 4) It incentivizes faculty to leverage external funding opportunities

8. Recommendations on admission of students of the Graduate Committee are sent to the Department Head for final approval. Offer letters are drafted and sent to successful applicants under the signature of the Department Head. Notification of regret are drafted and sent to all other applicants except for the 3-5 most highly ranked applicants who were not offered an assistantship (potential alternatives). These applicants are held in reserve pending the outcome of offers to successful applicants. All applicants who were denied admission are offered the opportunity to submit their application materials for review for the next funding period (e.g. fall applicants may request to be reviewed for spring funding). The FNR Admission Guidelines are included in the correspondence to ensure that applicants are aware of and satisfy the requirements for subsequent review.

9. After the applicants who have been offered funding accept and sign their offers of funding, their applications and recommendation for admission are forwarded to the Graduate School. After the Graduate Committee Chair approves the recommendation for admission for the coming semester, the Graduate School makes the final admission decision and either approves or denies the recommendation. The Graduate School sends the denial or admission letter directly to the applicant.

## Admission of Unfunded Students to Graduate Study in FNR

Date: Effective November 28, 2000

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1. All students admitted to the Forestry and Natural Resources graduate program, regardless of the presence or absence of stipend support, should be treated equally in all aspects, including provision of desks and support for travel to present findings at meetings.

2. Students henceforth will not be admitted without stipend support (i.e., support from the department, an external grant, a fellowship source, or private sponsor) except by means of an exemption as outlined below:

a) **the prospective advisor** of a graduate student wishing to be admitted to the FNR graduate program without a clear source of stipend support can take one of two actions to request an exemption from the Graduate Committee for admission of an unfunded student:

1. **The prospective advisor** for the student making the request must provide a **written** justification to the Graduate Committee, requesting an exemption for the student based on *special circumstances* (e.g., an older student who is returning from the work force and is willing to support herself while conducting graduate studies).
2. In the absence of grounds for an exemption due to special circumstances as Judged by the Graduate Committee, **the prospective advisor** may request an exemption from the Graduate Committee by stipulating a willingness, **in writing**, to provide a portion of the stipend support for the student requesting admission. Minimal obligations of support are considered a ½-time appointment for at least 1 semester or a ¼-time appointment for 2 semesters. Further, the prospective advisor must certify **in writing** that they will seek external funding to continue to support the student in question at a minimum level of ¼-time stipend support as appropriate for the completion of their degree objectives. The advisor also must certify, **in writing**, that the student requesting admission is aware that departmental support is not guaranteed after expiration of the advisor's support and that should the student apply for departmental assistantship support – he/she will be evaluated anew with incoming applicants.

**Required Course Credits for Thesis and Non-Thesis MS Degrees in FNR****Date: Effective October 18, 2002 (Amended August 26, 2009)**

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To receive a thesis-based MS degree from the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, a student must complete a minimum of 30 credit hours. Students must place on their Plan of Study and **complete 24 hours of course credits** (which primarily should include courses taken as an MS student at Purdue, but which also can include courses taken as a post-baccalaureate student or generated as a consequence of an uncompleted MS or PhD program. THE STUDENT'S GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE and GRADUATE SCHOOL MUST APPROVE THE POST-BACCALAUREATE COURSEWORK). In addition to the coursework, a minimum of six research credit hours also must be completed.

To receive a non-thesis-based MS degree from the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, a student must place on their Plan of Study and **complete 30 hours of course credits** (which primarily should include courses taken as a MS student at Purdue, but which also can include courses taken as a post-baccalaureate student or generated as a consequence of an uncompleted MS or PhD program. THE STUDENT'S GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE and GRADUATE SCHOOL MUST APPROVE THE POST-BACCALAUREATE COURSEWORK).

All other policies regarding transfers of course credit hours, level of course credit hours which can count towards the Plan of Study and/or degree program, residency requirements, etc. shall adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Graduate School Policy and Procedures Manual.

In addition, the following required course credit hours **MUST** be included on the Plan of Study for any M.S. student pursuing their degree in FNR:

- 1) GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct in Research – 1 credit – All students must register for this course -- preferably taken in first or second semester.
- 2) Students who started their degree program **PRIOR** to summer 2019 and are completing the **single** FNR degree program are required to complete one-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar.

Students who start their degree program summer 2019 or after are **NOT** required to complete the one-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar requirement.

- 3) Students who started their degree program **PRIOR** to summer 2019 and are completing the **dual** ESE/FNR degree programs are required to complete the two-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar I, one-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar II, and one-credit FNR 67900 seminar.

Students who start their degree program in summer 2019 and after and are completing the **dual** ESE/FNR degree programs are required to complete the two-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar I, one-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar II, **BUT** they are **NOT** required to complete the one-credit FNR 67900 seminar.

*Effect May 2019, the zero-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar was eliminated as a course option.*

- 4) FNR 59800 Theory & Applied Natural Resource Extension Program **or** FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming – 1 credit (only applies to students who began their program fall 2012 or thereafter. For students who began their programs from fall 2009 through summer 2012, FNR 59800 Experiential Extension & Outreach Practicum – one (1) credit was required. [**Note:** Students who began their program from fall 2009 through summer 2012 may opt to complete the one-credit FNR 59800 Theory & Applied Natural Resource Extension Program **or** FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming].

**Amendment to the FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension**

**Programming:** This amendment was approved by the FNR Graduate Council on September 28, 2015 and by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on October 1, 2015.

FNR graduate students who have previously earned a graduate degree from FNR are not required to take FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming given they meet both requirements below:

- a. The student has previously taken and received a passing grade in FNR 50600 (formerly FNR 59800) Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming, and
- b. The student's graduate committee deems the student has demonstrated sufficient proficiency and skills related to extension activities.

*The student is still required to meet the other policy standards including a graduate committee review and approval of an extension plan, at least one extension deliverable, and completion of FNR Form GC-10.*

**Amendment to the GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct of Research:** This amendment was approved by the FNR Graduate Council on September 28, 2015 and by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on October 1, 2015.

FNR graduate students who have previously earned a graduate degree from Purdue University where GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct of Research was already completed as part of the Plan of Study are not required to repeat GRAD 61200 in order to include it on the new degree program Plan of Study. This requirement will be waived and a statement included in the “*Add a Supplemental Note*” section on the new degree program Plan of Study.

Exceptions or substitutions involving the above required courses can only be granted by the Chair of the Graduate Committee upon receipt of a written request from the faculty advisor for the student requesting the exception/substitution.

**Minimum Cumulative Grade Index Requirements for FNR Graduate Students****Date: Effective August 4, 2004**

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**FNR Policy on Minimum Cumulative Grade Index**

Graduate students whose accumulative index drops below 3.2 will be notified in writing that they have one semester to re-establish a minimum 3.2 accumulative index. Should they fail to improve their accumulative index to 3.2 during the probationary semester, they will be dropped from the graduate program. However, students who feel their case involves extenuating circumstances may appeal to the Graduate Committee for an additional semester on probation. No further appeal will be allowed if the accumulative index has not reached 3.2 at the end of the second probationary period. Students on graduate assistantships will be continued on support for the first probationary semester only. Once a graduate assistantship is terminated for any reason, there is no assurance of renewed support even though the student achieves the accumulative 3.2 index during the second probationary semester.

**Graduate School Policy on Grades and Index Requirements (abridged)**

A graduate student is expected to maintain a graduation index representing a 3.0 or better. Indices less than 3.0 are marked “low” on grade reports. The student also is expected to earn S grades for research registration. Two consecutive sessions of U grades for research registration mandate that the department take formal action and inform the student and the graduate School with regards to discontinuation or conditions for continuation of the student’s graduate study. Note that the graduation index includes all grades earned in 500- and 600-level courses while enrolled as a graduate student, plus undergraduate-level courses approved on the Plan of Study (at the request of the major professor).

Beginning with summer 2018 registration, all students and faculty advisors must complete the Forestry and Natural Resources Semester Progress Review of Graduate Staff by Faculty Advisor FNR Research Credit Student - Instructor Agreement (FNR Form GC-11).

FNR Form GC-11 states that enrollment in FNR 69800/69900 entails an expectation of reasonable progress in scholarly research. These expectations include:

- conducting independent research on the background, motivation, and prior work related to the primary subject of the research project,
- actively participating in laboratory research at a level consistent with a professional research position,
- contributing to overall laboratory operations,
- following all safety guidelines and expectations associated with the research environment,
- following ethical research practices,
- contributing to the written and oral dissemination of research findings, and

- meeting the documented expectations of the thesis advisor as detailed in the annual IDP. By signing the form, the student acknowledges agreement with the expectations set forth by the instructor.

## FNR Ombudsman – Standard Operating Procedures

**Date: Effective December 1, 2005**

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The interaction between a graduate student and his/her faculty advisor is one of the most important relationships at a university. Academic productivity, professional development, and attitudes towards oneself and others can be influenced, sometimes dramatically, by the status of relations between student and advisor. Creating and maintaining a positive student-advisor relationship is to be encouraged and valued by both parties.

There is no substitute for frequent, open dialog between students and advisors in establishing and maintaining good working relationships. On occasion, however, communication may falter or other issues may impede programmatic progress and personal growth for either a student or an advisor. In those circumstances, an impartial third party (Ombudsman) may be needed to serve as a sounding board, a facilitator of dialog, or an arbitrator of acknowledged disputes. Thus, we have created an Ombudsman position in FNR to assist with the resolution of such problems when they arise in our department. The ombudsman's role in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources will be to hear reports of problems involving graduate student-advisor relationships as an objective third party, serve as a clearinghouse for information pertaining to possible options for addressing complaints, and facilitate communication between affected parties in an attempt to attain a mutually acceptable resolution.

A typical, but flexible, sequence of actions for the ombudsman includes:

1. Meeting with complainant to provide a preliminary evaluation of the situation. At the initiation of the meeting, the complainant should be made aware that the Ombudsman is required to report any disclosure of alleged harassment or discrimination. The report would be provided to the Department Head, and subsequently to Human Relations. The complainant would then be provided with the choice of filing an official grievance. Regardless, the report will remain on file permanently with HR.
2. Determining
  - a. Scope of the problem
    - i. Needs of the complainant (i.e., "What would you like me to do?") and potential courses of action (what options are available?)
    - ii. Whether involvement from the head of the graduate program or the Graduate Committee Chair is appropriate (e.g., due to legal issues)
3. Inquiring of the complainant what they consider the best way to proceed
4. Making initial recommendations that outline a plan of action to address the problem

5. Facilitating components of the plan of action as needed (e.g., facilitating a meeting of student and advisory committee)
6. Scheduling follow-up meetings to evaluate progress
7. Requesting permission to expand the group of informed individuals if the plan of action appears not to be working

**Stipend Levels for Graduate Students in FNR****Date: Effective February 13, 2006**

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- 1) All FNR graduate students accepted for admission to pursue a Ph.D. degree should receive at a minimum, a stipend at the appropriate Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30) rate for Ph.D. level departmental assistantships, as long as they have completed an undergraduate degree at the B.A. or B.S. level or higher.
  - 2) All FNR graduate students accepted for admission to pursue a M.S. degree should receive at a minimum, a stipend at the appropriate Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30) rate for M.S. level departmental assistantships, as long as they have completed an undergraduate degree at the B.A. or B.S. level or higher.
  - 3) All FNR graduate students who transfer from one degree program to another (M.S. to Ph.D. or Ph.D. to M.S.), while enrolled in a graduate degree program in FNR, will have their stipend level altered to reflect the appropriate Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30) departmental stipend rates for the new degree at the beginning of the semester subsequent to the official change in degree status, regardless of funding source.
  - 4) Stipend levels for fellowship students provided as a consequence of special endowments (e.g. van Eck), Interdisciplinary Programs (e.g., PULSe, ESE) or which fall under the dictates of outside funding agencies (e.g., GAANN) can independently set the rates for M.S. and Ph.D. level stipends as long as they do not fall below the minimum levels provided for departmental assistantships for the same degree or exceed the upper limits set by the Graduate School.
  - 5) Students participating in the Integrated BS/MS program, if receiving a stipend, must be paid at a minimum of the current Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30) departmental standard for M.S. students and stipends for these students cannot exceed the upper limits set by the Graduate School.
  - 6) Supplementation of assistantship stipend levels from departmental or external funding sources will be allowed only within the context of current university policies and must be approved by the Chair of the Graduate Committee and subsequently by the Department Head.
  - 7) Any student supported by departmental stipend funds **MUST** be classified as a student in the FNR graduate program using the corresponding departmental code for admission and registration; and must adhere to all policies and procedures established by the FNR Graduate Committee.

**\*\*\*\*This policy applies only to FUNDED graduate students\*\*\*\***

**Graduate Examinations in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources****Date: Effective April 24, 2006****Various Types of Examinations Associated with Graduate Degrees  
(non-thesis M.S., M.S.F., M.S., Ph.D.)**

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**Examination Types****Preliminary Examination (Ph.D. only)**

- Purpose: To evaluate the breadth and depth of a student's knowledge, to ascertain how well he or she can apply that knowledge, and to determine whether the examinee is qualified to progress to candidacy.
- Comprehensive in nature (i.e., the focus should not be exclusively on the student's area of research)
- Taken after the student's coursework is complete or nearly complete

**Final Examination (non-thesis M.S., M.S.F., M.S., and Ph.D.)**

- Defense of thesis, in conjunction with seminar

**Preliminary Examination****Basic Requirements<sup>1</sup>**

This examination is not required for M.S. students.

- The Examining Committee may or may not be identical to the advisory committee, but 51% of the Examining Committee members must have "Regular" graduate faculty certification.
- A *Request for Appointment of Examining Committee* (G.S., Form 8), signed by the major professor and the chair of the graduate program, must be received by the Graduate School at least one month prior to the examination date to give the Dean of the Graduate School adequate time to appoint and arrange for additional members, if he or she wishes.
- The examinee must have filed an approved Plan of Study and have satisfied all or most of the formal coursework listed in their plan.
- It also is recommended that graduate students have a research proposal that is signed by the members of the student's Advisory Committee prior to taking the Preliminary Examination.
- Student must have an examining committee with a minimum of three members of the graduate faculty who need not be faculty with whom the student has taken coursework. All members of the committee are to be notified of the scheduled examination. Although only three members are required, if the committee has four or more members, a single member may withhold his or her signature of approval.
- The examination can only be taken twice and only once in a given term (a term must elapse before retaking).

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<sup>1</sup>See also: <http://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=10510#establishing-examining-committees>

- The examination should be scheduled as soon as feasible and must be completed at least two sessions (including summer session) before the date of the Final Examination.
- Except in cases of voluntary withdrawal from the committee by a member, the composition of the Examining Committee cannot be changed after a failed exam without the expressed, written permission of the Graduate Committee Chair.

#### Written Component (completed at least two weeks before Oral Examination)

- The content of the Written Examination need not be restricted to the subject matter of the dissertation research.
- The student *may* be permitted to use outside materials to answer questions (this decision is left to individual examiners).
- The student's major advisor may not limit or constrain the subject matter content of the questions submitted by the Examining Committee or in any manner alter the instructions to the student by members of the Examining Committee.
- The written exam must be completed within a 7-day period.
- Completed examinations must be promptly graded and returned to the student by members of the Examining Committee.
- The written component of the exam must be passed before proceeding to the oral component.

#### Oral Component (taken two weeks after the written examination).

- Follow-on questions from the written examination can be asked if the examiner was not completely satisfied with written answer(s).
- The Graduate School has recommended that oral examinations not last more than two hours; if additional time is deemed necessary, the exam can be continued later.
- As is the case for the written component, the content of the oral portion need not be restricted to the subject matter of the dissertation research.
- The examination is open to all faculty on campus, and faculty not on the student's committee can participate as non-voting, *ad hoc* members of the Examining Committee.

#### Possible outcomes of the Preliminary Examination:

- Unconditional *failure* (Student is dismissed from graduate program)
- Conditional failure (specified conditions must be met before retaken)
- Unconditional pass (Student becomes a Ph.D. Candidate)

#### **Final Examination**

- Required for non-thesis M.S., M.S.F., M.S. and Ph.D. students.
- Final Examination committee may or may not be identical to the advisory committee, but 51% of the Examining Committee members must have "Regular" graduate faculty certification.
- A *Request for Appointment of Examining Committee* (G.S., Form 8), signed by the major professor and the head of the graduate program, must be received by the Graduate School

at least one month prior to the final examination date to give the dean of the Graduate School adequate time to appoint and arrange for additional members if he or she wishes.

- The examination committee determines if a student passes or fails the final exam. If the student does not pass the final exam, the examination committee determines if the student will have additional opportunities to pass the exam.
- Student must be enrolled during the term this examination is taken.
- Final Examinations must be held before the last week of classes in a given term.

#### Requirements for non-thesis M.S. Final Examination

- The Examining Committee may or may not be identical to the advisory committee, but must contain at least three members of the graduate faculty, and 51% of the Examining Committee must have “Regular” graduate faculty certification.
- The candidate will present his or her research in a forum open to the public.<sup>2</sup>
- The Examining Committee will conduct an oral examination of the student and render a pass or fail recommendation.

#### Requirements for M.S.F. and M.S. Final Examinations

- The Examining Committee must be comprised of at least three members of the graduate faculty and may or may not be identical to the advisory committee, and 51% of the Examining Committee must have “Regular” graduate faculty certification.
- The candidate will present his or her research in a forum open to the public which must be advertised to the Purdue faculty and student body a minimum of two weeks in advance.<sup>2</sup>
- The Examining Committee will conduct an oral examination of the student and render a pass or fail recommendation.
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#### Requirements for Ph.D. Final Examination

- At least two academic sessions devoted to research and writing must elapse between the Preliminary and Final Examinations.
- The Final Examination Committee will consist of a minimum of four members of the graduate faculty, and 51% of the Examining Committee must have “Regular” graduate faculty certification.
- A *Request for Appointment of Examining Committee* (G.S., Form 8), signed by the major professor and the head of the graduate program, must be received by the Graduate School

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<sup>2</sup>Consideration should be given for not having the oral presentations open to the public in cases where prior agreements with the sponsor of the research preclude the release of findings to the public for an agreed upon period of time or when prior review by the sponsor is specified in the funding agreement.

at least one month prior to the final examination date to give the dean of the Graduate School adequate time to appoint and arrange for additional members if he or she wishes.

- The candidate will present his or her research in a forum open to the public which must be advertised to the Purdue faculty and student body a minimum of two weeks in advance.<sup>2</sup>
- After research has been completed and the dissertation written and presented to the committee and public, a final oral examination must be held in which the candidate defends the thesis and demonstrates to the Examining Committee the capabilities for which the Ph.D. degree is to be awarded.
- The Graduate School has recommended that oral examinations not last more than two hours.
- Based on the acceptability of the dissertation and the performance of the student during the oral examination, the Examining Committee will a) render a pass or fail recommendation; b) complete the *Report of the Final Examination* (G.S. Form 11); and c) approve the *Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance* (G.S. Form 9 and FNR GC-9 requiring signatures from all committee members); and e) complete and sign all FNR final examination forms.
- The candidate will complete the a) Graduate School Exit Questionnaire and b) the Earned Doctorate Survey.

**Period of Funding and Extension Requests for M.S. and Ph.D. Students  
Funded on Departmental Assistantships  
Date: Effective January 1, 2007**

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**M.S. Students**

1. If funding is available, students that receive departmental assistantships to pursue M.S. degrees within our department will be guaranteed two years of funding to complete their degree.
2. If needed, the advisor of an M.S. student who is making satisfactory progress towards his/her degree may request a one-semester extension of the student's ½-time, M.S.-level departmental assistantship. The request, addressed to the graduate committee, must be in writing and must provide clear evidence (e.g., filed Plan of Study, manuscripts submitted, data collection completed, etc.) of satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. The Graduate Committee Chair may grant this request, pending budgetary approval by the Department Head.
3. If needed, the advisor of an M.S. student who is making satisfactory progress towards his/her degree may request a second, one-semester extension of the student's ½-time, M.S.-level departmental assistantship. The request, addressed to the graduate committee, must be in writing and must provide **CLEAR evidence (e.g., completed thesis chapters, pending thesis defense, etc.) of satisfactory progress toward completion of the M.S. thesis.** Approval of a request will require evidence of satisfactory progress and availability of funds. The Graduate Committee Chair may grant a well-justified request in part or in whole, pending budgetary approval by the Department Head. If funds are limited, preference for a second, one-semester extension for M.S. students on departmental funding will be given to students who have served as a teaching assistant in FNR courses for two or more semesters and/or have been funded for one or more semesters on funds external to the department (e.g., grants, contracts, fellowships, etc.) during their tenure in our degree program.
4. No additional extensions of departmental assistantships for M.S. students will be granted.

**Ph.D. Students**

1. If funding is available, students who receive departmental assistantships to pursue Ph.D. degrees within our department will be guaranteed three years of funding to complete their degrees.
2. If needed, the advisor of a Ph.D. student who is making satisfactory progress towards his/her degree may request a one-semester extension of the student's ½-time, Ph.D.-level departmental assistantship. The request, addressed to the graduate committee, must be in writing and must provide clear evidence (e.g., filed plan of study, passed preliminary exams, manuscripts submitted, data collection completed, etc.) of satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. The Graduate Committee Chair may grant this request, pending budgetary approval by the Department Head.

3. If needed, the advisor of a Ph.D. student who is making satisfactory progress toward his/her degree may request a second, one-semester extension of the student's ½-time, Ph.D.-level departmental assistantship. The request, addressed to the graduate committee, must be in writing **completed dissertation chapters, pending dissertation defense, etc.) of satisfactory progress toward completion of the Ph.D. dissertation.** Approval of a request will require evidence of satisfactory progress and availability of funds. The Graduate Committee Chair may grant a well-justified request in part or in whole, pending budgetary approval by the Department Head. If funds are limited, preference for a second, one-semester extension request for Ph.D. students on departmental funding will be given to students who have served as a teaching assistant in FNR courses for two or more semesters and/or have been funded for one or more semesters on funds external to the department (e.g., grants, contracts, fellowships, etc.) during their tenure in our degree program.
4. If needed, the advisor of a Ph.D. student who is making satisfactory progress towards their degree may request a third, one-semester extension of the student's ½-time, Ph.D.-level departmental assistantship. The request, addressed to the graduate committee, must be in writing and **to be granted, the request must be accompanied by a statement indicating that the student has made satisfactory progress toward the imminent completion of their Ph.D. dissertation. This statement must be signed by the student's complete graduate advisory committee with a clear indication of each member's agreement or disagreement with the statement.** Approval of a request will require imminent degree completion and availability of funds. The Graduate Committee Chair may grant a well-justified request in part or in whole, pending budgetary approval by the Department Head. If funds are limited, preference for a third, one-semester extension request for Ph.D. students on departmental funding will be given to students who have served as a teaching assistant in FNR courses for two or more semesters and/or have been funded for one or more semesters on funds external to the department (e.g., grants, contracts, fellowships, etc.) during their tenure in our degree program.
5. No additional extensions of departmental assistantships for Ph.D. students will be granted **(see exception below).**

### Exceptions

1. Due to the extra coursework and mentoring required of students entering the Ph.D. degree directly after completion of a B.S. degree, special exceptions for a fourth, one-semester extension of departmental funding can, at the discretion of the Department Head, be made for such students. Recognizing that additional time may be required to complete the degree program of such students, it is expected that the advisors of these students will make every effort to obtain funds external to the department (e.g., grants, contracts, fellowships, etc.) to support at least a portion of the assistantship needs of the student. Evidence of such efforts or lack thereof will be taken into account when decisions regarding a fourth extension for such students are made. No accommodations for a fourth extension will be made for students who have completed an M.S. degree prior to entering the Ph.D. program in our department.

2. Any M.S. student who has received funds from a departmental assistantship toward the completion of their degree from FNR must reapply for admission to the department if they wish to be considered for departmental funding to pursue a Ph.D. in FNR. For any student that completes a M.S. degree in FNR, and subsequently is selected to receive departmental funding to pursue a Ph.D. in FNR, a maximum limit of 6 years of departmental funding will be allowed (pursuant to the criteria stated in this memo regarding period of funding and extension requests for M.S. and Ph.D. students in FNR).

**Definitions**

1. **Spring Semester Extension** – that interval encompassing the period 1 January to 30 July of each year.
2. **Fall Semester Extension** – that interval encompassing the period 1 August to 31 December of each year.

**Allocation of van Eck Assistantships****Date: Effective January 1, 2008**

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*As of January 1, 2019, the Fred van Eck funding was restructured to a project-based eligibility selection process instead of assistantship selection process. The Fred van Eck will not be included as an assistantship funding source from this date forward.*

*For students currently funded by the Fred van Eck Assistantship awarded prior to January 1, 2019, the following allocation criteria apply.*

1. In consultation with the Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center (HTIRC) Advisory Committee, HTIRC scientists, and FNR faculty, the current HTIRC director will define a list of topics for graduate research that tie into the HTIRC strategic plan, ongoing HTIRC research areas, or NSF Center projects.
2. The current HTIRC director and FNR Department Head will confer and determine the number of available van Eck Assistantships for students initiating studies in the upcoming fall or spring semester.
3. The list of potential research topics for graduate study will be distributed to all HTIRC scientists and FNR faculty members to be used as a basis for recruitment of students.
4. Opportunities for van Eck Assistantships will be advertised by the HTIRC director as well as by faculty with research interests associated with the list of potential research topics (in 1 above). Prior to advertisement of opportunities, any faculty member or HTIRC scientist wishing to recruit students for Van Eck Assistantships must confer with the current HTIRC director to verify that their research interests fall within the strategic priorities of the Center (see 1 above) and that the resources to conduct the proposed research are available.
5. The current HTIRC director will determine the funds available to support advertisement efforts by faculty and will be responsible for working with faculty to advertise positions. All applicants will be asked to forward materials necessary for evaluation as a prospective student in FNR to the current secretary of HTIRC. These materials will in turn be forwarded to the current FNR Graduate Program Coordinator. The deadline for receipt of application materials will fall approximately 2 months **prior** to the departmental deadlines for review of applications for admission by the FNR Graduate Committee, which currently are: September 15 for spring admission and January 15 for fall admission.
6. Shortly after the deadline for receipt of applications for Van Eck Assistantships, the current Graduate Committee Chair and the current HTIRC director will meet to evaluate prospective applicants and rank them with regard to 1) academic and experiential qualifications used for evaluations by the FNR Graduate Committee [i.e., GPA, Statement of Purpose, quality of institutions attended, prior experience, and letters of reference] and 2) a prioritization of graduate

assistantship allocations consistent with criteria used by the FNR Graduate Committee for allocation of departmental assistantships [e.g., faculty rank, gender and cultural diversity, domestic and international balance, disciplinary balance, and past performance of potential advisors]. Based on this review, a short list of top candidates will be established and these students will be invited in for interviews (a reserve list also will be established).

7. The current HTIRC director will arrange for funding of site visits by the top-ranked prospective graduate students. All prospective candidates will be expected to interview (either on-site or electronically) and those attending campus will be expected to present a seminar.

8. All applicants invited for interview must complete applications for graduate study at Purdue University and must list FNR as their primary department.

9. Based on the outcomes of these interviews, advisors of all acceptable short listed candidates will indicate to the Graduate Program Coordinator that they wish for these candidates to be included in the pool of applicants forwarded to the Graduate Committee for consideration for admission to the department.

10. As part of the duties of the Graduate Committee, candidates for van Eck Assistantships will be evaluated and ranked with all other applicants to the department and will be selected for offers of van Eck Assistantships based on the same criteria used to assign departmental assistantships in FNR. Members of HTIRC or FNR faculty with prospective candidates will be restricted from evaluations of prospective van Eck assistantship awardees.

11. A ranked list of graduate students selected for offers of van Eck Assistantships will be provided to the current HTIRC director and current FNR Department Head for review prior to the distribution of offer letters to the successful candidates.

12. All FNR Faculty and HTIRC scientists who are recipients of van Eck-funded students will be expected to attend annual HTIRC Advisory Committee meetings, present results of research studies (if requested), and provide input for yearly reports to the University, HTIRC Advisory Committee, and to NSF (if applicable).

**Required Course Credits for Ph.D. Degrees in FNR****Date: Effective September 1, 2008 (Amended August 26, 2009)**

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To receive a Ph.D. degree from the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, a student must complete a minimum of 90 credit hours. Students must **complete a minimum of 24 course credit hours** (which primarily should include courses taken as a PhD student at Purdue, but which also can include courses taken as a post Baccalaureate student or generated as a consequence of an incomplete MS or PhD program – WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE STUDENTS GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS). The 24 course credit hours must be listed on the Plan of Study. In addition, a minimum of 15 research credit hours must be completed.

If a student has completed a MS degree, a **maximum of 30 credit hours** taken to complete the MS degree also can be counted toward the 90 credit hour total – AGAIN with permission of the students Advisory Committee members. The remaining credit hours needed to reach the 90-credit hour minimum may be a combination of coursework and research hours.

If a student has not completed a MS degree and begins a PhD program in FNR with only a Baccalaureate degree – they must **complete 36 course credit hours** (which primarily should include courses taken as a PhD student at Purdue, but which also can include courses taken as a post Baccalaureate student or generated as a consequence of an incomplete MS or PhD program – WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE STUDENT’S GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS).

All other policies regarding transfers of course credit hours, level of course credit hours which can count towards the Plan of Study and/or degree program, residency requirements, etc. shall adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Graduate School Policy and Procedures Manual.

In addition, the following required course credit hours **MUST** be included on the Plan of Study for any PhD student pursuing their degree in FNR:

- 1) GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct in Research – 1 credit – – All students must register for this course -- preferably taken in first or second semester.
- 2) Students who started their degree program **PRIOR** to summer 2019 and are completing the **single** FNR degree program are required to complete two, one-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminars.

Student who start their degree program summer 2019 or after are **NOT** required to complete the two, one-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar requirements.

Students who started their degree program **PRIOR** to summer 2019 and are completing the **dual** ESE/FNR degree programs are required to complete the two-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar I, one-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar II, and two, one-credit FNR 67900 seminars.

Students who start their degree program in summer 2019 and after and are completing the **dual** ESE/FNR degree programs are required to complete the two-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar I, one-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar II, **BUT** they are **NOT** required to complete the two, one-credit FNR 67900 seminar.

***Effect May 2019, the zero-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar was eliminated as a course option.***

- 3) FNR 59800 Theory & Applied Natural Resource Extension Program or FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming – 1 credit (only applies to students who began their program fall 2012 or thereafter. For students who began their programs from fall 2009 through summer 2012, FNR 59800 Experiential Extension &

Outreach Practicum – one (1) credit is required. [**Note:** Students who began their program from fall 2009 through summer 2012 may opt to complete the one-credit FNR 59800 Theory & Applied Natural Resource Extension Program or FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming].

### **Amendment to the FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension**

**Programming:** This amendment was approved by the FNR Graduate Council on September 28, 2015 and by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on October 1, 2015.

FNR graduate students who have previously earned a graduate degree from FNR are not required to take FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming given they meet both requirements below:

- 1) The student has previously taken and received a passing grade in FNR 50600 (formerly FNR 59800) Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming, and
- 2) The student's graduate committee deems the student has demonstrated sufficient proficiency and skill related to extension activities.

***The student would still be required to meet the other policy standards including a graduate committee review and approval of an extension plan, an extension deliverable, and completion of form FNR-GC10.***

**Amendment to the GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct of Research:** This amendment was approved by the FNR Graduate Council on September 28, 2015 and by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on October 1, 2015.

FNR graduate students who have previously earned a graduate degree from Purdue University where GRAD 61200 Responsible Conduct of Research was already completed as part of the Plan of Study are not required to repeat GRAD 61200 in order to include it on the new degree program Plan of Study. This requirement will be waived and a statement included in the “*Add a Supplemental Note*” section on the new degree program Plan of Study.

Exceptions or substitutions involving the above required courses can only be granted by the Chair of the Graduate Committee upon receipt of a written request from the Graduate Advisor of the student requesting the exception/substitution.

**Amendment to the Ph.D. requirements:** This amendment was approved by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on August 25, 2017.

Beginning spring 2018 (January 1, 2018), all students admitted to the FNR Ph.D. degree program are **strongly encouraged** to submit an article prior to the Ph.D. final examination.

**Assigning TA Duties to FNR Graduate Students****Date: Effective September 1, 2008**

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1. In the spring semester of each academic year, faculty and graduate students will be contacted with a list of expected TA needs for the coming fall and spring semesters and are requested to let the Chair of the FNR Graduate Committee know if:
    - a. faculty have TA needs that are not or should not be considered for assignment or,
    - b. graduate students have a particular class for which they would like to serve as a TA.
  2. Taking the feedback from student requests for TA slots into account, students will be prioritized for assignment to TA slots in the following order (technically any student in the department can be asked to TA when the need arises): departmental-funded students, Fred M. van Eck-funded students, fellowship students whose stipends are supplemented by the department or who have teaching responsibilities as part of their fellowship agreements, and externally-funded students. Externally-funded students often are requested for TA slots by their own major professors to assist with specific classes e.g., Dendrology, Fisheries Techniques, etc. Regardless of prioritization, students who are in their final semester or who have served as a TA four times will not be assigned to TA slots if possible.
  3. After selecting students for TA duties, the FNR Graduate Committee Chair will compose the first draft of TA assignments for the coming fall and spring semesters and distribute it to faculty so that he/she can get their input on whether:
    - a. the assigned students are acceptable to instructors as TA's for their classes;
    - b. the assigned students are in their last semester (it often is impossible to know this without input from faculty at this point in the process);
    - c. the students will be in the field and cannot actually serve as a TA in the assigned semester; and/or
    - d. instructors would prefer particular students as TA's for their classes due to their level of expertise in the subject matter (while this is most often a request made by faculty to have their own graduate students TA a particular class that they instruct, sometimes, such requests are made by instructors for the services of externally-funded or fellowship students for whom they do not serve as the advisor. Under these circumstances it is the responsibility of the instructor to get permission from the student's advisor prior to making the request).
  4. At this point in the process, faculty advisors are expected to discuss the potential TA assignments with their graduate students and respond to the Graduate Committee Chair with any concerns.

5. The Graduate Committee Chair will collate all of the feedback from the faculty and attempt to accommodate as many requests as possible. Unfortunately, annual changes in demands for TA assistance often make it difficult to accommodate everyone in the manner that they request. As a consequence, students may be requested to TA in areas that are somewhat outside of their area of expertise – while this is not desirable – it is sometimes necessary.

6. Once discussions with faculty are completed and TA assignments are finalized – the Graduate Committee Chair will distribute the final list of TA assignments for the fall and spring semesters to all FNR faculty and graduate students and ask the instructors of each class to contact their assigned TAs with instructions on their expected duties.

**External Membership for M.S. and Ph.D. FNR Graduate Advisory Committees****Date: Effective September 1, 2008**

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**Departmental Advising and Supervision*****Major Professor***

Every student in a degree program is required to select a major professor who acts as the chair of the Graduate Advisory Committee and who agrees to supervise the student's graduate study, research, and writing. The major professor/student relationship must be a mutually acceptable one.

***Advisory Committee***

The student and the major professor are responsible for the selection of an advisory committee. The duties of that committee are to assist the student in the preparation of the plan of study and to offer advice during the period of graduate work, including research and thesis preparation when these are required components of the student's degree program.

The committee consists of the major professor and at least two other members of the graduate faculty (with the exception of non-thesis master's degree programs that have approval for a one-member advisory committee. Please refer to Section VII. A. 2. a). Committees must be approved by the head of the graduate program, the college dean (if requested by the college), and the dean of the Graduate School. Because it is crucial for advisory committee members to bring independent thought and decision-making to their advisory committee roles, the Graduate School strongly recommends that major professors, graduate students, and other individuals involved in the advisory committee selection process strive to avoid appointments where there may be potential conflicts of interest. Advisory committee appointments of spouses/partners, partners in business, or those with financial conflicts of interest connected to the graduate student, for example, should be carefully reviewed and alternatives considered. Members of the committee need not be faculty with whom the student has taken coursework, however, at least 51% of the committee members must have regular graduate faculty certification. The request to the dean of the Graduate School for appointment of the advisory committee is made on the same form and at the same time as the request for approval of the student's plan of study. (See Section VII-B.) The dean of the Graduate School may appoint additional members if it seems advisable.

**a. One-Member Advisory Committee Flexibility Option**

A minimum of one member of the graduate faculty may be permitted to serve and fully constitute the membership of the advisory committee for non-thesis master's students who are meeting degree requirements entirely through the completion of courses. Departments wishing to pursue this option should submit a request to the Graduate Records Manager in the Graduate School, or the appropriate director of graduate studies at the regional campuses. Being as specific as possible, this request should outline what concentrations, cohorts, delivery methods (distance or campus based) or other features will qualify for this option.

Once approved, all non-thesis students within the department will be given technical access to list just one advisory committee member on the plan of study, even if this option is not appropriate for all. It is the department's responsibility to carefully review each proposed plan of study; if a student who does not qualify for the one-member advisory committee option lists only one member, the form must be rejected.

Please note that a Final Examination Report Form (G.S. Form 7) must be submitted for all master's students using the One Member Advisory Committee Flexibility option, unless the department also has an approved Alternative Graduation Criteria option. (See Section VII-F.2.)

### *Changes in the Advisory Committee*

Changes to the advisory committee must be submitted electronically via myPurdue if the plan of study was submitted electronically. Advisory committee changes on a paper plan of study should be requested using the Request for Change to the Plan of Study (G.S. Form 13). Each request for a change must be accompanied by a rationale and be signed by the student and each committee member whose status is affected by the request. If a paper form is used, it is the responsibility of the chair of the advisory committee to obtain the signatures of all committee members whose status is being changed. The request must be approved by the major professor, the head of the graduate program, and the college dean (if requested by the college). It is important to notify the Graduate School immediately of any change in the major professor to ensure that appropriate signatures are on forms.

In very rare instances in which an advisory committee member in any role does not approve a student's request for a change in the advisory committee, the student may ask (in writing) for review and assistance from the dean of the Graduate School who will forward it to his/her designee. This action by the student should be utilized after he/she has made at least three contacts (in writing) to the advisory committee member over a period of at least one month to secure approval. The dean of the Graduate School's designee will convene a committee of three faculty members/administrators, normally including the graduate student's college associate dean, department head, and departmental graduate committee chair, to consider the situation. A majority vote of this committee is required to ask the dean of the Graduate School's designee to remove an advisory committee member from that role. The dean of the Graduate School's designee is a non-voting facilitator and serves as a liaison between the Graduate School, the college/department, and the student. If the student believes that either composition of the committee did not allow him/her to have a fair review or the process was not properly followed, he/she may appeal directly to the dean of the Graduate School within 10 days of the issuance of the committee's decision.

All students pursuing a graduate degree in FNR (non-thesis M.S., M.S.F., M.S., or Ph.D.) must have at least one member of their Graduate Advisory Committee who is external to FNR. An external committee member can be defined as: 1) an individual who does not have a majority appointment in FNR, 2) an individual from another department at Purdue University, or 3) any individual who is not employed by Purdue University. Post-Doctoral Researchers, Research Faculty, Administrative

Professional Staff, or any other individuals employed by FNR do **NOT** qualify as external committee members under this policy and are not eligible to serve as an advisory committee member.

All external committee members that do not have a “Regular” appointment to the Graduate Faculty at Purdue University must be submitted for approval for appointment as a “Special” member of the Graduate Faculty in order to serve on the Graduate Advisory Committee of a student in FNR.

The Graduate School “Special” Faculty Appointment Request will be prepared by the FNR Graduate Program Coordinator. Before the request can be completed, the graduate student will need to submit to the FNR Graduate Program Coordinator: 1) a current vita of the person seeking the “Special” appointment, 2) a statement of justification prepared by the faculty advisor explaining why the person is the best choice for the committee, and 3) a statement of justification prepared by the graduate student explaining why the person is the best choice for the committee. The nomination is forwarded for approval to the FNR Department Head and College of Agriculture Dean for Graduate Education, and Dean of the Graduate School. Upon approval, the Graduate School will assign a graduate faculty identifier (e.g., C0001) to the appointee for use on Graduate School documents.

Members of the Graduate Advisory Committee need not be faculty with whom the student has taken coursework, however, at least 51% of the committee members must have “Regular” graduate faculty certification.

## Extension and Outreach Requirements for Graduate Study in FNR

**Date: Effective August 20, 2012**

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Exposure to research, extension and teaching are consistent with the missions of the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources. According to articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and other literature including *Science*, broadening experiences (i.e., in addition to research) should be components of graduate education so that students may realize the breadth of potential professional opportunities and interact with a diversity of stakeholders. The Department of Forestry and Natural Resources has a mission and values, consistent with those of a land grant institution, which provides the foundation to build programs that help graduate students realize diverse professional objectives.

### Statement of Policy

The policy described in this document provides FNR graduate students baseline knowledge and skills necessary to develop, implement and evaluate outreach and extension programs in their field of expertise.

### Requirements

The policy described in this document applies to both FNR M.S. and Ph.D. students. To fulfill this policy, graduate students will complete coursework, develop an outreach plan, and produce a minimum of one deliverable. The 1-page outreach plan must include a defined target audience, clear learning objectives, and a suggestion of where and when their outreach or extension activity will occur. The specific deliverable(s) associated with each student's outreach or extension activities will vary depending upon each student's educational objectives and the direction given by each individual graduate student's advisory committee. Examples of deliverables include, but are not limited to, numbered extension publications, non-technical publications, articles in popular magazines, newsletter, trade magazines, etc., posters, pamphlets, web content, social media, workshops for professional or public audiences, seminars for non-scientific audiences, and youth programming.

Steps for fulfilling these requirements are outlined as follows:

Step 1 – Complete the required course, FNR 59800 (old course number) or FNR 50600 (new course number) Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming or equivalent before the end of their second semester. This course will be included on official Plan of Study.

Step 2 – Develop a 1-page outreach plan in aforementioned course  
Major professor approves 1-page outreach plan by the end of the second semester for students who enroll in the graduate program beginning the fall semester, or the end of the first semester for students who enroll in the graduate program beginning the spring semester.

Step 3 – Student will perform the activities described in the outreach plan. Graduate students must produce a minimum of one deliverable or conduct a minimum of one program/activity.

Step 4 – FNR Form GC-10 Extension Outreach Evaluation  
Student obtains form from the FNR Graduate Program Coordinator.  
List all extension and outreach activities, talks and deliverables completed while seeking current degree.  
The student’s graduate committee will sign the form at the M.S. thesis or Ph.D. dissertation defense.

Step 5 – The student will submit one (1) copy of the completed form from Step 4 to the FNR Graduate Program Coordinator shortly following the defense, and the Graduate Program Coordinator will forward a copy of the completed and approved GC-10 to the FNR Extension Coordinator.

**Amendment:** This amendment was approved by the FNR Graduate Council on September 28, 2015 and by the FNR faculty at the FNR Departmental Meeting on October 1, 2015.

FNR graduate students who have previously earned a graduate degree from FNR are not required to take FNR 50600 Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming given they meet both requirements below:

- 3) The student has previously taken and received a passing grade in FNR 50600 (formerly FNR 59800) Theory & Application of Natural Resource Extension Programming, and
- 4) The student’s graduate committee deems the student has demonstrated sufficient proficiency and skill related to extension activities.

The student will still be required to meet the other policy standards including a graduate committee review and approval of an extension plan, an extension deliverable, completion of form FNR-GC10, and approval by all committee members at the M.S. thesis or Ph.D. dissertation defense.

**FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar****Date: Effective June 3, 2003**

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*Effect May 2019, the zero-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar was eliminated as a course option.*

*Effect May 2019, the one-credit FNR 67900 Forest Resources Seminar was eliminated as a required course for students beginning their programs in summer or fall 2019. All student who began their programs prior to summer 2019 are held to the one-credit FNR 67900 course (M.S. – one, one-credit registration and Ph.D. – two, one-credit registrations).*

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**One-credit FNR 67900**

1. Graduate students should plan to make one to two (1-2) public presentations on research topics in their field of expertise while they are students in the department. Master's students need to make one (1) presentation; doctoral students need to make two (2) presentations. During the semester(s) that you make the presentation(s), you should sign up for the one-credit FNR 67900 seminar. Therefore, Master's students will sign up for one, one-credit seminar once, while Ph.D. students will sign up for the one-credit seminar in two semesters. One or two credits of FNR 67900 should be part of every student's Graduate School Plan of Study.
2. If you have a teaching, class, or research conflict that will not allow you to attend seminars during a semester, simply email the instructor for FNR 67900 to explain the conflict and s/he will mark you down as excused from attendance for that semester.
3. The faculty encourages graduate students to present their research in public settings, both to help disseminate the research being done in the department and to give students experience in public speaking.
4. Public presentations should be in the form of a poster or an oral presentation. A wide variety of presentations can be used to satisfy the requirement, including papers or posters presented at annual meetings of professional societies, talks to public groups, or the student's final defense of their research. Posters presented in the FNR Spring Research Symposium may also be used. Talks given in class as part of the requirements for a specific course do **not** qualify (i.e., you can't use an oral report required for a specific course) but guest lecture presentations in courses in which you are not enrolled may be used. If you are unsure whether a particular presentation qualifies, contact the FNR 67900 instructor.

5. When you sign up for one (1) credit of FNR 67900, you need to send an email message to the FNR 67900 instructor or otherwise document the public presentation you are making to satisfy the one-credit requirement.
6. Many students plan to use their final defense as one of the presentations, and therefore wait to sign up for one credit of FNR 67900 until their last semester. This is perfectly acceptable, but it is risky. If you sign up for one credit of FNR 67900 and then fail to defend, you will get an incomplete that must be resolved before the Graduate School will accept your request to graduate. If you expected to graduate in the fall, and suddenly get a job offer in the summer, then you may wish to schedule your defense earlier than you had planned. FNR 67900 is not offered for the summer academic session. But, if you have not yet satisfied your “for-credit” obligation for FNR 67900, your Graduate School Plan of Study will not be completed. The Graduate School will **not** approve your application to schedule the defense in this circumstance. These problems can be resolved, but it is simpler to get the “for-credit” obligations out of the way as soon as possible.
7. Student who complete the **dual** ESE/FNR degree programs are required to complete the two-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar I, one-credit GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Seminar II, and one-credit FNR 67900 seminar(s). These students will register for GRAD 59000 ESE Coll/Sem I (2 cr.) and ESE Coll/Sem II (1 cr.) their first two semesters. They may wait to register for the one-credit FNR 67900 seminar beginning the third semester if there is a course schedule conflict with the GRAD 59000 ESE seminar.

### **Protocol for Obtaining the Absence Excuse beginning fall 2018**

You will contact Dr. Paul Brown ([pb@purdue.edu](mailto:pb@purdue.edu)) via email to request his permission to register for the one-credit FNR 67900 course. You will carbon copy the graduate program coordinator. Explain your plans regarding the presentation. If Dr. Brown provides his permission, you are clear to register for the course. You are responsible for contacting Dr. Brown after you have completed the presentation requirement. Dr. Brown has stated that attendance is NOT mandatory for FNR 67900, but as a professional act of respect, please discuss with Dr. Brown his requirements regarding class attendance. You will follow his attendance policy.