

AGRICULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING

Degree Requirements

Master of science (M.S.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

All candidates for the M.S. degree must complete a minimum of 30 credits at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level, with at least 6 credits in thesis research (600 or 610). All candidates for the M.S. must write a thesis. The thesis must be accepted by the advisers and/or committee members, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the students must pass a thesis defense.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

Official entrance into a Ph.D. program occurs upon successful completion of the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam. Ph.D. degree requirements include successful completion of the following: approved graduate course work, Ph.D. English competency requirements, a comprehensive examination, and final oral examination (the dissertation defense). To earn the Ph.D. degree, doctoral candidates must write a dissertation that is accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

No specified number of courses completed or credits earned are required by the department. However, the candidate must complete at least 9 credits of Agricultural and Biological Engineering (ABE) course work beyond the baccalaureate degree. Six credits must be 500-level ABE courses (excluding ABE 500, ABE 590, ABE 594, ABE 595, ABE 596); the remaining 3 credits must be in any ABE course 460 or higher. Unless previously taken, all Ph.D. students must complete ABE 500. The student's Ph.D. committee will recommend the minimum requirements in such supporting areas as mathematics, engineering, agricultural/biological sciences, and physical sciences. The candidate is expected to develop a program of study and submit it to the appointed Ph.D. committee for consideration and approval. All Ph.D. students are required to participate in resident education or extension teaching activities for the equivalent of at least one semester during their graduate program. A typical plan of study consists of about 90 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree with about 30 of the total credits for research. All requirements for a Ph.D. degree, whether satisfied on this campus or elsewhere, must be completed within eight years after passing the qualifying examination.

Ph.D. Language and Communication Requirement

The purpose of the communication requirement is to strengthen the student's professional communication skills. The candidate must take a minimum of two courses (a minimum total of 5 credits) and receive a grade of B or better in each course taken. Course selections must be approved by the academic adviser prior to registration. Courses used to satisfy this requirement must include the substantial practice of writing and/or speaking.