

## **CERTIFICATION OF GRADUATE STUDENT FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE**

Certification for the MS/MA and Ph.D. degrees gives the student and her/his AC a formal venue to discuss broad expectations for the student's graduate career. During certification, the AC will review the student's background and point out areas of deficiencies that should be improved during the course of the degree program. In general, graduate students are expected to have backgrounds in their area of study equivalent to or exceeding Departmental expectations for Zoology undergraduate students.

This form must be completed by the end of the second semester after entering graduate school by students who intend to complete the UW-Madison Zoology Ph.D. Program. Students who plan to earn a MA/MS Degree should first complete the Certification Form for that degree. Certification does NOT constitute admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. Degree program. (Admission to the Ph.D. Degree program is determined by successful completion of the Preliminary Exam – see below.)

The Ph.D. **Advisory Committee** consists of five members, one of whom must be from outside the Department of Integrative Biology. For the Option A minor, the Minor Professor may serve as the external committee member. The Ph.D. Advisor/Major Professor is the only committee member required to be from the Department of Integrative Biology. It is acceptable to have a 4-member Advisory Committee for the certification meeting and qualifying exam, but the full 5-member committee must be present for the preliminary exam and the final (oral) exam. For more information on committees go to: **Add link to website**

In addition to Certification, a student pursuing a Ph.D. Degree must pass a **Qualifying Examination**, a **Preliminary Examination**, and a **Final Exam**, described below.

The **Qualifying Exam**: The qualifying exam (QE) is a diagnostic exam used by the student's Advisory Committee (AC) to recommend or require courses and additional activities to prepare a student for Ph.D. research. The scope of the QE will be limited to areas recommended by the AC during the Ph.D. Certification. Outcomes of the QE are: (1) pass, (2) pass with the requirement to take specified courses and/or perform additional activities, (3) fail with the option of retaking the QE within two semesters, and (4) fail for the second time, at which point the student will not be given the option of taking the QE for a third time. Because the QE is primarily a diagnostic exam, outcomes (3) and (4) are rare. Passing the QE is not required for completion of a MS/MA degree.

The QE must be taken within 4 semesters of entering graduate school. (Therefore, the QE will ordinarily be taken before completion of an MS/MA degree).

The **Preliminary Exam**: The preliminary exam (PE) is centered around the research proposed for student's Ph.D. dissertation and is designed to determine whether a student may proceed towards candidacy for the Ph.D. The PE must include a written research proposal. In the PE, the student must defend the research proposal and satisfy the AC that s/he has sufficient background to see the work to completion. A successful research proposal will normally include preliminary data/results to show that the proposed work is feasible. However, the PE should be completed before the bulk of research is performed, generally within the first 5 semesters of a Ph.D. program or within 2 semesters of completing a MA/MS degree in UW-Madison Zoology. The PE gives the AC the opportunity to make extensive suggestions on the proposed research and set out expectations for a successful Ph.D. research project.

Outcomes of the PE are (1) pass, (2) fail with the option of retaking the PE within 2 semesters, and (3) fail without the option of retaking the PE.

The **Final Exam** is a detailed defense of the research described in the Ph.D. dissertation. The exam may be taken no sooner than 1 year following completion of the PE. All members of the AC should be present. Students are required to present the results of their research at a departmental **colloquium** before being awarded their Ph.D. degree. A joint colloquium with another department is acceptable in meeting this requirement.

### **Time to PhD degree**

It is expected that a student will defend the Dissertation by the end of the fifth academic year. If this is not accomplished by the end of the summer following the sixth academic year, the major professor and one member of the Advisory Committee must meet with the Chair to present a written statement that explains why the Dissertation has not been completed and describes plans that the student and the Committee have agreed upon to ensure completion. The student may attend this meeting. Continuation in the Program beyond 8 years will be at the discretion of the Chair and Advisory Committee. Ten years is the outside limit by which a student must complete the Ph.D. degree. See *Criteria for Satisfactory Progress* on the Zoology Graduate Program, Current Students departmental web page for additional information on what constitutes graduate student satisfactory progress.

## Academic History

Students should bring copies of undergraduate and graduate course transcripts as well as a CV to the certification meeting.

Name:

Undergraduate work

Institution:

Dates attended:

Major subjects:

Degree (with date):

Undergraduate work

Institution:

Dates attended:

Major subjects:

Degree (with date):

Graduate work

Institution:

Dates attended:

Major subjects:

Degree (with dates):

Date entered the UW-Madison Graduate School:

## Requirements for a Ph.D. Degree

The courses that a student is required to take for completion of a UW-Madison Zoology Ph.D. degree are determined by the student's AC. The program does not have a set list of courses that are required by all students.

### 1. Minimum credit requirements

- To meet all PhD requirements, students must complete 51 credits prior to graduation. Students coming in with a Masters Degree (or other graduate credits) may apply some of the credits earned at a previous institution to meet the credit requirements. See below for more information.
- In order to achieve dissertator status, students must complete 32 credits. Students must also:
  - Clear all Incomplete or Progress grades in non-research courses
  - Earn at least a cumulative 3.0 GPA with no deficient grades
  - Pass the Preliminary Exam
  - Request the Prelim Exam Warrant from the Department and return the completed Warrant to the Department after passing the Prelim examination
  - For more information on dissertator status visit:  
<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#dissertationstatus>

### 2. Courses taken after enrollment as a graduate student.

Students entering with a BA/BS Degree.

For those students who want to earn a Masters Degree in addition to their PhD, a Masters Degree Warrant must be requested after 30 credits have been completed and a Masters thesis must be deposited with the Graduate School. See the Masters Certification for more details about specific requirements for the Masters Degree.

For students who do not wish to earn a Masters and instead wish to proceed straight to the PhD, the Masters Certification is not required.

For those students entering with a MA/MS Degree:

With committee approval, students are allowed to count no more than 19 credits of graduate course work from other institutions to complete their minimum PhD credit requirements. Course work earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree or earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. Typically committees will choose to cap course work from another institution at a lower level than 19 credits, but this is a committee decision to be made on a case by case basis. Not that these courses will not appear on a UW transcript.

Below, total the credits from the MA/MS Degree (or other graduate coursework) that the committee would like to count towards the minimum PhD course requirements (19 credit maximum). Major advisors must sign off on credits and inform the Graduate Student Coordinator that outside credits intend to be used so the Graduate Coordinator can notify the Grad School.

3. Courses/special exams/written reports or other requirements specified by the Advisory Committee (list here).

4. Courses recommended but not required by the Advisory Committee.

5. Credit Requirements- To earn a PhD students must complete 51 credits. 26 of those 51 credits must come from courses designed for graduate students. In Zoology those courses are listed below. Students may take classes from other Departments to fulfill those requirements but need to check with the home department to ensure that the class is designated as graduate coursework. Graduate work in Zoology may include any courses numbered 700 and above including the following:

Zoology 725 Ecosystem Concepts

Zoology 750 Problems in Oceanography

Zoology 765 Developmental Neuroscience

Zoology 799 Independent Study

Zoology 879 Advanced Landscape Ecology

Zoology 911 Limnology and Marine Science Seminar

Zoology 950 Interdisciplinary Seminar in Animal Behavior

Zoology 953 Introduction to Ecology Research at UW-Madison

Zoology 954 Seminar in Endocrinology-Reproductive Physiology

Zoology 955 Science in the LTER network

Zoology 955 Seminar-Limnology

Zoology 956 Professional Development  
Zoology 956 Seminar-Ecology  
Zoology Seminar-Evolution  
Zoology 958 Seminar-Biophysical and Physiological Ecology  
Zoology 960 Seminar in Cellular Biology  
Zoology 961 Seminar-Morphology  
Zoology 962 Behavioral Neuroscience  
Zoology 962 Seminar-Ethology  
Zoology 965 Seminars in Developmental Biology  
Zoology 969 Colloquium on Teaching College Biology  
Zoology 980 Earth System Science Seminar  
Zoology 990 Research

#### 6. Teaching requirement.

One semester of at least a 1/3 time teaching assistantship is required. This requirement can be met by teaching completed at another institution (teaching experience as defined by the TAA agreement).

- Teaching requirement met at time of Certification.
- Must meet requirement.
- AC-approved waiver (explain):

**MINOR**

Minor selection:                    \_\_\_\_ A “external” – complete option A section below  
   \_\_\_\_ B “distributed” – complete option B section below

The Graduate School’s minimum course requirements for the minor include:

- a. an average GPA of 3.00 on all minor course work
- b. course work must be graduate level (the equivalent of UW-Madison courses 300 level or above; no audits or pass/fail)
- c. maximum 3 credits of independent study (e.g., 699, 799, 899, 999)
- d. research and thesis cannot be used to satisfy the minor (e.g., 790, 890, 990)
- e. no more than 5 credits of course work completed more than 5 years prior to admission to the Ph.D., course work taken 10 years ago or more may not be used.

**Option A minor**

The Option A (“external”) minor requires 9 credits taken in a department other than the Department of Integrative Biology, as specified by that department. The Option A minor must be approved by the Minor Professor or the departmental chair of the minor department (see Graduate School Catalog).

Department:  
Courses (List course titles, credits and institution)

Approval of proposed Option A minor:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature, Minor Professor  
or Chair, Minor Department)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

### **Option B minor**

The Option B (“distributed”) minor requires 9 credits taken in one or more departments forming a coherent topic and can include course work done in the Department of Integrative Biology. The Option B minor requires approval of the Chair of the Department of Integrative Biology (see Graduate School Catalog).

Department:

Courses (List course titles, credits and institution)

Department:

Courses (List course titles, credits and institution)

Approval of proposed Option B minor:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature, Chair, Integrative Biology)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)



**Approved by the Ph.D. Advisory Committee**

Date:

Signature

Name (printed)

Department

1.

(Major Professor)

2.

3.

4.

5.

I understand all terms and conditions contained in this document and the information provided in the "OUTLINE OF GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN ZOOLOGY" and recognize that they constitute the requirements for a Ph.D. in Zoology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Graduate Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

All parties involved in this certification recognize that contingencies may arise during the course of graduate study that alter close adherence to the time schedules recommended herein. The Advisory Committee will sympathetically consider adjustments appropriate to the nature of the contingencies.