

Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences — Graduate Certificate, MS, MAg, PhD

Degree Programs

- Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences — MS (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/agronomyandsoilsmmagphd_major/agronomyandsoils_ms/)
- Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences — MAg (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/agronomyandsoilsmmagphd_major/agronomyandsoils_mag/)
- Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences — PhD (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/agronomyandsoilsmmagphd_major/agronomyandsoils_phd/)

Graduate Certificates

- Crop and Soil Science (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/CropSoilScience_gcrt/)

Graduate training in this department enables outstanding students to achieve a high level of scholarly attainment in the soil, crop and environmental sciences. Within these broad areas, research training and experience may be gained in the specialized fields of soil fertility and plant nutrition; soil chemistry; soil genesis, morphology and classification; soil mineralogy; soil physics; soil microbiology; plant breeding and genetics; weed science; forage, fiber, bioenergy and grain crop production; crop ecology; environmental quality; and turfgrass management.

All graduate students are required to have core undergraduate courses in math, chemistry, physics, botany, plant physiology, genetics, and statistics. The Graduate Studies Committee evaluates each applicant's record and determines prerequisite deficiencies. Qualified students lacking prerequisite subjects can be admitted but will be required to complete course work to satisfy undergraduate course deficiencies. Students are encouraged to visit the department's web site and view the graduate student handbook for specifics. Admission is based primarily on a combination of required grade point average (GPA) and graduate record examination (GRE) scores and TOEFL tests for international students.

Three degrees are offered:

1. **Master of Science (MS)**, earned only under the thesis option where importance is placed on both classroom and research training. The MS requires a minimum of 30 semester hours at or above the 6000 level of which 4 hours of thesis research and 2 hours of seminar are included. The student's advisory committee along with the student determines the course of study. In addition, the student must complete research, a written thesis and an oral defense examination of the thesis research.
2. **Master of Agriculture (MAg)** earned under the non-thesis option places more emphasis on classroom training over a broader range of subject matters. The MAg degree requires at least two additional graded courses that replace thesis research hours. An oral defense of course subject matter is required and students must register for GRAD 7000 during the semester the exam is taken. MAg students must write a professional paper as part of a special problems course (CSES 6960) and present an exit seminar (CSES 7950) on this paper.
3. **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)** requires a minimum 60 semester hours of course work beyond the Bachelor of Science. Of the 60 semester hours, 30 must be graded courses 6000 level and above, 20 of which must be completed at Auburn University while registered in the PhD program. There is no language requirement for this degree. Upon completion of the course work, a PhD student must satisfy a general written examination administered by each member of the graduate advisory committee. A student must pass all parts of the written examination before scheduling the preliminary oral examination. After satisfactory completion of the preliminary examination, the student advances to candidacy. The PhD student will conduct independent research and prepare a dissertation through the guidance and direction of the advisory committee. Upon completion of the dissertation, the student must pass a final oral examination defending the dissertation.

Graduate students in a program requiring a thesis or a dissertation must register for at least one hour of CSES 7990 or CSES 8990 per semester. Research Associates and similar classifications that also are graduate students are exempt from this requirement but must complete 10 hours of 7990 in the master's program or 20 hours of 8990 if in a PhD program.