

EVS Degree Plan

PhD Requirements

EVS PhD students are required to complete the PhD core course requirements, which include taking one class in each of three categories: Environmental Chemistry/Soil and Water Science, Environmental Policy, Law & Economics, and Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies. Each student will also take 1 credit hour of Ethics, 4 credit hours of Seminar, 6 credit hours of Statistics and 18 credit hours of Dissertation. In addition, each student will normally take courses in their specialty area sufficient to bring the total number of credits to the minimum of 72 required for the PhD in Environmental Science beyond the bachelor's degree or 42 beyond the master's degree. Any additional course work requirements will be determined by the PhD Advisory Committee to meet the student's specific program needs. For PhD EVS students, there are two public defenses: 1) dissertation proposal and 2) dissertation defense of their completed research. Each of these defenses is followed by an oral examination given by the PhD Advisory Committee. Two qualifying examinations and a final comprehensive examination are also required. A PhD level research scientist must have the ability to form a research hypothesis based on previous knowledge in the area, design the critical experiments necessary to test the hypothesis, analyze the experimental data, propose additional experiments based on the data, and come to a successful resolution of the problem. Passing all required exams implies that the student has sufficient critical thinking skills to be able to solve any problems that might arise during the research. The student must also have acquired sufficient knowledge in the research area and at least one area of environmental science. Thus, these examinations are important milestones for assessing whether the graduate student has the necessary knowledge and skills to advance toward completion of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Environmental Science.