

V. THE MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES DEGREE

The Master of Professional Studies (MPS) graduate degree program enables students to integrate knowledge and expertise drawn from both the natural and social sciences, and to apply their knowledge to solve practical forest and natural resources management problems. The primary focus of the program is to provide an opportunity for graduates coming from related academic backgrounds with baccalaureates to gain a professional education in forest and natural resources management. As such, the program is designed to be the first professional degree in forest and natural resources management. Graduates will successfully function as professional managers on multi-disciplinary forest and natural resources management teams and respond to the challenges related to the sustainable management of local, regional and global resources.

The program is open to both students with some prior background in forestry and natural resources and for those without such background. Students with a degree in a related discipline (e.g., ecology, biology, wildlife, chemistry, etc.) can complete the MPS degree in twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months. Students without a general science background, will require eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) months to complete the program. The curriculum is designed for fall admission, but spring semester admission is possible. More than four (4) semesters may be required for students from non-science backgrounds who need additional basic undergraduate coursework as part of their program of study.

The Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management (FNRM) uses a checklist to facilitate detailed program planning and to document of the steps required for graduation (see below). Major Professors keep a version of the checklist with student-specific information in their advising files. Each student is encouraged to keep an updated personal copy. Checklists are available in the FNRM Office (320 Bray Hall).

A few graduate students manage to complete their entire degree programs without having to file a single petition. However, because of our students' diverse backgrounds, interests, degree programs, and personal lives, the many of our students occasionally find themselves in violation of some College or FNRM policy, or find a need to create proper documentation for their academic file. The correct vehicle to use is a Petition (see Appendix A for information on petitions). Petition forms may be obtained from the Registrar's Office (111 Bray Hall).

Prerequisites

Students are accepted into our programs with a variety of backgrounds. Deficiencies in undergraduate-level English, ecology, forestry, soils, or statistics may have been identified in your letter of admission. If not completed prior to matriculation, appropriate classes should be taken during residence. Either undergraduate or graduate courses may be taken to remedy deficiencies, depending on the circumstance. Undergraduate courses are not included in grade point averages, and do not count toward satisfying the minimum number of required graduate credit hours.

Transfer Credit

Up to six (6) credits of graduate coursework **not used to complete any other graduate degree** may be accepted toward completion of a master's degree as approved by your steering committee. A student may not transfer any graduate coursework earned as part of a conferred master's degree toward an ESF master's degree. Students may transfer up to nine (9) credits of credit-bearing **non-degree ESF** graduate coursework (e.g., credit-bearing graduate coursework taken as a non-matriculated ESF student) toward a master's degree. Credit hours appropriate to the graduate degree in which a minimum grade of B was earned from an accredited institution can be transferred to the college, but grades and grade points cannot be transferred. All transfer credit will remain tentative until official, final transcripts are received. In addition, all transfer credits must be approved by the steering committee and by the Graduate Education Committee via a petition.

Steering Committee

You will have a steering committee that provides advice about your coursework and other aspects of the program. The steering committee is composed of the major professor, who is assigned to the student at admission, and at least one other faculty member or other qualified person. A new major professor, different from the assigned, can be assigned by submitting a new Form 2A (available from the Office of Instruction and Graduate Studies (227 Bray Hall) and at www.esf.edu/graduate/graddegreq.htm). Two co-major professors count as two committee members. You, in consultation with your major professor, chose who will be on your steering committee during the first semester. MPS students must have a minimum of a major professor and one (1) steering committee member.

To have your steering committee assigned, your major professor must submit Form 2A Steering Committee, obtained from the Office of Instruction and Graduate Studies (227 Bray Hall) and at www.esf.edu/graduate/graddegreq.htm). This form must be signed by the Chair of the Graduate Education Committee and recorded by the FNRM Graduate Education Secretary.

As a graduate student, you are responsible and accountable for your progress. You should meet at least once a year with your steering committee, but frequent informal meetings with your major professor and individual committee members are strongly encouraged.

Coursework Requirements and Guidelines

The MPS degree requires a minimum of thirty (30) total graduate credit hours, of which at least of twenty-four (24) credit hours must be taken in residence at ESF. These general graduate requirements are set by the College (see the College Catalog available at <http://www.esf.edu/catalog>). In addition to the general graduate requirements, FNRM has established the following faculty specific requirements:

Requirements/Courses	Credit Hours
A. A graduate level course in statistics	3
B. FOR560 Principles of Management (or equivalent; if waived, add 3 hours to E or F) ¹	3
C. FOR690 Seminar and Workshop: Natural Resource Policy & Management	3
D. Graduate course in environmental or scientific writing, or demonstration of ability (if waived, add 3 hours to E or F) ²	3
E. At least 15 graduate credit hours in student's area of concentration	15
F. At least 3 graduate credit hours in quantitative methods, geographic information systems, or statistics	3
Total Credit Hours	30

¹ This requirement may be waived under the following conditions: 1) a B or better in a junior/senior level principles of management course from an accredited institution; 2) a memo attached to the 3B form and the MPS course list signed by student and steering committee approving the waiver.

² This requirement may be waived under the following conditions: 1) a portfolio of written work will be submitted to be reviewed by the steering committee; 2) a memo attached to the 3B form and the MPS course list signed by student and steering committee stating they have reviewed the portfolio and approve the waiver.

No course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement. Credit may be given for graduate course work successfully completed before entry into the MPS program, but the total requirement is thirty (30) graduate credit hours with at least twenty-four (24) taken in residence at ESF. See the Transfer Credit section above.

Student Study Plan

After forming your steering committee, you **must** fill out Form 3B: Graduate Student Program (available from the Office of Instruction and Graduate Studies (227 Bray Hall) and at www.esf.edu/graduate/graddegreq.htm). This form **must** be signed by your major professor, all of the members of your steering committee, and the Chair of the Graduate Education Committee. The FNRM Graduate Secretary (Ms. Tari Pittenger, 320 Bray Hall), records the form and forwards it to the Office of Instruction and Graduate Studies for approval. Once approved, Form 3B serves as an institutional endorsement of your graduate program of study and protects you by officially stating what courses you will complete and when you will complete them. Students that change their program of study must submit an updated Form 3B (signed by your major professor, all of the members of your steering committee, and the Chair of the Graduate Education Committee) to the FNRM Graduate Secretary (Ms. Tari Pittenger, 320 Bray Hall).

Additionally, you *must* complete the FNRM “MPS Course List” (see Appendix B) and submit it with your Form 3B. The “MPS Course List” should contain all courses listed on the Form 3B and demonstrate how these courses fulfill the MPS requirements. This list is used to verify that students have chosen courses that meet MPS degree requirements.

Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management MPS Checklist

Step	Procedure	Responsibility	Target date	Date done
1.	Decide upon general area of study	Student (In consultation with Major Professor)	First semester or before	__/__/__
2.	Propose steering committee (Memo by Chair of the Graduate Education Committee (CGEC) to Office of Instruction and Graduate Studies (OIGS)).	Major Professor (in consultation with student)	First semester	__/__/__
3.	Student and steering committee determine appropriate coursework. Student completes Form 3B and “MPS Course List” form. Student, major professor, and steering committee sign form (which must be approved by CGEC and OIGS).	Student	First semester	__/__/__
4.	Meet with steering committee to review study plan (and if necessary, revise Form 3B).	Student	Second semester	__/__/__
5.	Certify completion of all requirements (Form 9, through CGEC to OIGS)	Major Professor	Before graduation	__/__/__

Appendix B: MPS Course List

Student _____ Date _____

Requirements/Courses ¹	Credits
A. A graduate level course in statistics _____	_____
B. FOR560 Principles of Management (or equivalent; if waived, add 3 hours to E or F) _____	_____
C. FOR690 Seminar and Workshop: Natural Resource Policy and Management _____	_____
D. Graduate course in environmental or scientific writing, or demonstration of ability (If waived, add 3 hours to E or F) _____	_____
E. At least 15 graduate credit hours in student's area of concentration 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
F. At least 3 graduate credit hours in quantitative methods, geographic information systems, or statistics 1. _____ 2. _____	_____ _____
Total (must be at least 30)	_____

¹ No course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement.