

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANT  
AND SOIL SCIENCE**

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Texas Tech University**

**College of Agricultural Sciences  
And Natural Resources**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook outlines the graduate program policies and procedures for the Department of Plant and Soil Science. The purpose of this document is to help a graduate student successfully complete the degree program. It is the student's responsibility to learn and utilize all of the policies and requirements established by the State of Texas, Texas Tech University, the Graduate School, and the Department of Plant and Soil Science. This document is a supplement to the Graduate Catalog and does not supersede the policies of the Graduate School.

## **GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

The main purpose of a graduate program is to provide the opportunity for a student to gain knowledge and skills beyond those possible from baccalaureate studies. The principal differences between a B.S. and an advanced degree program are the student's participation and involvement in decision-making processes generally through research. The major tasks of a graduate student are learning how to design, conduct, interpret, and report the results of a research project.

Most of the time, a student in our graduate program that leads to a M.S. thesis or a Ph.D. dissertation has an assistantship and project funding. Assistantships are considered half-time employment. Therefore, the student is expected to work a minimum of 20 hours per week for the major professor while remaining time should be devoted to class work and thesis/dissertation research. Often graduate projects are structured in a manner that allows the student to work on their thesis/dissertation research to fulfill this requirement.

### **Master of Science Program**

The Department of Plant and Soil Sciences offers two options for a Master of Science (M.S.) program. One option requires a thesis while the other does not require a thesis. The non-thesis option is for individuals who need advanced skills in interpretation of data and synthesizing concepts from disparate sources of information, but do not intend to conduct research per se. The thesis option is for individuals who wish to begin to develop research capabilities. **The decision of which track to choose must be made when the Program for the Master's Degree and Admission to Candidacy form is completed.**

### **Master of Science Program Non-thesis Option**

The M.S. non-thesis option is an advanced education experience beyond the baccalaureate studies. The students committee shall be comprised of a minimum two Plant and Soil Science graduate faculty and one member of the Texas Tech University graduate faculty who is not a member of the Plants and Soil Science department. This option requires a minimum of 36 hours of graduate level classes plus any additional leveling (undergraduate) classes as deemed necessary by the students' committee. A minimum of 12 hours must be PSS classes. No more than six hours may be in non-formal courses (problems and selected topics). While enrolling in seminar class is encouraged, students not on campus will not be required to enroll in this class. During the semester of anticipated graduation, a comprehensive oral exam must be scheduled and successfully passed. Even though a student has successfully completed the 36 hours of coursework, the degree will not be

awarded without a letter from the student's committee chair stating that the student has successfully completed the oral exam.

### **Master of Science Program Thesis Option**

The M.S. thesis option is often the first experience in actually conducting scientific research. Consequently, a M.S. candidate needs considerable guidance from the major professor and graduate advisory committee. The student may expand upon ideas initially generated by the major professor or committee members. If the student is working on funded research, it is likely that the major professor wrote the proposal and was awarded a grant or had made a successful bid on a contract well before the student arrived. The student's role may be largely that of a data collector and analyst. Research is learned through personal involvement in a structured example. The student should be able to understand the scientific process, and thus, be better able to critically review and use scientific literature in the future.

Most M.S. thesis programs allow sufficient latitude for a student to suggest changes in design, data collection, and analysis. Most of the interpretations of the data should come from the student. The major professor and graduate advisory committee provide editorial comments and suggestions. The degree of originality shown during the M.S. program is often used as an indication of probable aptitude for continuing onto a Ph.D. program.

### **Doctor of Philosophy Program**

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) candidate is treated both as a student and a junior colleague. Completion of a Ph.D. brings the expectation that the individual can serve as a faculty member or research scientist. The Ph.D. candidate is expected to be involved in the generation of original ideas, proposal writing and funding negotiations. The Ph.D. student must show considerable command of scientific literature, creativity at hypothesis formation, skill at research design, the ability to solve a problem and competence in data analysis. The major professor and graduate advisory committee do not resolve any of the research details, but serve as advisors and critics to give the student insight into the peer review system. The decision to award a Ph.D. is judged upon the dissertation's originality and contribution to science.

### **Master of Agriculture Program**

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources with specialization in the various departments. Our department is one of those participating departments offers a Master of Agriculture (M.Ag.) program. The M.Ag. is designed to prepare students to be leaders, managers, and executives in the agricultural sciences and natural resources areas. Because the program is multidisciplinary and includes a wide choice of professional courses, it prepares graduates to enter a diversity of careers. It is an excellent choice for those who are employed, yet desire additional formal education.

Courses for the M.Ag. degree program may be taken from offerings in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and from other Colleges in the University. For the Plant and Soil Science option, students would normally take 18 hours in this

department and the balance in at least three other departments. The degree program may require more than 36 hours (depending on the student's needs).

### **GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

A student's graduate program is under the direction of a major professor and a graduate advisory committee. The major professor chairs the graduate committee. The major professor and student work closely together on all aspects of the student's graduate degree program.

The graduate committee is made up of at least three graduate faculty for an M.S. student, four members for M.Ag. and five graduate faculty for a Ph.D. student. Adjunct faculty serve a major role in our graduate program. If an adjunct faculty is serving as the major professor, it is recommended that a regular graduate faculty member serve as academic advisor to facilitate student advising. One member of the M.S. and M. Ag. and two members of the Ph.D. committee must come from departments other than Plant and Soil Science.

Committee members are selected after joint consultation between the student and the major professor. Potential committee members should be contacted informally to gain their oral consent to be on the committee before the major professor submits the "Graduate Advisory Committee Assignment" form through administrative channels. The committee selection is subject to the approval of the Department Chair and the Dean of the Graduate School. The composition of the committee may be revised at any time by mutual consent of the faculty involved and the approval of the major professor, the Department Chair and the Dean of the Graduate School.

A graduate advisory committee is appointed during the first year the student is in residence. Even if there is some uncertainty about the student's specific area of study and career objective, the initial committee meeting will preferably be held no later than the second semester of residence to assist in the selection of coursework. Committees do not appreciate having to review and approve accomplished coursework programs, research plans, or results presented without an opportunity for input. Work done prior to the initial committee meeting **may not be acceptable** to the committee as a whole (neither the Graduate School nor the graduate advisory committee are obligated to accept courses completed prior to acceptance into a graduate program or formation of a graduate advisory committee). The graduate committee will recommend a program of courses, administer a comprehensive examination, assist in developing a research plan, critique reports and other evidence of progress on the research, read the final draft of the thesis/dissertation, attend seminars presented by the candidate, and attend the final examination.

The student is encouraged to maintain close contact with the major professor and other members of the graduate advisory committee during research and writing phases of the thesis/dissertation. This contact allows the student to benefit from the expertise of individual effort; furthermore, it informs the graduate committee members of research progress. The student is urged to confer with members of the graduate advisory committee whenever needed during the research program.

## **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

To be formally admitted to candidacy toward an advanced degree in which a thesis or a dissertation is required, the student must: (1) write a detailed research proposal; (2) defend the written proposal successfully in a “candidacy” meeting with the graduate advisory committee; (3) obtain the committee’s approval of a curriculum of coursework; and (4) submit the “Application to Candidacy” form to the Graduate School. For the non-thesis option in M.S. or M.Ag., only the approval of a curriculum of coursework and submission of the “Application to Candidacy” form to the Graduate School are required.

The student is expected to fulfill the requirements for admission to candidacy as soon as possible after the graduate committee has been formed. If the student is unable to define a specific research problem during the first two semesters of the program, the student should hold a preliminary meeting with the graduate advisory committee to decide on coursework. The requirements for admission to candidacy are described in greater detail below.

### **Research Proposal**

Under supervision of the major professor, the student should define an original research problem and write a detailed proposal. The proposal should consist of a title, a statement of the problem and rationale for gathering original research data, a statement of objectives including hypotheses to be tested, a review of the literature, and a detailed description of the design, data analysis and procedures of the study. The student should be aware that the proposal will be judged largely on the basis of whether or not the study design and procedures are likely to permit fulfillment of the stated objectives.

After the major professor has approved the proposal, the student should distribute copies to members of the graduate advisory committee. The committee should be allowed **at least** two weeks to read and evaluate the proposal prior to the committee meeting.

### **Committee Meeting**

During the committee meeting, the student will be questioned by the graduate committee on the research proposal. The student should be prepared to summarize orally the content of the proposal; to defend the rationale, objectives and hypotheses; to cite and comment on relevant sources in the literature; and to defend the proposed study designs and procedures. When members of the graduate advisory have finished questioning the student, they will arrive at a consensus as to whether or not, and under what conditions, the proposal should be accepted. The student’s list of required coursework is also scrutinized in relation to previous coursework, current research, and career objectives. The student must comply with any suggested changes and stipulations before admission to candidacy.

### **Coursework**

An M.S. student’s coursework should comprise at least 24 (18 hours class work plus research hours) of the 30 credit hours required for the M.S. degree with the thesis option. For the M.S. degree, non-thesis option, a minimum of 36 credit hours are required. Attendance at seminars is encouraged, but not required for students who are not on campus. A M.Ag student’s coursework should comprise a minimum of 36 hours for this non-thesis

degree. Of these hours, 18 should be from within the department and the remainder from at least three other departments. A Ph.D. student is required to complete from 60 to 87 hours (exclusive of dissertation credit) beyond the B.S. with at least 15 hours from outside the Department. Only classes numbered above 5000 are acceptable for graduate credit.

The student is urged to meet with the major professor shortly after arriving on campus to decide upon a tentative program of coursework. After the student and the major professor agree on the proposed coursework list, the student should distribute copies to members of the graduate committee prior to the meeting at which coursework is to be discussed. In this meeting, the committee reviews or revises the proposed list of courses prior to approval.

Decisions concerning specific courses to be taken are the responsibility of the graduate committee. The Graduate Advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School review and approve the program of coursework. Students lacking adequate undergraduate preparation in supporting areas may be required to take additional coursework without graduate credit.

### **GRADE MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Graduate School policy requires all graduate students to maintain an average of “B” or better. If a student’s GPA for a particular semester drops below 3.0 he/she will be put on academic probation. If the overall GPA is not above 3.0 within two semesters after being put on probation, the student will be suspended from the graduate degree program and any financial assistance will be terminated.

### **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

A student whose major professor is a TTU faculty member is expected to register for at least 9 hours each long semester and 3 hours each summer session. A student whose major professor is a TAES/TAEX employee is expected to register for at least 9 hours each long semester with no registration required during the summer session. A student who is not in residence and is without financial support may be granted exception to these rules by the Department Chair. These rules apply to every semester up to and including the semester of the thesis/dissertation defense. If degree program completion occurs during a semester other than the semester of defense, the student must register for at least one credit. Forms are available in the office of the Department of Plant and Soil Science to defer selected fees for the student who has either a TA or RA appointment.

The maximum credit load for a student on a research assistantship is 12 semester credit hours. Nonresident tuition has been historically waived for a student with either a RA or TA appointment.

### **SEMINAR ENROLLMENT**

A graduate student in the Department of Plant and Soil Science graduate program is expected to enroll in a minimum of two semesters in PSS 5100 – Seminar. A student seeking an M.S., M.Ag., or a Ph.D. degree is expected to present a seminar during their graduate studies. Students not on campus are exempt from this requirement.

The faculty of the Department of Plant and Soil Science strongly encourages steady attendance regardless of enrollment status. Seminar helps the student become more aware of other facets of the science and art of the diverse disciplines in the Department.

### **RESIDENCY AND REGISTRATION**

The student who has begun thesis/dissertation research must register in each regular semester and each summer session until the degree requirements have been completed, unless granted an official leave of absence from the program for exceptional reasons. Approval of a leave of absence will not automatically extend time for completion of the degree.

Ordinarily, the minimum residence for an M.S. degree is a full academic year or its equivalent of graduate work carrying residence credit. If the student proceeds to Ph.D. research without obtaining an M.S. degree, at least one year of graduate studies will be required to be completed “in residence” at Texas Tech University. Residence is normally accomplished by completion of a full schedule (at least 9 hours) of graduate work in each of two consecutive semesters.

### **TIME LIMITS ON COURSEWORK**

Coursework for a graduate degree must be completed within six years for an M.S. program. All work for the Ph.D. program must be completed within four years after the applicant has been admitted to candidacy.

### **PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH**

Since all coursework at Texas Tech University and written products of graduate research are in English, the student must develop a command of English regardless of national origin. The student for whom English is not the native language must pass the TOEFL exam. The student may also be given further diagnostic tests by the Intensive English Language Institute upon arrival at Texas Tech University. Further English studies may be indicated or placement in introductory (undergraduate) level courses may be advised at the outset of the student’s program.

The major professor and committee may verify writing competency at the first committee meeting, and additional coursework or writing experience may be required. The minimum level of English proficiency required will be determined by the major professor and committee.

### **PRELIMINARY EXAM**

As early in the Ph.D. program as possible, the student will undergo a preliminary examination (oral, written, or both). Material covered in this exam may include previous course work as well as proposed research. This examination will serve as the basis for further counseling of the student and development of the program of study. Results will be reported to the Graduate School on the form entitled “Program for the Doctoral Degree.”

## **QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS**

A Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Plant and Soil Science is required to take written and oral comprehensive examinations prepared and conducted by the graduate committee. The purpose of these examinations is to determine whether or not a candidate possesses a depth of knowledge in their area of specialization, a breadth of knowledge in supporting areas, an understanding of the scientific method, and the ability to communicate knowledge in an organized and scholarly manner.

The student should make arrangements with the major professor to take the comprehensive examinations upon finishing the coursework. A student should complete all portions of the examination, preferably at the end of the second year of study, but no later than four months before the planned graduation date.

## **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

Shortly after successfully completing the Qualifying Examinations, but before the candidacy meeting, the student should obtain an "Application to Candidacy" form from the Graduate School and should fill in background information, proposed coursework, and transfer credits (if any). At the meeting, the student should enter any necessary changes and obtain the necessary signatures. The student should submit four copies of the form to the Graduate School with the approval of the major professor and Departmental Chair at which time the student is considered by the Graduate School for official admittance to candidacy. Any change in coursework taken or major alterations in research direction requires written approval of the committee. Memoranda to formalize such changes will be initiated by the major professor.

## **PREPARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION DATA**

In preparing initial drafts of the thesis or dissertation, the student should conform to the manuscript style currently accepted by the Graduate School. The Texas Tech University Publication Guide for Graduate Students and the CBE Scientific Writing for Graduate Students are helpful. Departmental secretaries should not be used for typing or duplicating any draft of the research proposal, thesis, or dissertation. Word processing PC's are available in the department and at the ATLC in the basement of the library.

An alternative to the traditional style of writing the thesis/dissertation is the submission of a paper or collection of papers in a format acceptable for submission to an appropriate professional journal. Consultation with the major professor and committee to select which style will be used is recommended.

## **FINAL EXAMINATION**

An M.S., M.Ag., or Ph.D. candidate who has fulfilled all coursework requirements, passed comprehensive examinations (Ph.D. only), and gained the major professor's approval of a draft of the thesis/dissertation (not required for M.Ag or M.S. non-thesis option) must pass a final examination to complete the degree program. The final examination includes an oral presentation (defense seminar) open to the public followed by an exam conducted by the graduate advisory committee in which the student is expected to defend his/her work. The

Graduate School office provides specific deadlines and procedures to be followed in this process.

### **Thesis/Dissertation**

Each committee member has the option of using two weeks to examine the major professor-approved draft of the thesis/dissertation to determine if it is acceptable to be formally defended. The committee members will then suggest either a willingness to attend the final meeting or inform the student what remains to be done before a final meeting is held.

### **Final Oral Presentation**

The final oral presentation is presented at a publicly announced seminar. This presentation is based upon the thesis/dissertation and is expected to be of a quality suitable for delivery at a scientific meeting. Included in the presentation should be: (1) a clear rationale for the research; (2) a concise statement of objectives; (3) a brief review of procedures; (4) a summary of results; and (5) a discussion of the broad significance of the study. Presentation lengths vary, but are typically 30-45 minutes.

### **Defense of Thesis/Dissertation**

The purpose of the final graduate committee meeting is to allow committee members the opportunity to evaluate the student's total academic performance and to arrive at a consensus as to whether or not an advanced degree should be granted. During the final meeting, the committee will review the student's records to make certain all prior requirements have been completed satisfactorily and will examine the student verbally on the thesis/dissertation subject matter. The student should be prepared to summarize briefly the objectives and results of their research, to justify the importance of its contribution and to answer questions pertaining to the form and content of the report, thesis, or dissertation draft.

After the graduate advisory committee has reviewed the student's records and has examined the student verbally, a determination will be made whether or not to recommend conferral of an advanced degree. The student will be advised immediately of the committee's decision. The committee has the option of indicating conditional approval, in which case the student must meet the specified conditions. Members of the graduate advisory committee indicate ultimate approval by signing the final version of the thesis/dissertation. All committee members must sign for a degree to be conferred. Departmental policy requires a majority vote to pass.

## **FINAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

The student who is within four months of completing a graduate degree program is advised to consult the Graduate Catalog and personnel in the Graduate School for information on fees, disposition of the departmentally-approved thesis/dissertation and graduation deadlines. Students are encouraged to participate in commencement exercises and need to contact the Graduate School for annually updated information on graduation deadlines. The student is responsible for meeting all deadlines required for graduation.

## **OTHER PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Integrity**

Advancement of knowledge depends on the generation of original truthful information. Stealing someone else's ideas, data, or producing fictitious information drastically impedes the progress of science. Scientists must be scrupulously honest with themselves and with those who will be using the results of their research. Consequently, even a hint of plagiarism or fictitious data will cause a cloud of suspicion to form over relationships with professors and other colleagues. Proof of such activity will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the Department of Plant and Soil Science graduate program.

### **Fraud**

The University expects a graduate student to maintain the highest standards of research honestly. Research fraud is an act of deception; it is different from error. The term fraud is used here to include a broad range of deceptive practices including:

1. Falsification of data—the intentional and unauthorized altering or inventing of any information or citation, including the purposeful omission of conflicting data with the intent to falsify.
2. Plagiarism—knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own.
3. Misappropriation of other's ideas—the unauthorized use of privileged information (such as violation of confidentiality in peer review, however obtained).

Research fraud may be reported either during or after a graduate student's program has been completed. If found guilty of research fraud, the student will be given a penalty which may include: (1) reprimand; (2) warning or other probation; (3) suspension; (4) expulsion; (5) request to rewrite thesis/dissertation, correct and reanalyze data and/or resubmit and defend thesis/dissertation; (6) loss of financial assistance; or (7) revocation of degree.

### **Professional Societies**

A graduate student is encouraged to join and participate in the activities of pertinent professional societies. Since the student is embarking on a professional career, it is in the student's best interest to become actively involved in a professional society. Most societies have reduced student dues in recognition of student budgetary constraints. In addition to reading journals and newsletters, the student should attend professional meetings whenever possible. Departmental transportation will often be available to the off-campus events of these societies. The student who serves on a committee or delivers a paper at a scientific or society meeting will usually be able to obtain at least partial travel expenses from the project or department.

### **Informal Social and Other Learning Opportunities**

The alert graduate student will find that there are many opportunities to learn from fellow students as well as from classes or conferences with professors. The student will gain most from graduate years by taking every opportunity to talk with other students and share experiences from other parts of the United States and the world. The student can learn a great deal by sharing work efforts and traveling to different study areas with other students with other students or professors. The Department will try to facilitate these opportunities for interaction. These interchanges will not be forced. A student, however, who quietly works on only individual research, will gain only a fraction of the experience that a

sociable, widely-inquiring student will be able to obtain. Lifelong professional ties can be built among fellow students which will enhance your long-term chances for success.

### **Publication of Research**

A thesis or dissertation is not considered a publication. These documents are not readily accessible to the research and management community. The student who accepts public money to conduct research has an obligation to make the results available to the public. Consequently, every student is expected to publish at least the main elements of the research in a widely-available journal. The stature of the Department and its ability to attract research funds depends on this process. Maintenance of the Departmental stature is of overall value to past and potential recipients of graduate degrees. Present graduate students draw on the past Departmental reputation as they vie for positions in the current job market.

The student is encouraged to write the research in a form acceptable for publication within one year after completion of degree requirements. This task becomes more difficult the longer it is delayed. Accordingly, if the student fails to meet this obligation within one year after leaving, the responsibility for getting the research into publishable form will fall on the major professor. This, in turn, may influence the professor's opinion when answering requests for job references and awards. Lack of effort can also be grounds for relinquishing senior authorship on a publication.

All data and intellectual properties generated during graduate and project research are the property of Texas Tech University. Departmental, College, and University guidelines must be followed in publishing research or protecting intellectual properties. Failure to follow proper procedures or to leave Texas Tech University without full disclosure of data or intellectual properties could result in civil or criminal prosecution.

All data collected, research materials accumulated, slides and publication rights of any research conducted during graduate work are the property of Texas Tech University and the State of Texas. Such materials should be left in the safekeeping of the major professor at the end of the degree program.

## **CARE AND USE OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES**

### **Funds**

Nearly all Departmental activities entail use of facilities, equipment, and operational budgets provided through state and federal funds. When private money is accepted, its use becomes public. The use of these funds for conducting teaching and research entail accountability to those who provide this support. This means that use of facilities, equipment, and budgets may be audited by appropriate authorities at any time. A student who uses University property for reasons other than that for which it was intended is liable for legal prosecution and/or dismissal. Avoid the temptation of use telephones, copy machines, mail, vehicles, and other resources for private use.

## **Insurance**

The University carries third-party injury and property damage liability insurance for a graduate student who is on contract. This insurance, however, does not cover costs for repairs from collisions of Departmental vehicles nor is it valid when accidents occur in connection with unauthorized use of equipment. It also is not valid if the user is breaking the law (example: drinking alcoholic beverages in a state vehicle) at the time of the accident. The law breaker is also personally responsible for all fines (example: traffic tickets).

The student must maintain personal automobile liability insurance. A current driver's license in good standing and approval by the University are required of all drivers who operate Departmental vehicles. University employees are covered by Workman's Compensation in case of injury on the job. Any accidents should be reported to the major professor as soon as possible. A student with a TA or RA appointment is eligible for coverage by Texas Tech University's health insurance. A student should be sure the appropriate forms are completed for individual coverage as soon as possible after the initial appointment is made.

## **Vehicles**

The Department has many vehicles that are necessary to fulfill teaching and research missions. Each driver must have a valid driver's license, liability insurance and be listed on the Departmental insurance sheet for each vehicle operated.

The most common taxpayer complaints are about state vehicles being seen at unauthorized places (parked at private residences and restaurants) or speeding. Failure to follow the above policies could jeopardize the privilege of having project or Departmental vehicles.

## **Departmental Labs**

The Department has laboratories available to use by graduate students. These labs are under direction of the individual project leaders who will coordinate laboratory use.

## **Computers**

The Department has graduate student labs equipped with computers, scanners, slide making, and duplicating equipment, and printers. This equipment is available to graduate students on a first come, first serve basis. Secretaries' computers may never be used by graduate students.

## **Copying and Office Supplies**

The Department makes every effort to support graduate research to the fullest extent possible. There are, however, some stipulations we place on the use of office supplies and equipment provided by the State of Texas. General office supplies and equipment (paper, pens, etc.) are available to faculty and staff. Supplies are available to a graduate student only by special request from a graduate advisor.

Departmental copy machines are available for graduate student use as well as faculty and staff. The copy machines are intended to support research and teaching activities, not for

copying coursework material or books (commercial copy centers are located both on campus and throughout the city for copying personal material).

## **MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES**

### **Travel**

Official travel out of town overnight in project or private vehicles requires completion of a "Travel Authorization Form." These forms must be completed and approved prior to the planned trip. The student should ask the major professor or Departmental bookkeeper for details.

### **Alcohol**

Texas law prohibits consumption of alcoholic beverages in vehicles and on all state property. Unopened containers of alcoholic beverages may be carried in state vehicles. Drinking of such beverages in public, however, is illegal and any person in charge of a field trip or property is responsible for such conduct. A student's refusal to comply with these laws could leave the person in charge no option but to request the assistance of law enforcement officials.

### **Smoking**

Texas Tech University prohibits smoking tobacco in all structures on campus.

### **Drugs**

To continue to receive federal money for teaching and research, Texas Tech University has agreed to maintain a drug-free workplace. Accordingly, discovery of and use of illegal (non-prescription) drugs while on University property or while conducting University business elsewhere will require the notification of appropriate authorities. Conviction will be followed by dismissal.

### **Vacations**

Part-time appointments do not carry provisions for vacation or sick leave. Arrangements for absences from campus for field sites should be worked out between the student and the major professor. The student should indicate when he/she expects to be absent. Student holidays are provided for undergraduate students and do not necessarily apply to graduate students on paid appointments. All leave time must be approved by the student's major professor.

### **Mail**

Mail boxes are established for each graduate student. Please see a Departmental secretary to establish a box or leave a forwarding address when your program is completed.

### **Keys**

Appropriate keys are obtained from the Department. The student will be required to sign for keys. It is illegal to duplicate University keys or have unauthorized keys in one's possession. After the completion of a program, keys must be returned to the Department.

## **Safety Regulations**

Safety standards for Texas Tech University are regulated by the Attorney General's Office and enforced by the Texas Department of Health. These standards are at least as stringent as O.S.H.A. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) requirements. Stiff fines and penalties exist for noncompliance.

Before starting any analytical procedure, a student must be trained in the safe use and handling of chemicals involved. A form must be signed attesting to this training. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals are located at the Erskine Street Farm and Department greenhouses. Laboratory supervisors should also provide access to MSDS sheets. Please read and refer to the MSDS sheets for chemicals you will be handling. These safety sheets contain all the necessary information regarding chemicals.

All containers within the labs must be appropriately labeled. An inventory must be maintained and an MSDS must be available for each and every chemical in the Department. Please inform the lab supervisor of any chemical brought into the Department. This is the only way accurate records can be maintained.

Inventory lists and signs are posted in each lab. Please do not remove or relocate any lists or signs. Food and drinks are prohibited in labs by University regulations.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MAJOR PROFESSOR**

1. Advise the student of opportunities and appropriateness of intended coursework and research necessary to meet personal career objectives.
2. Advise the new student how to obtain keys, a desk, and a mailbox.
3. Advise the student on selection of graduate committee, coursework, and research plan.
4. Organize and attend all graduate committee meetings, including seminars.
5. Advise the student as needed during progress of research.
6. Organize comprehensive exams (Ph.D. only).
7. Read and critique drafts of thesis/dissertation in a timely and constructive manner.
8. Attend seminars and help the student prepare presentations.
9. Organize final defense.
10. Read and sign final version of thesis/dissertation.
11. Answer requests for recommendation concerning the student's employment or further study.
12. Work with the student to write and submit funded research results for publication in scientific literature.

## **REPSONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT**

1. Give thoughtful consideration to your personal, educational, and career goals.
2. Acquire a basic familiarity with your own academic program, including all applicable Departmental, College, and University requirements and policies.
3. Give thoughtful consideration and preparation to the planning of your courses, research, and thesis/dissertation.
4. Ask questions about all policies and procedures that you do not fully understand.

5. Keep your major professor, Departmental office, and Registrar's Office apprised of your current local and permanent addresses and telephone numbers, so that you can be contacted if necessary.
6. Take responsibility for being aware of all important calendar deadlines, such as the last day to drop a course and defend your thesis/dissertation.
7. Accept responsibility for your choices and decisions.