

Code of Legislation

Graduate Faculty of the Field of Animal Science

Cornell University

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1. Purpose

The Graduate Field of Animal Science is the administrative home for faculty and students interested in discovery and application of science and technology addressing efficiency in animal production systems, economic and environmental sustainability, and maintaining health and well-being of animals.

2. Membership

Potential members should transmit a CV to the **Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)** along with a statement of intent to join the Field. The DGS and the **Graduate Field Assistant (GFA)** will transmit the CV and statement of intent to current members of the Field. The GFA will schedule a date for the potential member to present a research seminar during one of the academic year weekly Graduate Student Research Updates sessions. After the seminar, the GFA will request a vote. New members will be admitted upon the approval of 2/3 of current Field members.

3. Transactions of the Field

3.1. Meetings

Meetings of the Field will be called at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or at the request of ten members of the Field, but at least once per year. Members will be notified of meetings and will be provided with an agenda at least one week in advance. Field business will be decided by a majority vote of members present.

3.2. Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

The DGS is the Chair of the Executive Committee and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Field and other duties as specified in the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty ([Appendix 1](#)).

The DGS will be elected by a majority of a quorum¹ of Field members for a three-year term by email ballot from nominations solicited by the GFA. Voting will be by Instant Run-off Voting². Confidential votes will be returned to and tallied by the GFA, who will announce the results.

3.3. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee conducts Field business between annual meetings. The primary function of the Executive Committee is to review graduate student applications. The committee

¹A quorum of the Field is 1 more than half the number of faculty members.

²Instant Run-off Voting means that voters return a ballot with candidates ranked in order of preference. First place votes for candidates are counted. If no candidate receives a majority of votes, the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated and the next-place votes on the ballots of that candidate are added to the totals for the remaining candidates; this step is repeated until a candidate receives a majority of votes.

consults with appropriate faculty and academic units relative to space, financial support, and faculty interest and approves admission of students to the Field.

The Executive Committee consists of the DGS as Chairperson and four additional members, with one member replaced by a new member elected by a majority of a quorum of Field members each year from nominations solicited by the GFA. Committee members serve until their replacement is elected by 30 June of the year they rotate off the committee. Voting will be by Instant Run-off Voting¹. Confidential email ballots will be distributed by and returned to the GFA, who will tally and announce the results. A list of recent members of the Executive Committee is given in [Appendix 2](#).

3.4. Graduate Field Assistant

The Graduate Field Assistant, supported by the Department of Animal Science, supports the Director of Graduate Studies and other members of the Executive Committee to administer the business of the Field.

4. Graduate Program Guidelines

4.1. Evaluation for admission

Academic credentials (GPAs, GRE scores), the rigor of previous studies, the statement of purpose, the fit with faculty programs, and letters of recommendation are used by the Executive Committee to evaluate MS and PhD applicants. Prior research experience is considered to be useful for MS and PhD degrees. MPS applicants are evaluated by a committee appointed by the Chair of the Department of Animal Science.

4.1.1. GRE scores

The Field of Animal Science requires all American citizens to submit GRE scores. GRE scores are not required for International students, but they are recommended. The selection process is highly competitive and GRE scores are among a variety of considerations for selection.

4.1.2. English language proficiency requirement

The English language proficiency requirement is specified by the Graduate School at <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions/prepare/english-language-proficiency-requirement/>.

4.1.3. Transcript

Official transcripts must be submitted to the Graduate School by each previously attended college or university. If original transcripts are not available in the English language, a certified translation must be submitted. The Field of Animal Science does not have a minimum acceptable grade point average (GPA), but the selection process within the Field is highly competitive and GPAs are strongly considered.

4.1.4. *Statement of purpose and program fit*

1. To ensure that applicants enter a program that fits with their personal interests, the Field of Animal Science strongly encourages applicants to explore programs available within the Field of Animal Science and to connect with [a member of the Field](#) specializing in their interest of study before applying. Such a connection and interest in the research being conducted by a member of the Field should be included on the application and in the “Statement of Purpose” part of the application.

4.1.5. *Letters of recommendation*

The Field of Animal Science requires two letters of recommendation but will accept and welcome one or two additional letters of recommendation.

4.1.6. *Funding*

Applicants for PhD programs are not admitted without a source of funding. Funding could include institutional funding via fellowships, departmental assistantships, faculty grant funds at Cornell University or other documented fellowship or governmental funding. Cornell University funding must be guaranteed by the administrative unit of the applicant’s potential mentor. Applicants for the MS program may self-fund their programs, but they are encouraged to apply for the MPS. See [Appendix 3](#) for details about Department of Animal Science assistantships.

4.2. ***Degree Requirements***

The following major and minor subjects are recognized within the Field:

- Animal genetics
- Animal genomics
- Animal nutrition
- Animal science
- Physiology of reproduction

The Field requires no specific courses or number of credits for MS or PhD students. MPS students must follow the guidelines of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The Graduate School requires that all students enroll in a minimum of 12 credits during each academic semester and, if enrolled, during the summer session. All graduate students are expected to enroll in ANSC 6220 (Graduate Student Research Updates, 1 credit, S-U grading) during the academic year. The remaining credit requirements can be met by subject-matter courses or an appropriate number of credits in a variable-credit thesis research course:

- [ANSC 8900 Master's Level Thesis Research](#)
- [ANSC 7900 Graduate-Level Thesis Research](#) (before passing the A-exam)
- [ANSC 9900 Doctoral-Level Thesis Research](#) (after passing the A-exam)

Examinations are those required by the Graduate School. All students must complete [Graduate School forms](#) and adhere to the deadlines specified by the Graduate School. Current deadlines and forms are given in [Appendix 4](#).

4.2.1. Master of Science (MS)

4.2.1.1. Special Committee

The special committee for the MS degree will include three members of the graduate faculty of the University, one of which must have a primary appointment of an academic unit outside of the unit represented by the chair of the committee. The chair of the committee will be a member of the Field of Animal Science representing a major subject of the Field. One member will represent a minor subject in any field of the Graduate School.

4.2.1.2. Seminar

All MS students in the Field of Animal Science are required to present a seminar on their master's thesis research prior to, or in conjunction with, their Final Examination. This seminar must be scheduled before the form to schedule the Final Examination is signed by the GFA. The seminar may be given in ANSC 6220 (Graduate Student Research Updates) or scheduled at another time. The student must inform the GFA of the date, location, and title of the seminar so that notices can be sent to all faculty and students in the Field.

4.2.2. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

4.2.2.1. Special Committee

The special committee for the PhD degree will include four members of the graduate faculty of the University, one of which must have a primary appointment outside of the academic unit of the chair of the committee. The chair of the committee will be a member of the Field of Animal Science representing a major subject of the Field. Two members will represent minor subjects in any field of the Graduate School.

4.2.2.2. Seminar

All PhD students in the Field of Animal Science are required to present a seminar on their doctoral thesis research prior to, or in conjunction with, their B Examinations. This seminar must be scheduled before the form "Scheduling the B Examination" is signed by the DGS and GFA. The seminar may be given in ANSC 6220 (Graduate Student Research Updates) or scheduled at another time. The student must inform the Graduate Field Assistant of the date, location, and title of the seminar so that notices can be sent to all faculty and students in the Field.

4.2.2.3. Teaching Requirement

All PhD students, whether or not they are funded by a TAsip, are expected to obtain teaching experience as a teaching assistant for at least one semester, or equivalent experience assisting in an extension program. There is no requirement for MS candidates, but teaching experience is highly desirable. Extension experience, where appropriate for the student's degree focus, is highly recommended.

4.2.2.4. A-exam separate from final exam for MS degree

The final examination for the MS degree may not be combined with the Admission to Candidacy Examination for the PhD.

4.2.2.5. Retaking failed A-exam

As specified by the Graduate School, if a student fails an examination, a single re-examination is allowed if approved by the special committee of the student. Three months must elapse between the failed exam and re-examination. In preparation for re-examination, a plan must be submitted to the DGS within one month after the failed examination. The chair of the special committee and the student will work together to prepare the plan. The preparation plan should include: 1) how knowledge gaps identified by the special committee will be filled by the student; 2) how problems the student may have had expressing oral answers to questions will be overcome with practice sessions; 3) a timetable for these steps.

4.2.3. Student progress toward degree

The Field requires each beginning student to attend a planning meeting with the special committee during the first academic year of study at Cornell and preferably before the start of the third semester. All graduate students are required to meet at least annually with their Special Committees. All graduate students will complete the annual on-line [Student Progress Review Form](#) required by the Graduate School.

4.3. Master of Professional Studies (MPS) Degree

The Field of Animal Science offers the [College of Agriculture and Life Sciences MPS](#) program for students interested in opportunities to prepare for animal agriculture and veterinary science professions. Individuals who have already embarked on professional careers, those who plan to continue in their current fields or related ones, or those who will be working primarily as educators often select this program. The MPS program emphasizes breadth of training via course work rather than research experience. MPS degree candidates in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences complete a minimum of 30 credit hours and a problem-solving or applied project.

5. Appendix 1. The Director of Graduate Studies

(from the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty as revised in March 2019)

5.1. Responsibilities

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) represents a field in matters such as:

- promoting the quality of graduate education within the field, including regular assessment of learning outcomes,
- promoting the well-being of graduate students within the field,
- coordinating the establishment of academic priorities and allocation of resources for graduate education within the field,
- overseeing the field's admissions process, and
- serving as liaison between the field and the Graduate School.

The Director of Graduate Studies should:

- Communicate regularly with graduate students in the field (e.g., email, regular office hours, occasional town hall meetings).
- Be regularly accessible to graduate students in the field.
- Facilitate conversations between graduate faculty and students as needed.
- Convene the graduate faculty as needed to consider the quality of graduate education in the field, policy matters, and graduate student progress and outcomes.
- Be familiar with the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty.

5.2. Eligibility

The Director of Graduate Studies for a field must be a member of that field. Graduate School Professors are ineligible. To be eligible for appointment or election as Director of Graduate Studies, a faculty member must have a tenured appointment and at least three years' membership on the graduate faculty, unless there is no such qualified candidate. If the field faculty determine there is no such qualified candidate, an explanation of the reasons must be provided to the Dean of the Graduate School.

5.3. Selection

Using whatever method they deem appropriate, the graduate faculty in the field to be represented nominate a Director of Graduate Studies to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. The nomination materials should explain the nomination method used by the graduate faculty.

5.4. Term of Appointment

The term of a Director of Graduate Studies is generally three years with the possibility of reappointment or re-election. If a DGS will be on leave or otherwise unable to conduct the duties of the position for one semester or less, the field may designate an interim DGS and inform the Graduate School. If a DGS will be on leave or otherwise unable to conduct the duties of the position for more than one semester, a new DGS should be selected and proposed to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval following the procedures above.

6. Appendix 2. Recent members of the GFAS Executive Committee

Start	1-Jan-12	1-Jan-13	1-Jul-13	1-Jul-14	1-Jul-15	1-Jan-17	1-Jul-17	1-Jul-18	1-Jul-19
End	31-Dec-12	30-Jun-13	30-Jun-14	30-Jun-15	31-Dec-16	30-Jun-17	30-Jun-18	30-Jun-19	30-Jun-20
Johnson	DGS								
Thoney	X	DGS (elected)	DGS	DGS	DGS	DGS (reelected)	DGS	DGS	DGS
Overton	X	X	X	X	X				
Boisclair	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Selvaraj	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lei		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Giordano						X	X	X	X
McFadden								X	X
Gavalchin									X

7. Appendix 3. Department of Animal Science Assistantships

A few assistantships may be available to fund applicants whose advisors' primary appointments are in the Department of Animal Science. To be eligible for Department of Animal Science assistantships, completed applications are due on 15 January for matriculation in the fall semester. Maximum time for funding will be:

- **MS:** 5 academic semesters and 2 summers (2½ years)
- **PhD for applicants who have already earned MS, MPS, or DVM degrees:** 8 academic semesters and 4 summers (4 years)
- **PhD for applicants with no degrees beyond the bachelor's degree:** 10 academic semesters and 5 summers (5 years)
- **MS/PhD applicants:** 12 academic semesters and 6 summers (6 years)

8. Appendix 4. Deadlines & Forms

Go to the Graduate School forms page <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/> to download a form.

8.1. All students

3 weeks after first registration: Submit the name of the special committee chair or temporary advisor to the Graduate School Special Committee Selection and Change (online)

Optional forms

- Designation of Proxy for Examinations/Thesis Approval

8.2. MS program

- **End of 2nd semester:** Submit names of 2 additional members of the special committee (3 members are required), one of whom must be a member of a department other than the department of the chair of the special committee and one of whom represents a minor Special Committee Selection and Change (online)
- If the special committee will include individuals who are not members of the Cornell Graduate Faculty (ad hoc members), a request must be made to the graduate school using the **Ad-Hoc-Committee-Member-Request form**.
- Required forms
 - **Schedule Master's Examination** (submit 7 calendar days prior to the exam)
 - **Master's Exam Results** (submit within 3 business days after the exam)

8.3. PhD program

- **End of 3rd semester:** Submit names of 3 additional members of the special committee (4 members are required), one of whom must be a member of a department other than the department of the chair of the special committee and two who represent minors Special Committee Selection and Change (online)
- If the special committee will include individuals who are not members of the Cornell Graduate Faculty (ad hoc members), a request must be made to the graduate school using the **Ad-Hoc-Committee-Member-Request form**.
- **Admission to candidacy (A) exam** must be taken after completing 2 registration units (semesters) and before the 7th semester. A minimum of two registration units must be earned between passing the A exam and scheduling the B exam.
 - Schedule A Examination form (submit 7 calendar days prior to the exam)
 - A Exam Results Form, Instruction, and Research Compliance Form (submit within 3 business days after the exam)
- **Thesis defense (B examination)**
 - Schedule B Examination (submit 7 calendar days prior to the exam)
 - B exam Results and Instructions (submit within 3 business days after the exam)