

Veterinary Microbiology and Preventive Medicine
Graduate Student Manual

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Table of Contents

Admission requirements

Full admission	4
Concurrent DVM students	4
English requirements for non-native English speakers	5
Assistantships and Employment expectations	6
Assistantship time limit	6
Required teaching and research responsibilities	6

Benefits

Sick leave and vacation for RAs and TAs	7
Sick leave and vacation for adjunct instructors	7
Insurance	7
Maternity and Paternity leave	8
Holidays	8

Guidance for new students

Registration	9
Late registration	9
Add/drop slips	9
CY-ride bus pass	9
Internet / email	9
Keys	9
F-1 and J-1 credit requirements	10
Additional information	10

Program requirements

List of required courses	11
List of additional courses that may be relevant	12
Links to interdepartmental programs	12
Annual report	13
POS committee	13
Program of study	14
Credit requirements	15
Approvals	16

Preliminary examinations

Format of Preliminary exams	16
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Example of a proposal style of examination	17
Procedural guidelines and schedule	17
Criteria for evaluating the proposition	18
Thesis and dissertation requirements	
Master's thesis	20
Doctoral dissertation	21
Writing and editing responsibility	21
Finishing up	
Final examination	21
PhD dissertation seminar and publication requirements	21
Diploma slip information	22
Exit survey	22
Academic standards	
Probation policy	23
Dismissal policy	23
Dismissal procedures	24
Graduate student organizations	24
List of forms and due dates	26

Admission Requirements

Requirements for full admission in VMPM graduate programs are as follows:

- The Graduate Records Examination (GRE) general aptitude test is required of all applicants. An advanced test in biology is strongly recommended. Students must satisfy the requirements of both the Graduate College of Iowa State University (ISU) and the department. There is no minimum score, as the student's performance is evaluated with all other relevant information. Generally, students accepted in the Department score above the 50th percentile.
- Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English equivalent to a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on the paper-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test as a part of the admissions process. International students may also submit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores in lieu of the TOEFL. The ISU Graduate College minimum is 6.5. After admission, students whose native language is not English need to meet the Graduate English requirements.
- The transcript record must show a strong background in the biological sciences; preferably including biochemistry, biology, calculus, chemistry, genetics, immunology, microbiology, physics and physiology.
- Three letters of recommendation are required.
- Autobiographical statement describing research interests and future plans must be written by the student. (1-2 pages)
- Applicants wishing to pursue a Ph.D. in Veterinary Microbiology (Preventive Medicine Emphasis) must have a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or an equivalent degree.
- Students who have achieved high scores on the GRE test, and who have substantial and appropriately documented research experience in microbiology, may be admitted into the Ph.D. program upon approval of the VMPM Graduate Admissions Committee and the ISU Graduate College. Students admitted into the M.S. program who demonstrate simultaneously high capabilities in didactic course work and in research may be advanced from the M.S. to a Ph.D. program by their Program of Study (POS) Committee, subject to final approval by the Program Chair and the DOGE. Admittance of students into the program is dependent on the availability of a Major Professor and Laboratory willing to accept and provide financial support to the student.

Concurrent Degree Students

Students in the professional school (College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM DVM program) may also enroll in graduate studies in the M.S. or Ph. D. programs within the department. Only students who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement and are highly motivated will be considered. The student must be accepted into the ISU DVM program as a pre-requisite for acceptance into the concurrent DVM/PhD program. The PhD degree is awarded through the ISU graduate college, therefore the graduate college and the V MPM admissions committee will determine acceptance

into the PhD portion of the program. The student will identify a PhD mentor who is working on a topic matched with the student interests who pledges funding to support the student financially throughout the PhD studies. Identification of this mentor **must** be done before the end of Year 1 Spring. Students will be subject to the normal rules and procedures in effect for both the College of Veterinary Medicine and ISU's Graduate College. Students in the concurrent D.V.M.- Graduate Degree Program will need to have Program of Study approved by the Associate Deans of both colleges and the DOGE or Chair of VMPPM. Students must maintain a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average in both programs to remain enrolled.

Students enrolled in the Graduate College must satisfy all academic requirements established by the Graduate College. In meeting these requirements, the only courses in the Veterinary College eligible for graduate credit will be courses identified in the ISU Course Catalog as being available for graduate credit. Students enrolled in the concurrent program may elect to use courses from their graduate Program of Study, where applicable, to meet the requirements in effect for the professional curriculum, provided approval is obtained from the Curriculum Committee and the Administration of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Students should check with the department to confirm the availability of the various graduate courses. At present courses that **can** be included are: VMPPM 586 Medical Bacteriology; VMPPM 586L Medical Bacteriology Laboratory; VMPPM 587 Animal Virology; VPth 542 General Pathology; VPth 576 Veterinary Parasitology; and VDPAM 426 Veterinary Toxicology. In order for a graduate course to be acceptable as a substitute for a designated professional course in the Veterinary Curriculum, it must be reviewed by the CVM Curriculum Committee to confirm that the depth and rigor of the course content required by the professional curriculum is adequate as determined by the College Graduate Studies Committee. At the end of each semester, students should transfer credits from the DVM transcript to the graduate curriculum using the [Transfer of Courses for Concurrent VM/Graduate form](#).

If a student does not hold a B.S. or B.A. degrees, a graduate degree would not be granted until all requirements for the D.V.M. degree are completed. By not restricting credits earned, a student may pursue graduate studies during summer and holiday sessions and may elect to postpone the fourth year of professional curriculum for one year in order to facilitate pursuit of graduate courses and research. This latter option may be declared during the second or third year of the professional curriculum, and no later than the first day of the spring semester of the third year of the professional curriculum.

All applications for admission should be directed to:

US and international application

website: http://www.admissions.iastate.edu/apply/index.php?type=us_grad

Assistantships and Employment Expectations

Research assistantships (RA) positions are available through the designated laboratory and major professor. A 100% tuition credit is awarded to PhD RAs and a 50% tuition credit is awarded to MS students with RAs. Additional fellowships and RAs may be available through agreements with the USDA laboratories in Ames and training grants from NIH or USDA.

Assistantship Time Limit

The time limit for assistantships will vary greatly depending on the type of support. Research assistantships are related to the life of a research grant or availability of departmental, USDA or other support. Students should discuss their support with their major professor, DOGE, Chair or supervisor and plan accordingly. Most VMPM faculty members assume that a M.S. should be completed within two to three years and a Ph.D. in approximately five years. Students should not expect support to be automatically provided beyond these time intervals. Students making inadequate progress will be notified in writing and support may be terminated.

Required Teaching and Research Responsibilities

Teaching responsibilities are generally determined by the Chair. Students receiving Departmental TAs will be expected to take part in TA orientations, workshops and testing set up by the University and the Department.

Research responsibilities are determined by the major professor in consultation with the POS Committee. There are no specific departmental research responsibilities.

Benefits

Sick Leave and Vacation for RAs and TAs

All RAs and TAs on 12-month appointments are entitled to vacation and sick leave in the same manner as A-base faculty, except at a rate proportional to the fraction of their appointment.

TAs on 9-month appointments are entitled to sick leave, but do not accrue vacation time. They have the same policy as B-Base faculty at a rate proportional to the fraction of their appointment.

Example:

Research Assistants appointed on a 1/2 C-Base appointment would accrue 8 hours of vacation and 6 hours of sick leave per month. Using one day of vacation would subtract 4 hours and one day of sick leave would subtract 4 hours from your balance. In the same manner, Teaching Assistants on 1/2 C-Base appointment would accrue 6 hours of sick leave per month. Using one day of sick leave would subtract 4 hours from your balance.

All leaves/absences must be reported to the departmental office in 2182 Vet Med and approved by the student's major professor.

Insurance

Health Insurance Plan – Graduate assistants with an appointment of one quarter time or more receive self only health insurance coverage as a benefit of employment, **enrollment in the self only health insurance plan is automatic** and the cost is paid for by your department.

Dental Insurance Plan – Graduate assistants with an appointment of one quarter time or more are eligible for the dental insurance plan which is partially subsidized by the university and the employee premium will be deducted from the GA’s paycheck.

Dependents - Graduate assistants may also enroll their lawful spouse or domestic partner, and unmarried dependent children under age 26. A portion of the monthly premium will be deducted from the graduate assistant’s paycheck when adding coverage for dependents. Dependents must be added within 30 days of your appointment date or with a qualifying event.

Note: Once you and your dependents are added to the plan, you will be required to remain on the plan until the end of the policy year or until your appointment ends.

For plan specifics, costs, open enrollment dates and benefits details for the health and dental insurance plans, please see the Human Resources Student & Scholar Insurance Program website at <https://sship.hr.iastate.edu/>.

Maternity and Paternity Leave

The departmental guidelines are essentially those of the University. Basically, faculty, staff and students are expected to use sick leave or a leave-of-absence for the purpose of maternity or paternity leave. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) may apply in certain circumstances; consult the ISU Office Procedure Guide. All leaves/absences should be arranged with the major professor and the Chair.

Holidays

All employees, regardless of appointment base, are not required to be on duty during official university holidays, which include New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas, and one additional day each year determined by the President and ISU Administration. When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the Friday preceding will be declared the holiday. When any holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be declared a holiday.

Guidance for New Students

Registration

All students who attend classes at ISU must register and pay assessed tuition and fees. The ISU Office of the Registrar’s website at <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/> is the official source of information about registration for all students at ISU. Specific dates for registration are listed:

- on the Registrar’s Web page,
- on the University Calendar,

Registration for summer session should be completed during the spring at the same time as registration for fall semester. All students are encouraged to register for courses on the Web through AccessPlus. Detailed instructions are provided at <https://catalog.iastate.edu/registration/#registrationprocesstext>.

Add/Drop Courses

Students may make most schedule changes through the first five days of class using the AccessPlus registration system. For courses with permission requirements and/or after the first week of classes, a Schedule Change form will be needed. The Schedule Change form can be found in AccessPlus, under the Student tab, within *Registrar Forms* located in the menu on the left column. Procedures for schedule changes vary by the time period of the semester. The effective date of a schedule change is the date when the change is entered into the registration system. For late registration (beginning on the first day of class), a Student Schedule form is required and a late registration fee of \$20.00 will be assessed to student U-Bill.

All Registration information can be found at:

<https://catalog.iastate.edu/registration/#registrationenrollmenttext>

Cy-Ride Bus Passes/Fares

All ISU students ride free by showing their student ID card.

Internet/E-Mail

Every VMPM student must register for an ISU NET-ID - this gives you access to the Internet and an email account. The Department will send information at various times via electronic mail, so it is imperative that you register as soon as possible for an ID. By doing this, you will be assured that you will receive information sent electronically to our students. Net-ID registration webpage: https://iastate.service-now.com/it?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0011352

Keys

Keys will be issued upon request of the major professor and is completed in the departmental office. Processing of key applications may take up to two days. Keys must be returned to the Key Issue Desk, Facilities, Planning and Management Building, prior to graduation. Currently there is a fine of \$30 per lost key.

F-1 and J-1 Credit Requirements

International students with an F-1 or J-1 nonimmigrant visa are required to maintain full time student status. During Fall and Spring semester:

- All students are required to be enrolled for a minimum of 9 credit hours.
- If it is in the student's best interest to be enrolled for less than 9 credits, a 'short course load' form is to be completed. This form is available in the Office of International Students and Scholars (ISSO).
- Complete International student information can be found at:
<https://isso.dso.iastate.edu/new-student-orientation/fall-orientation/graduate-and-transfer-students>

During Summer semester:

- If the first semester that an international student is enrolled at ISU is Summer, the student is required to be enrolled for 5 credits. If it is in the student's best interest to take less than 5 credits, a 'short course load' form is to be completed. This form is available in the OISS.
- If the student has been enrolled during the previous semester, the student is not required to be enrolled during the Summer semester.

Additional Information

All of the University regulations and requirements for graduate students can be found in the Graduate College Handbook and the Graduate College Thesis Manual. They are available on the web through the ISU Graduate College Homepage (<http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu>). ISU Graduate College Forms are available at that website as well.

Other references you may wish to obtain include: General Catalog, Graduate College Catalog, Schedule of Classes, Iowa State University phone/e-mail directory. Most, if not all, of these resources are available on the web at the ISU homepage (<http://www.iastate.edu>).

Program Requirements

M.S. in Veterinary Microbiology (Thesis and Non-Thesis)

Ph.D. in Veterinary Microbiology

Required courses for all MS and PhD students:

GR ST 565 Responsible Conduct of Research Cr. 1

STAT 587 Statistical Methods for Research Workers Cr.4

VMPM 604 Seminar VMPM 604 **OR** Micro 604 **OR** Imbio 604
(1 for MS students and 3 for Ph.D students over the course of their program)

Additionally, MS students are required to take 1 course in 2/4 areas and PhD students are required to take 1 course in 3/4 areas.

Required Areas:

Bacteriology:

VMPM 586 Medical Bacteriology Cr. 4

VMPM 625 Mechanisms of Bacterial Pathogenesis Cr. 3

Micro 552 & 553 & 555 Combined:

552: Bacterial molecular genetics and physiology Cr. 1

553: Pathogenic microorganisms Cr. 1

555: Fungal biology Cr. 1

Virology:

VMPM 587 Animal Virology Cr. 3

VMPM 608 Molecular Virology Cr. 3

Immunology:

VMPM 520 Medical Immunology Cr. 3

OR

VMPM 575 Immunology Cr. 3

Epidemiology:

VMPM 528 Introduction to Epidemiology and Pop Health. Cr. 3

VMPM 527 Applications to Statistics to Pop Studies Cr. 3

VMPM 529 Epidemiological Methods for Population Research Cr. 3

Ph.D. in Veterinary Microbiology (Preventive Medicine Emphasis)

Required Coursework:

VMPM 528	Introduction to Epidemiology and Prev. Med. Cr. 3
VMPM 527	Applications to Statistics to Pop Studies Cr. 3
VMPM 529	Epidemiological Methods for Population Research Cr. 3

A list of additional courses relevant to the VMPM major:

Micro 551	Microbial diversity and phylogeny Cr. 1
Micro 556	Microbial ecology and environmental monitoring Cr. 1
Micro 554	Virology
VMPM 525	Intestinal Microbiology, Cr. 3
PIP 509	Plant Virology Cr. 4
BMS 575	Cell Biology Cr. 3
V Pth 655	Cellular and Molecular Pathology I Cr. 3
BBMB 645	Molecular Endocrinology; Hormones and Growth Factors Cr. 2
STAT 402	Statistical Design and the Analysis of Experiments Cr. 3
STAT 403	Nonparametric Statistical Methods Cr. 2
STAT 407	Methods of Multivariate Analysis Cr. 3
STAT 415	Advanced Statistical Methods for Research Workers Cr. 3
STAT 421	Survey Sampling Techniques Cr. 3

Interdepartmental Programs

The Course requirements for the Interdepartmental Majors can be found at their respective web sites:

[Bioinformatics and Computational Biology \(BCB\)](#)

[Genetics](#)

[Immunobiology](#)

[Microbiology](#)

[Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology \(MCDB\)](#)

[Toxicology](#)

VMPM Graduate Student Annual Report

Continued enrollment in the Graduate College requires that students make satisfactory progress toward their degree. To measure this progress, every VMPM graduate student must submit the Graduate Student Annual Report. The report is a confidential document that will be deposited in the file of the student.

The signed report will be submitted to the DOGE no later than September 15 of each year.

Program of Study Committee

The POS Committee guides the graduate program of the graduate student. Students are encouraged to establish a POS Committee as soon as a major professor is selected. POS Committees should be in place by the end of the third semester of graduate study.

The following requirements have been established by the Graduate College or the Department of VMPM for program of study committee makeup:

M.S.

- POS Committee has at least three members of the Graduate Faculty.
- Graduate students with major professors who are Affiliates must have a co-major professor who holds VMPM regular faculty status.
- One committee member must be from outside the area of study. Affiliates do not qualify as outside members. The outside graduate faculty member provides relevant specialized knowledge or a different perspective helpful to the planning, execution, and reporting of research, deemed important by the committee and/or major.

Ph.D.

- POS Committee has at least five members of the Graduate Faculty.
- The major professor, or one of the co-major professors, must hold graduate faculty status.
- Graduate students with major professors who are Affiliates must have a co-major professor who holds VMPM regular faculty status.
- Three committee members must be members of VMPM graduate faculty holding regular, or Affiliate status.
- Two committee members must be from outside the field of study. Affiliates do not qualify as outside members. The outside graduate faculty member provides relevant specialized knowledge or a different perspective helpful to the planning, execution, and reporting of research, deemed important by the committee and/or major.
- One committee member must not be a member of the graduate program of the student's major.

Program of Study

The student and the POS Committee develop a Program of Study which is a listing of courses required for the individual's degree. Each graduate student should submit a Program of Study form (POSC) within 3 semesters of entering the graduate program. POSC forms are electronic and can be accessed from the Graduate College web page. Each student's POS should be designed to correct deficiencies in academic preparation, allow study of subject matter that most interests the student, and avoid repetition in areas where the student is well-prepared. The POS Committee assures departmental requirements are met before signing the POS form.

Graduate faculty members are encouraged to establish the POS course work for the student at the first meeting of the POS Committee. It is recommended that the student and major professor discuss appropriate course work prior to the first formal committee meeting. This should be done using the POSC worksheet which can then be discussed by the full committee at the first meeting. The electronic POSC form should not be submitted until after the first committee meeting. Written research proposals formulated early in the student's graduate work are beneficial for timely completion of the degree.

The POSC is routed electronically for approval by committee members, and the DOGE before being submitted to the Graduate College. There the program of study is reviewed by the Graduate College and is submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval.

Recommendations for modifications to the program of study for a master's or Ph.D. degree must have the approval of the student, major professor, all committee members, and the program's DOGE before approval by the Graduate College is sought. Modifications to the POS can be made on the online POSC form available in the Student tab in AccessPlus. A change of degree requires a new POSC form.

Program of Study Committee and Program of Study Time Table

Before the 2nd semester:	Form POS Committee
Before the 3rd semester:	Develop Program of Study
Before the end of the 3rd semester:	Submit POSC form
Before the end of the 6 th semester:	Take preliminary exam

Graduate Credits Required

Masters of Science with Thesis

At least 30 credits of acceptable graduate work must be completed, not less than 22 of which must be earned from ISU. Any transfer of credits from another institution must be recommended in the Program of Study by the POS Committee. Graduate credit is approved for transfer only if a grade of "B" or better has been earned.

Masters of Science without Thesis

A Masters without Thesis is offered by Veterinary Microbiology. This requires satisfactory completion of 35 credit hours of acceptable work (not including research) including a creative component of 5 credits. At least 30 credits must consist of didactic courses.

Doctor of Philosophy

A minimum of 72 graduate credits must be earned for a Ph.D. At least 36 credits, including all dissertation research, must be earned under the supervision of the student's Program of Study Committee. At least 24 of these credits must be earned during two consecutive semesters or during a continuous period including two semesters and a summer session while in residence at the University. (This requirement does not apply to doctoral students who are employed more than half time). A Program of Study Committee may recommend transfer of Master's degree research credits earned at another institution toward partial fulfillment of Ph.D. requirements at ISU. To avoid overspecialization, a significant body of pertinent coursework must be taken outside of the major field. Twelve hours of applicable graduate credit is required by the student's POS Committee.

Preliminary Examinations

A written and oral examination will be given by the POS Committee. Successful completion of written and oral preliminary examinations results in admission to candidacy by the Graduate College.

All the steps mandated by the University must be fulfilled. All members of the University faculty are free to attend preliminary and final examinations. The basic formats of these examinations are as follows:

Preliminary Examination

A date should be set for the written portion of the examination that is at least two weeks prior to the oral examination. The written exam can consist entirely of questions submitted by the POS committee members. The major professor is responsible for requesting the questions. In this type of exam, the major professor or a faculty member designated by the major professor administers the examination. The POS Committee members then grade the written examination. If the examination is deemed acceptable, the oral portion of the preliminary examination can proceed. If the performance on the written examination is questionable, the committee may allow the oral examination to proceed. If the performance on the written examination is sufficiently poor, the POS Committee should meet and report a failing result.

The oral portion of the preliminary examination may include a short presentation of the student's research results to date, followed by in-depth questioning by members of the POS Committee. The following outcomes are possible:

1. The student passes the exam and is admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.
2. The student is given a conditional pass for the exam and must make up specified deficiencies within a prescribed time. It is the responsibility of the student and the POS Committee to see that the conditions to be met are clearly understood by all parties. The student may continue his/her studies, but must meet other conditions specified by the POS committee on the "Report of Preliminary Examination" form under "Special conditions" before being recommended for candidacy. The conditional pass is intended for students that have identifiable and limited deficiencies (e.g. they may be weak in one subject area but strong in all others). The conditional pass should be used sparingly and is not a substitute for the designation of failing performance. These conditions will remain in effect until the Graduate College is given written notification by the major professor.
3. The student fails the examination, but it given opportunity to repeat the examination six months after the first attempt. An explanatory letter must accompany the report form. A specific course of action should be outlined to correct deficiencies. This course of action should be signed by both the student and the major professor. A written copy of the proposed course of action should be sent to the DOGE. A copy of this course of action should also be attached to the report form and submitted to the Graduate College. The student fails and is not permitted to continue to work toward a Ph.D. degree at ISU. An explanatory letter must accompany the report form.

Example of Proposal Style of Preliminary Exam

The written exam can also be in the form of a grant proposal. This can take on several different formats; the student should consult with his/her major professor to determine the format of the written exam. An example of the format of this type of exam is given below.

The primary purpose of this format of preliminary examination is to help train students to function as successful scientists and to help in the evaluation of their academic progress. During the examination, the student will have an opportunity to put together ideas and hypotheses in a selected field, to express these ideas in writing and to defend them orally. The student should expect and appreciate sharp criticism of his/her research proposal and should accept the challenge and confrontation of the exams as valuable aspects of his/her learning experience and preparation as a research scientist and academician.

In order to pass this exam, the student must:

1. Assure the POS committee that he/she is able to:
 1. Envision and formulate a specific problem (hypothesis and experiments, not an approach nor a long-term research problem);
 2. Express a research problem concisely in writing; and
 3. Present and defend these ideas orally in an effective manner
2. Assure the sufficiency of background information. Demonstrated areas of deficiency in the background of the student may be filled in by any of several means (courses, examinations, tutorials, etc.).

Procedural Guidelines and Schedule

1. The student will propose several possible research objectives for a proposal and discuss these with the major professor. The topic may be laterally related to the students' dissertation research but it not cannot be a recapitulation of the student's research topic.
2. The student will then outline their proposal objectives and a brief description of each aim in an abstract format and send this to their committee members for approval. The student must prepare the abstract (and proposition) on an independent basis without prior editorial assistance or other direct help in its preparation. The student's best possible effort must be represented as it will be seen by the examining committee and placed on record without modification.
3. The major professor will consult with the POS committee and determine as expeditiously as possible (one or two days) whether the abstract meets all of the stated requirements (see below). The student will then be notified of the decision. If the abstract is acceptable, the student and major professor will decide on a suitable date for completion of the completed proposition. Usually the student will have three to four weeks to submit the completed proposition. It should not exceed 2000 words and should contain an introductory statement indicating the pertinent background information justifying the choice of the problem, the original hypothesis to be tested, the experimental approach in testing the hypothesis, a critical evaluation of the possible results, and a selected bibliography.
4. The oral examination will consist of a 15-20 minute presentation by the student to clear up any deficiencies not covered by the written proposition, and several rounds of questioning

Criteria for Evaluating Proposition:

A proposition will be rejected, preferably in the abstract state, if the following criteria are not met or cannot be met with moderate revision. Inadequacy in any one area will be sufficient grounds for rejection of a proposition. Actual passing or failing of the examination will be determined after the oral exam and will be based on the defense of the proposition and the student's actual performance during the oral examination.

The Abstract should:

1. Be a logical, understandable, clear and concise statement of the problem, hypothesis, and experiments (i.e., be in acceptable scientific prose and free from jargon and excessive abbreviations);
2. State a significant* and original† problem;
3. State a testable hypothesis§; and
4. Include relevant experiments, which test the hypothesis as stated.

It should be noted that at this stage in the examination procedure a student may not have developed the best approach to test the hypothesis. The student should be given some degree of

latitude to discover and formulate more refined and/or better ways of testing the hypothesis during the writing of the proposition and even during the last week when preparing for the oral exam. Thus, neither the abstract nor proposition should be rejected solely on the basis of an inadequate experimental approach and the POS committee should refrain from indicating these deficiencies to the student.

* "Significant" implies that the problem chosen for investigation would appreciably advance knowledge in a relevant area of research. In other words, the planned study should not be a small step forward, a trivial "mop up" of existing phenomenology, a repetition of experiments done with one organism in another, etc.

† "original" implies that the problem proposed for study has not been adequately studied before or the proposed hypothesis has not been formulated before or the proposed experimental approach uses methodologies and/or systems that have not previously been used to study the problem. The problem proposed for study should not be closely related or duplicative of any research endeavor currently being investigated at ISU.

§ "Testable" implies that methods and procedures needed for the research can be worked out and the appropriate experiments conducted in a one- to two-year period of time; this does not mean that all methods and/or procedures be already worked out at the time the proposition is written. A "hypothesis" is a positive statement of assumption whereas a "null hypothesis" is a negative statement of assumption. Therefore, a "look-see", "either-or" or "whether if" investigation does not contain a hypothesis. Clearly, the testability of the hypothesis requires that the proposed experiments be able to differentiate between the correctness or incorrectness of the hypothesis and to reveal the correctness of alternative hypotheses that could have been proposed based on existing knowledge at the time the proposition is written.

The Proposition

Should:

1. Conform to the criteria outlined for the abstract;
2. Expand the concepts presented in the abstract and present experiments in greater detail (with references);
3. Elaborate possible outcomes of the experiments and conclusions with respect to the hypothesis;
4. Indicate the significance of the possible outcome with respect to new problems and hypotheses; and
5. Include an accurate bibliography with titles of articles.

Thesis & Dissertation requirements

The Graduate College Thesis checklist is available at <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/current/thesis/checklist/>

It is the responsibility of the student and major professor to ensure that the thesis or dissertation is ready for critical evaluation. Copies of the thesis or dissertation must be submitted to the members of the POS Committee at least two weeks before the final oral examination.

Master's Thesis

A Master's thesis is a scholarly composition that demonstrates the ability of the author to do independent and creative work. It explores in some depth a problem or issue related to the major field of study. Although considerable variations in format and style are acceptable, precise expression, logical construction and meticulous attention to detail are essential. A thesis is required in all areas in which a Master's degree is awarded, except for the non-thesis degree.

Doctoral Dissertation

A doctoral dissertation must demonstrate conclusively the ability of the author to conceive, design, conduct and interpret independent, original and creative research. It must attempt to describe significant original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and must demonstrate the ability to organize, analyze and interpret data. In most instances, a dissertation includes a statement of purpose, a review of pertinent literature, a presentation of methodology and results obtained, and a critical interpretation of conclusions in relation to the findings of others. When appropriate, it involves a defense of objectives, design and analytical procedures. Dissertation research should be worthy of publication and should, ideally, appear in appropriate professional journals of quality or in book form.

Writing and Editing Responsibility

Since satisfactory completion of the thesis or dissertation can constitute one of the most gratifying experiences in graduate study, the document should reflect the highest standards of scholarship, serving as a measure of quality for the student, major professor and the department.

Responsibility for writing and editing the thesis or dissertation rests with the student, under the supervision of the major professor. The Graduate College does not permit joint authorship of theses or dissertations. It is the responsibility of the professor in charge of a candidate's program to supervise the preparation of preliminary and final drafts of the thesis or dissertation, so as to assure the highest level of quality when the student presents the thesis or dissertation to the POS Committee for final approval.

Finishing up

Application for Graduation

Application for graduation should be made by the end of the third week of the semester in which the student expects to receive the degree. To apply for graduation, the student is required to log into their AccessPlus account and submit the electronic Application for Graduation form. Before submitting this form, a student must have submitted and had approved by the Graduate College the electronic Program of Study and Committee (POSC) form. Also the student must have been fully admitted to a program and met the Graduate English requirement (for nonnative English speakers). Graduation will be delayed if the filing deadline for the “Application for Graduation” form is not met. If it becomes apparent that a student cannot graduate during the indicated term, they should withdraw the application through AccessPlus. The student must then submit a new application for the next planned term of graduation. All dissertation/thesis students will be charged a one-time, nonrefundable fee of \$145 by the Graduate College upon submission of the graduation application. This fee will be billed to each dissertation/thesis student’s university bill to cover dissertation/thesis review, processing, and technical assistance.

Final Oral Examinations

Thesis and non-thesis master’s students and all Ph.D. degree candidates must pass final oral examinations. The final oral examination must be held by the final oral examination deadline date for the semester in which the degree is granted. All coursework in the program of study must either be completed or in progress before the final oral examination can be scheduled. This examination is oral; it may also include a written component if specified by the student’s program of study (POS) committee.

Graduate students must register at Iowa State University for a minimum of one credit, or Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed, during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken. International students, even those in their final term, must be registered full-time or previously approved by the International Students and Scholars (ISS) to reduce their course load.

The following conditions must be met before the “Request for Final Oral Examination” form is submitted to the Graduate College:

- full admission status,
- electronic Program of Study and Committee (POSC) form with all coursework completed or in progress, approved by the Graduate College no later than the semester before the final oral examination,
- English requirement met (for nonnative English speakers),
- not on probation,
- time limit not exceeded for courses used on a POSC
- approved “Report of Preliminary Oral Examination” form (for Ph.D. candidates only),
- “Application for Graduation” form submitted,
- registered for term in which final oral examination is taken for a minimum of one credit or for Examination Only (GR ST 681B) if no course work is needed,

- overall G.P.A. above 3.00 reflecting all courses listed on the graduate transcript whether undergraduate or graduate level and regardless if listed on the POSC form or not, or petition filed and approved stating extenuating circumstances,
- a minimum of six months between the preliminary oral and final oral examinations (for Ph.D. candidates only).

The master's final oral examination is conducted after the thesis is finished, if a thesis is required. The thesis and nonthesis final oral examinations are comprehensive, oral, and may include written sections. The Ph.D. final oral examination, conducted after the dissertation is finished, is oral and often, but not always, limited to a defense of the dissertation. To receive the degree at the end of a given semester, the student must hold the final oral examination before the final oral examination deadline for the semester.

The candidate is responsible for initiating the "Request for Final Oral Examination" form, which must be submitted to the Graduate College at least **three** weeks before the examination.

Reporting Final Oral Examination Results

The "Report of the Final Oral Examination" form must be submitted to the Graduate College immediately after the examination. On this form the POS committee indicates whether the student

- has passed the examination and may be granted the degree sought,
- must meet some conditions before the degree may be granted. These conditions are specified on the report form and will remain in effect until the major professor and/or committee, if specified, submits the [Preliminary or Final Oral Exam Conditions Met](#) form to the Graduate College. This form notifies the Graduate College that conditions have been satisfied and the degree may be granted,
- has not passed but the exam may be retaken. Two months must elapse before the exam may be retaken (a written explanation should be provided with the report form), or
- has not passed and the exam may not be retaken at a future date. The degree is denied (a written explanation should be provided with the report form).

In a final oral examination, if one member of the committee votes not to pass the candidate, each member of the committee must forward to the Dean of the Graduate College in writing a justification for their vote. If more than one member of the committee votes not to pass the student, the candidate does not pass the examination.

Exit Survey

All graduating students will receive an exit survey from the DOGE during the semester of graduation.

Academic Standards

Probation policy

If a graduate student does not maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average on all course work taken, exclusive of research credit, the student is placed on academic probation by the Graduate Dean. Grades earned by graduate students in undergraduate courses are included in the calculation of the grade point average. Academic probation judgments are made on the basis of grades in course work only; research grades are excluded.

While on academic probation, a student cannot be admitted to candidacy for a degree and usually cannot be appointed to an assistantship. The Graduate College places a hold on future registration to ensure that registration does not take place without a review by the Department. Before the student registers for the next term, it is necessary for the Department to review his or her record and recommend whether the Graduate College should continue to permit registration.

Before graduation is approved, the student must complete all courses listed on the Program of Study with a minimum of "C" and have a 3.0 average, unless an exception is recommended by the student's committee and approved by the Graduate Dean.

In order to remain eligible to receive financial aid from student aid programs, a student must meet both qualitative and quantitative academic standards. Qualitative standards refer to minimum expectations of academic performance in course work; quantitative standards refer to limits on the number of semesters in which enrollment is permitted in combination with a minimum number of credit hours to be earned per year. The Student Financial Aid Office can provide more details.

Dismissal Policy

Students may be dismissed from the VMPM graduate programs, that is, removed from the degree program and not permitted to register as a VMPM graduate student. Dismissal may occur for the any of the following reasons:

1. Lack of a major professor.

Because graduate degrees in VMPM are centered about a mentored research project, it is impossible to complete the degree without a research mentor (major professor). To maintain good standing and earn a degree in VMPM, a student must have a VMPM faculty member serving as major professor.

Occasionally, a faculty member who has previously agreed to serve as a major professor becomes unable or unwilling to serve. A faculty member who wishes to terminate service as major professor for a VMPM student may do so by notifying the student, the DOGE and the VMPM Chair in writing. A student who has lost his/her major professor has up to three months (after the date the Chair was notified) to identify another VMPM faculty member willing to serve. It is the responsibility of the first faculty member to continue to support the student during this time in order to provide continuity of support. The VMPM DOGE or Chair will help the student search for a new major professor, if the student desires.

2. Failure to progress satisfactorily in their degree program and/or maintain their academic standing.

A student's POS committee, or if the student has no POS committee, the student's major professor, temporary advisor or a member of the VMPPM Graduate Programs Committee have the right to recommend dismissal of any student who, in their view, is failing to progress satisfactorily in his/her degree program, or who has failed to maintain their academic standing, as defined by the Iowa State University Graduate College Handbook. In addition, recommendations for dismissal can be made based upon a lack of research progress or a lack of aptitude. Recommendations for dismissal are made by sending a memo to the VMPPM Chair and a copy to the DOGE.

3. Academic dishonesty

The proper conduct of science requires the highest standards of personal integrity. Because of this, the University and VMPPM consider dishonesty in the classroom or in the conduct of research to be a serious offense. Students accused of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the University Catalog and the Faculty Handbook. Possible punishments can include dismissal from the program and expulsion from the University, depending upon on the severity of the offense.

Dismissal Procedures

Procedures for dismissal are as described in the Iowa State University Graduate College Handbook. It is the responsibility of the VMPPM DOGE to discuss the situation with the student, as well as their POS Committee, Major Professor, Temporary Advisor, and/or Supervisory Committee, in an attempt to find a satisfactory resolution. This discussion constitutes the informal conference as described in the Graduate College Handbook. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, either party may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for a decision. The student may appeal the decision of the Associate Dean, as described in the Graduate College Handbook.

Graduate Student Organizations

Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) is an elected governing body through which graduate and professional students express their concern for the welfare of graduate and professional students at Iowa State, develop and disseminate ideas for the improvement of graduate and professional education, and contribute to the formation of relevant University policies. Founded in 1970, it is the recognized independent representative body of graduate students at ISU.

CVMAGS

We are the graduate student organization that serves the College of Veterinary Medicine. The CVMAGS has several different departments and we recognize that there is no such organization which brings

together all students from these departments. We aim to provide a place where all students of CVM can intermingle, exchange ideas, network, and express their concerns that relate to not just their departments, but to CVM as a whole. We also participate in various outreach and volunteer events each throughout the year in the Ames area.

M.G.S.O. (Veterinary Microbiology Graduate Student Organization)

The M.G.S.O. is an academically oriented organization whose main purpose is to unite fellow graduate students pursuing similar career goals in areas of microbiology. It is an active forum for the discussion of microbiology related topics and actively sponsors guest speakers. Students are located at NADC, NVSL, NSTL, Animal Science, Poultry Science, Science I and the Veterinary Medicine Complex.

I.G.S.O. (Immunobiology Graduate Student Organization)

The purpose of the I.G.S.O. is to promote interest in the field of immunology and to provide a means for the widely scattered members of the Immunobiology Program to discuss research, exchange ideas, and to interact in academic as well as non-academic settings. Students are located at NADC, NVSL, Animal Science, Poultry Science, Science I and the Veterinary Medicine Complex.

List of Forms and Due Dates

Name of form	Due by
Annual report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 15 each year
POSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of 3rd semester
Request for preliminary oral exam (PhD only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No later than 2 weeks prior to exam. POS form must have been filed the semester before the prelim.
Report of the preliminary oral exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filed immediately after exam
Application for graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st week of the semester that graduation is planned. (Must be re-submitted if you do not graduate as scheduled).
Request for final oral exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No later than 3 weeks before the scheduled exam. You must be registered for at least 2 credits the semester of the exam
Report of the final oral exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filed immediately after exam
Graduate student approval form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the final exam is passed in the term you plan to graduate
Additional forms some students may need to file	
Concurrent enrollment for graduate / DVM degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With application for graduate study
Transfer of courses for concurrent graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going
Summer graduates request to attend spring or fall commencement ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By cancellation date for spring or fall term