

Veterinary Microbiology and Preventive Medicine
Graduate Student Manual

November, 2024



This document establishes policies and procedures for the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Preventive Medicine. The document is supplementary to and subordinate to all rules and policies of the Graduate College. Those policies, rules and regulations are included here: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook>. Any change in those rules, policies or regulations made subsequent to adoption of this document automatically modifies or rescinds any portion of the latter which is in conflict.

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Admission Requirements

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

- All application materials for graduate study are submitted via the online application: <https://www.iastate.edu/admission-and-aid/apply>
- The transcript record must show a strong background in the biological sciences; preferably including biochemistry, biology, calculus, chemistry, genetics, immunology, microbiology, physics and physiology. A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale, or equivalent, in undergraduate work or in previous graduate work is expected. The GPA may also be met through one of the following:
 - Undergraduate degree with GPA greater than 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale)
 - Completed 9 to 14 credits of graduate coursework with grade B or better in all courses
 - Completed 15 or more credits of graduate coursework with GPA above 3.00 and no F grades
- Three letters of recommendation are required.
- Autobiographical statement describing research interests and future plans must be written by the student. (Statement of Purpose = SOP; 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.
- The Graduate Records Examination (GRE) general aptitude test is not required. 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.
- 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 Academic Plans (AP) 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.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must submit a valid, official test report from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or from an approved alternative examination. Applicants who otherwise would need to submit scores are exempt if they hold baccalaureate or higher degrees from countries where the only official language is English. Proficiency in English equivalent TOEFL score of at least 550 on the paper-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test. 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.

Concurrent Degree Students

Students in the professional school (College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM DVM program) may also enroll in graduate studies in the MS or PhD 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 Academic Plans (AP) 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 Academic Plans (AP), 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 5860 Medical Bacteriology; VMPPM 5860L Medical Bacteriology Laboratory; VMPPM 5870 Animal Virology; VPth 5420 General Pathology; VPth 5760 Veterinary Parasitology; and VDPAM 4260 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 [Internal Transfer of Courses Request](https://iastate.app.box.com/v/grad-int-course-trans). <https://iastate.app.box.com/v/grad-int-course-trans>
If a student does not hold a BS or BA 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: <https://www.iastate.edu/admission-and-aid/apply>

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 75% 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 MS should be completed within two to three years and a PhD 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

Assistantship appointments are defined in Chapter 3 of the Graduate College Handbook (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook>). For half-time appointments, the university guideline is that 20 hours per week should be spent on assistantship duties. It is understood that these hours include only duties necessary for completion of research and/or teaching responsibilities, excluding research time leading to a thesis or dissertation.

Supervisors are encouraged to provide written performance reviews for graduate research assistants on a regular basis and in a fair, transparent, and confidential manner, especially when requested by the graduate student. Results of performance reviews should be shared with the graduate student, who should be given the opportunity and guidance to redress claims and/or remedy deficiencies in performance of assistantship duties.

Graduate assistants should be allowed to attend seminars, workshops, and conferences to support their professional development unless participation will interfere with meeting expectations related to assistantships.

Teaching responsibilities are generally determined by the teaching department. Students receiving Departmental TAs will be expected to take part in TA orientations, workshops and testing set up by the University and that Department. VMPM does not have TA assistantships within the VMPM coursework.

Research responsibilities are determined by the major professor in consultation with the Academic Plans Committee (APC). There are no specific departmental research responsibilities.

Benefits

Benefits in addition to stipend support accrue to the graduate assistant during the appointment period. A full explanation of these benefits appears in the Policy Library <https://www.policy.iastate.edu/>; the following shortened description omits references to forms and approvals. Graduate Assistants are responsible for making sure they review and understand the benefit information.

Benefit information is also available from the **Student & Scholar Health Insurance Program**. <https://sship.hr.iastate.edu/graduate-assistants>

Health Insurance Plan

Graduate assistants with an appointment of one quarter time or more for at least 3 months of the fall or spring terms receive self-only health insurance coverage as a benefit for the term at no cost.

Dental Insurance Plan

Graduate assistants with an appointment of one-quarter time or more for at least 3 months of the fall or spring term are eligible for the dental insurance plan which is partially subsidized by the university and the monthly premium will be deducted from the graduate assistant'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 refer to the **Student & Scholar Health Insurance Program**.

PLEASE NOTE: All insurance premiums will be deducted from your pay.

Since many graduate assistants do not receive summer pay, an extra deduction will be taken in March and April to pay for the June and July insurance.

Leave

Arrangement for a leave of absence is made between the graduate assistant and that assistant's supervisor adhering to all grant and other funding source restrictions. When a graduate assistant needs to be absent for personal reasons or illness, the supervisor should understand and accommodate that need. At the same time, the graduate assistant should attempt to plan personal leave so that it does not interfere with, or cause neglect of, the duties associated with their appointment. Supervisors of graduate assistants are responsible for ensuring that their assistants do not exceed reasonable limits for leave.

It is recommended for the assistant and supervisor to discuss leave expectations within their first meeting. When a conflict arises between the graduate assistant and that assistant's supervisor regarding leave of absence use, refer to Chapter 8 to review conflict resolution process.

Resident Tuition

Graduate assistants with an appointment of 1/4-time or more for at least 3 months of the fall or spring terms are assessed full-time, resident tuition. Graduate assistants with an appointment of 1/4-time or more for at least 4 weeks of the summer term are assessed resident tuition at the per credit rate with a maximum assessment of 5 credits.

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

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.

Cy-Ride Bus Passes/Fares

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

NetID/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 email, 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 and door access

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. Door access will require your UID # and will be handled in the VMPPM main office.

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>).

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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 5650 Responsible Conduct of Research Cr. 1

STAT 5101 Statistical Methods for Data Analysis Cr.4

VMPM 6040 Seminar VMPM 6040 **OR** Micro 6040 **OR** Imbio 6040
(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 5860 Medical Bacteriology Cr. 4

VMPM 6250 Mechanisms of Bacterial Pathogenesis Cr. 3

Micro 5520 & 5530 & 5550 Combined:

5520: Bacterial molecular genetics and physiology Cr. 1

5530: Pathogenic microorganisms Cr. 1

5550: Fungal biology Cr. 1

Virology:

VMPM 5870 Animal Virology Cr. 3

VMPM 6080 Molecular Virology Cr. 3

Immunology:

VMPM 5200 Medical Immunology Cr. 3

OR

VMPM 5750 Immunology Cr. 3

Epidemiology:

VMPM 5280 Introduction to Epidemiology and Pop Health. Cr. 3

VMPM 5270 Applications to Statistics to Pop Studies Cr. 3

VMPM 5290 Epidemiological Methods for Population Research Cr. 3

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

Required Coursework:

VMPM 5280	Introduction to Epidemiology and Prev. Med. Cr. 3
VMPM 5270	Applications to Statistics to Pop Studies Cr. 3
VMPM 5290	Epidemiological Methods for Population Research Cr. 3

A list of additional courses relevant to the VMPM major:

Micro 5510	Microbial diversity and phylogeny Cr. 1
Micro 5560	Microbial ecology and environmental monitoring Cr. 1
Micro 5540	Virology
VMPM 5250	Intestinal Microbiology, Cr. 3
PIP 5090	Plant Virology Cr. 4
BMS 5750	Cell Biology Cr. 3
V Pth 6550	Cellular and Molecular Pathology I Cr. 3
BBMB 6450	Molecular Endocrinology; Hormones and Growth Factors Cr. 2
STAT 4020	Statistical Design and the Analysis of Experiments Cr. 3
STAT 4030	Nonparametric Statistical Methods Cr. 2
STAT 4070	Methods of Multivariate Analysis Cr. 3
STAT 4150	Advanced Statistical Methods for Research Workers Cr. 3
STAT 4210	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

Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology (MCDB)

Toxicology

Enrollment, Registration, Tuition and Fees

Registration processes are administered through the Office of the Registrar. Policies regarding tuition, fees, and residency should be directed to the Registrar.

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 and 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 through

Workday. https://iastate.service-now.com/esc?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0022857

During the academic year, graduate students not on assistantship must be registered for a minimum of nine credits to be considered full-time students, or five credits to be considered half-time students. Students on an assistantship appointment during the academic year are considered full-time regardless of credit load.

Registration in credit courses is limited to a maximum of 15 credits per semester (10 credits for summer session) for graduate students, per Board of Regents.

The credit-hour limits for graduate students may be exceeded only in exceptional circumstances with the written recommendation of the major professor. For more information on registration requirements for those students on assistantship appointments see Graduate Students on Assistantships later in this document.

A graduate student is required to be registered during the following:

- Preliminary and final oral examinations
- Assistantships that are more than 5 class days
- Every fall and spring between the preliminary oral exam and final oral exam

Doctoral students must register during the term of the preliminary oral examination, and all graduate students must register during the term of the final oral examination for a minimum of one credit or for Examination Only (GR ST 6810B) if no course work is needed. Examination Only (GR ST 6810B) requires payment for one credit hour tuition and fees and is not allowed on the Academic Plan (AP).

If students take the final oral examination between terms (including the first day of classes), registration can be either for the term before or the term after the examination. A student who fails to register as specified above must complete the appropriate registrations before the Graduate Student Approval Request is signed by the Graduate College.

Graduate students who are not required to take a final oral examination should complete all required coursework on the AP before or during the term of graduation. Any transfer credits must be completed the term before the graduation term and follow transfer course rules outlined in the Graduate College Handbook. (<https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook/chapter3-financial?id=3#3.2>).

Doctoral students who have completed coursework and passed (full or conditional) the preliminary oral examination are required to register for a minimum of one credit each fall and spring term, regardless of whether university facilities, equipment, or staff time are used in person or in absentia.

Continuous registration may be maintained by taking

- 1) a minimum of one credit of required and/or elective courses or research hours to complete the Academic Plan or
- 2) Doctoral Continuous Registration (GR ST 6810A), requires a one credit hour tuition and fees payment and is not allowed on the Academic Plan (AP).

Doctoral continuous registration is required fall and spring terms if not on an assistantship.

Academic Plans Committee (APC)

The AP Committee guides the graduate program of the graduate student. Students are encouraged to establish an AP Committee as soon as a major professor is selected. AP 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 VMPPM for Academic Plans (APs) committee makeup:

M.S.

- AP 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 VMPPM 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.

- AP 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 VMPPM regular faculty status.
- Three committee members must be members of VMPPM 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.

Additional information regarding Academic Plan Committees can be found in the Graduate College Student Handbook: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/book/export/html/215>

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Academic Plans (APs)

The student and the major professor develop the Academic Plan (AP) with the consultation and approval of their Academic Plan Committee (APC). The AP should be submitted as early as possible for approval. The AP must be approved by the DOGE in Workday at least three calendar months before the preliminary oral examination for doctoral candidates; the three calendar-month timeframe for scheduling a preliminary oral examination begins the day that the DOGE approves the AP. For master's students, the AP must be approved by the DOGE in Workday by the last day of the semester prior to the term of the final oral examination. For students in approved master's programs with no final oral examination, the AP must be approved by the DOGE in Workday no later than the last day of the semester prior to the graduation term. For the AP to be approved in any given term, it must be approved by the DOGE in Workday by the [published deadline](#) for that term. Each student's AP 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 APC assures that program requirements are met before approving the AP.

Changes on the Academic Plan (AP)

Recommendations for modifications to the Academic Plan (AP) for a master's or doctoral degree must have the approval of the student, the Graduate College, the major professor, all committee members, and the program's DOGE. **Modifications to the AP must be made in Workday.** A change of degree requires a new Academic Plan.

Courses Taken as an ISU Undergraduate

Courses at the 4000 and 5000 levels listed in the ISU Catalog may be used in the Academic Plan (AP) even though they were taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU.

- Up to 9 credits earned as an ISU undergraduate may be used to meet the requirements of the graduate degree.
- These credits must be approved by the student's APC and DOGE. Up to 6 of these credits may be at the 4000 level.

- Up to 6 of these credits could have been used to meet the undergraduate degree requirements.
- Grades of B or better are required in the courses that led to these credits.
- These credits must have been earned when the student was classified as an undergraduate, not as a nondegree undergraduate (special) student.

Graduate programs may accept 3000-level courses taken by the student as an undergraduate at ISU to meet background deficiencies or to demonstrate proficiencies in subject matter necessary for the degree. These courses are not eligible for inclusion on the AP but may be articulated for transfer internally in the program. The student would be required to meet the minimum number of credits required for the degree without the inclusion of these undergraduate-level courses.

Expired Courses

The age of a course used on an Academic Plan (AP) is defined as the time between the year the credits were earned and the year that the student graduates.

A course is considered expired when its age is greater than the time limit for the master's or doctoral program. The Graduate College Time-to-Degree Limit is seven years. Graduate programs may establish more restrictive policies for both time-to-degree limits and expired course limits.

Typically, APs include only age-compliant course credits, no older than seven years. Occasionally, a student and their APC members may believe expired credits should be counted toward degree requirements. Recognizing the wide diversity of graduate programs at Iowa State University, and the fact that students embark on graduate study under many different circumstances and with varying degrees of prior experience and/or education, the Graduate College offers the following procedure for the review of expired courses for possible inclusion on an AP:

- Master's degree students may use any number of credits up to seven years old and up to six credits that were taken between eight and ten years prior to the graduating semester at the discretion of the APC and the DOGE. An **Expired Course Petition** must be completed as part of the AP submission process to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year. Master's students may not use more than six credits of courses on the AP that are eight to ten years old or any credits that are 11 or more years old without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.
- MFA students may use any number of credits up to ten years old and up to 24 credits that 11 years old or more at the discretion of their APC and the DOGE, so long as no more than 10 of those credits are more than 16 years old. An **Expired Course Petition** must be completed to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year as part of the AP. Credits more than 16 years old must have been earned in the completion of a previous graduate degree. Coursework that does not meet these stipulations may not be used without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.

- Doctoral students may use any number of credits up to ten years old and up to 36 credits that are 11 years old or more at the discretion of their APC and the DOGE, so long as no more than 12 of those credits are more than 16 years old. An **Expired Course Petition** must be completed as part of the AP submission process to justify the use of these credits beyond their expiration year. Credits more than 16 years old must have been earned in the completion of a previous graduate degree. Coursework that does not meet these stipulations may not be used without documented extenuating circumstances and petition to the Graduate College.

Any expired coursework (coursework more than seven years old) to be used on an AP must be requested through an **Expired Course Petition** as part of the Academic Plan submission process. The petition will include:

- a justification for each course explaining why it is still relevant
- an assurance that the student has kept current with the information covered in the expired course(s)
- an explanation of how the student will be evaluated on expired course material. Evaluation could include a written examination (a preliminary, qualifying, or comprehensive examination), evidence of satisfactory performance in course(s) for which the expired course(s) are prerequisites, or the completion of an audit in one or more current courses in the areas encompassed by the expired course(s). The object should be to determine whether the material learned in those courses is still timely and adequate. The evaluation method should be specified by the committee at the time the AP is submitted.

If the Graduate College approves the use of expired courses, it does so based in part on the student's year of expected graduation (ECD). If a student does not graduate by the term indicated on the AP, the approved use of expired courses is void, and a new petition must be submitted for approval along with a modified AP. Students and faculty advisers should plan in advance for the possibility that additional courses will be required due to delays in graduation.

Academic Plans (APs) Committee and Academic Plans (APs) Time Table

Before the 2nd semester:	Form Academic Plan Committee
Before the 3rd semester:	Develop Academic Plans (APs)
Before the end of the 3rd semester:	Submit POSC form
Before the end of the 6 th semester:	Take preliminary exam

Additional information regarding Academic Plans can be found in the Graduate College Student Handbook: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/book/export/html/215>

VMPM Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) 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 IDP. The report is a confidential document that will be deposited in the file of the student record.

An individual development plan (IDP) is a tailor-made approach for evaluating your professional objectives and crafting a roadmap to achieve them. This process encourages self-reflection on long-term career goals, assesses current competencies, and outlines concrete steps to reach those goals. Iowa State University's IDP form is comprised of a self-assessment of trainee current skills and interests, a summary of goals for the upcoming year based on the self-assessment, and an action plan to shape the skillset, created in conjunction, **grad student & advisor**. Instructions and IDPs are attached.

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

Graduate Credits Requirements

Masters of Science with Thesis

The academic value of each course is stated in semester credits. Each credit is normally earned by attending one 50-minute lecture or recitation per week for the entire semester, or by attending a laboratory or studio session for two or three hours per week.”

Master's Degrees

- A minimum of 30 graduate credits is required for all master's programs at ISU.
- At least 22 graduate credits must be earned at ISU
- For the program focus that is considered essential for an advanced degree, approximately two-thirds of the work should be devoted to the major field, but this is not necessarily restricted to one program.
- Any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be added to the Academic Plan and approved by the Academic Plan Committee and Graduate College.
- Graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned.
- A thesis is required in all areas in which a Master's degree is awarded, except for the non-thesis degree.

Doctor of Philosophy

A minimum of 72 graduate credits must be earned for a doctoral degree:

- At least 36 graduate credits, including all dissertation research, must be at ISU.
- A minimum of three research credits must be taken toward the dissertation requirement there is no specific university requirement regarding the number of credits to be taken inside or outside the major/program.
- For the program focus that is considered essential for an advanced degree, approximately two-thirds of the work should be devoted to the major field, but this is not necessarily restricted to one program.
- Any transfer of graduate credits from another institution must be recommended in the Academic Plan and approved by the Academic Plan Committee and Graduate College.
- Graduate credit earned as a graduate student will be approved for transfer only if a B grade or better was earned.

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 AP 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 AP 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 AP 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 AP 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 program completion should be made by the end of the third week of the semester in which the student expects to receive the degree. To apply, the student is required to log into Workday and [Apply for Program Completion](#). Before submitting this request, a student must have submitted and had approved by the Graduate College the Academic Plan and Committee (APC) and the Academic Plan (AP). Students must also have met the Graduate English requirement (for nonnative English speakers). Graduation will be delayed if the filing deadline for program completion is not met.

A fee will be billed to each dissertation/thesis student's university bill to cover dissertation/thesis review, processing, and technical assistance. If it becomes apparent that a student cannot graduate during their intended term, they should cancel their Application for Program Completion in Workday. The student will be refunded the \$145 submission fee. The student must then submit a new application and pay the \$145 fee for the next planned term of graduation.

Final Oral Examinations

Thesis and non-thesis master's students and all doctoral 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 Academic Plan (AP) 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 Academic Plan Committee (APC).

Graduate students must register at Iowa State University for a minimum of one credit, or Examination Only (GR ST 6810B) 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 Office (ISSO) to reduce their course load.

The following conditions must be met before the student submits their **Request for Final Oral Examination** in Workday:

- The student's AP with all coursework completed or in progress must be approved no later than the semester before the final oral examination.
- The student must meet the **English requirement**(for nonnative English speakers).
- The student should not exceed the time-to-degree limit (see Chapter 4).
- The student must have an approved and completed Preliminary Oral Examination (for doctoral candidates only).
- The student must have an **Application for Program Completion**submitted.
- The student must be registered for the term in which final oral examination is taken for a minimum of one credit or for Examination Only (GR ST 6810B) if no course work is needed.
- The student must not be on academic probation. Their overall G.P.A. must be at or above a 3.00. This cumulative GPA reflects all courses listed on the graduate transcript, whether undergraduate or graduate level, and regardless if listed on the AP or not. If the student does not have a 3.00 cumulative GPA, a petition must be filed with and approved by the Graduate College stating extenuating circumstances.
- The student must wait a minimum of six months between taking the preliminary oral and final oral examinations (for doctoral 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 doctoral 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 student degree candidate is responsible for initiating the **Request for Final Oral Examination**, which must be submitted to the Graduate College at least three weeks before the examination. When a final oral examination includes a defense of the dissertation or thesis, the candidate must submit copies of the manuscript to members of their APC at least two weeks

before the examination. A committee member who does not receive the dissertation or thesis at least two weeks before the final oral examination may cancel the examination.

Oral examinations are the primary ways the university assesses learning by graduate students. These examinations also gauge whether students' accomplishments meet expectations associated with earning advanced degrees. Oral examinations must involve the full engagement of all participants simultaneously, and unobstructed communication among participants is essential.

Students and their committees should schedule oral examinations far in advance so that all participants are together on campus for the events whenever possible.

For the final oral examination, the student, in consultation with their major professor(s), may decide on the examination modality (in person, remote, or hybrid). Similar to the preliminary oral examination guidance, the student and major professor(s) should discuss the choice of modality with the committee, and for remote or hybrid meetings, arrange for facilities and equipment to ensure full video and clear communication. Determination of meeting modality must be determined when the student submits the **Final Oral Examination Request**. If the chosen modality is not in person, the student must inform the Graduate College of the modality at the time the request form is submitted. Best practices for remote meetings may be found on the Graduate College website.

The **Report of the Final Oral Examination** must be submitted to the Graduate College immediately after the examination. On this form the APC indicates whether the student has:

1. Passed the examination and may be granted the degree sought
2. Must meet some additional conditions before the degree may be granted
 1. These conditions are specified on the report form and will remain in effect until the major professor and/or committee, if specified, report that the condition are met to the Graduate College. This process notifies the Graduate College that conditions have been satisfied and the degree may be granted,
3. Not passed, but the exam may be retaken
 1. Two months must elapse before the exam may be retaken.
 2. A written explanation should be provided with the report.
4. Not passed and the exam may not be retaken at a future date.
 1. The degree is denied.
 2. A written explanation should be provided with the report.

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.

Reporting Doctoral Preliminary Oral Examination Results

Immediately following the preliminary oral examination, it is the responsibility of the Academic Plan Committee to decide whether the student will be recommended for admission to candidacy and may continue to work toward the doctoral degree. All APC members must be present at the preliminary oral exam and **report the results**. Four options exist:

1. The student passes and the APC recommends to the Graduate College that the student be admitted to candidacy.
2. The student may continue their studies, but must meet other conditions specified by the APC on the **Preliminary Oral Examination Results** under “Conditional Pass” before being recommended for admission to candidacy.
3. The student fails but is given an opportunity to repeat the examination six months after the first attempt. An explanatory letter must accompany the results.
4. The student fails and is not permitted to continue to work toward a doctoral degree at ISU. An explanatory letter must accompany the results.

Exit Survey

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

This document establishes policies and procedures for the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Preventive Medicine. The document is supplementary to and subordinate to all rules and policies of the Graduate College. Those policies, rules and regulations are included here: <https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/handbook>. Any change in those rules, policies or regulations made subsequent to adoption of this document automatically modifies or rescinds any portion of the latter which is in conflict.

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 Academic Plans (APs) 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.

Conflict and Formal Grievance Option

A student who has a dispute or complaint against their major professor should first attempt informal resolution by discussing the matter with the individual involved, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the concerns or complaints relate to a general policy or contractual issue, rather than an individual, the student should bring the matter to the attention of the DOGE and/or Department Chair then the Associate Dean of Research in the College of Vet Med.

If these approaches are not viable options or they are not successful, the student will be encouraged to visit the [Ombuds Office](#). The Ombuds Office is a professional, confidential, independent, and neutral resource available to informally work through work-place challenges. Ombuds Office contact information: (515) 294-0165, ombuds@iastate.edu.

If a resolution cannot be reached through the informal options outlined above, the student may file a formal grievance.

Grievances must be filed in a timely manner. All grievances must be filed within ten (10) business days after occurrence of the event that is the cause of the concern, or, if informal

resolution has been attempted, within ten (10) business days after use of the informal grievance option described above has concluded.

A grievance must be filed in good faith and not be of a frivolous or repeated nature. A student may withdraw their grievance at any point during the process. Grievances that have been withdrawn may not be refiled.

Step 1: File with Appropriate Person or Committee. All grievances related to scholarly and professional issues in the workplace must start at the department, appointing unit or program level. The student must first contact the Department Chair. If the Department Chair is directly involved in the issue in question, then the grievance should be discussed with the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, who shall review the matter or create an ad-hoc committee to review.

Step 2: Prepare Written Grievance. To file a grievance, the student shall provide a written statement with supporting documentation attached. This written grievance statement should be concise and clearly state the relevant background facts and the primary issues/concerns/complaint, including the related policies in question; identify the key people involved and possible witnesses; and state requested outcomes/remedies. The supporting documentation should include emails, departmental procedures, University policies, letters, and other such documentation.

Step 3: Grievance Review and Decision. The person or committee who receives the written grievance statement (reviewing party) will review the materials submitted. The reviewing party shall respond in writing to the student within ten (10) business days, unless, in the opinion of the reviewing party, that is insufficient time to appropriately investigate and consider the substance of the grievance. If additional time is needed, the reviewing party shall contact the student to provide a new date by which the decision shall be made and so inform the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. Once the review of the grievance is complete, the reviewing party shall meet with the student and provide a written decision.

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 VMPM 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 VMPM 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 VMPM 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 VMPM 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 (IDP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 15 each year
Academic Plan Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of 3rd semester
Academic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After AP Comm is approved
Request for preliminary oral exam (PhD only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No later than 2 weeks prior to exam. AP 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 Program Completion	<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 1 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

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.