Natural Resources Science, Ph.D.

Degree Offered

- Doctor of Philosophy

Fields of Study Offered

- Forest Resource Management
- Wildlife and Fisheries Resources
- Wood Science and Technology

Within these fields of study, specialization is limited only by the range of competencies in the graduate faculty.

Nature of the Program

The Ph.D. in Natural Resources Science is an interdisciplinary program that allows doctoral students the opportunity to specialize in a range of competencies. As a graduate student in the School of Natural Resources and the Environment, you'll advance your research knowledge and prepare to become a leader in your chosen field. With the guidance and support of faculty mentors, you'll develop an advanced understanding of and appreciation for the principles of economics, stewardship and sustainability of our natural resources.

Admissions for 2027-2028

A regular graduate student is a degree-seeking student who meets all the criteria for regular admission to a program of their choice and under no requirements to make up deficiencies.

For regular admission, a student must:

- Possess a baccalaureate degree from a college or university and have at least a grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale (or an average of 3.0 or higher for the last sixty credit hours).
- Provide three letters of reference from persons acquainted with the applicant's professional work, experience, or academic background.
- Submit a written statement of 500 words or more indicating the applicant's goals and objectives relative to receiving a graduate degree, and identify a potential faculty advisor.
- Have an adequate academic aptitude at the graduate level as measured by the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the New Medical College Admissions Test (New MCAT).

* International students must meet WVU's minimum score requirement for English language proficiency (https://admissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/international-students/english-language-proficiency-requirements/).

A student seeking admission for a Ph.D Natural Resources Science degree may choose a major field of study in forest resources management; wood science and technology; or wildlife and fisheries resources. Within these major fields of study, specialization is limited only by the range of competencies in the graduate faculty.

Major Code: 1734

A candidate for the Ph.D. degree in Natural Resources Science must meet all University, College, Division, and Program requirements as outlined in the WVU Graduate catalog.

Program Requirements

All Ph.D. degree students are required to follow a planned program of study. The student develops the plan of study during their first year in the program in conjunction with the graduate committee. The plan must be approved by the Director of the Division and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Davis College.

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required in all courses applied toward degree requirements.		
Course Requirements as determined by the Plan of Study		
Research		
Candidacy Exam		
Dissertation		
Dissertation Defense		

Curriculum requirements for all Ph.D. candidates include a block of graduate courses in the major field, which will constitute a comprehensive review of the significant knowledge in that field and a block of graduate courses in a minor field of study. A minimum of sixty semester hours beyond the bachelor's degree and exclusive of the dissertation is required.

DISSERTATION AND FINAL EXAMINATION

The research work for the doctoral dissertation must show a high degree of scholarship and must present an original contribution to the field of forest resources science. In addition to coursework and the dissertation, the candidate is required to pass a qualifying examination and a final examination.

Degree Progress

The School of Natural Resources and the Environment requires the following milestones for all students. According to the graduate catalog, students will receive a yearly evaluation. Students who are either not making adequate degree progress or who are failing to uphold professional standards may receive notice of probation, suspension or dismissal. Students may be notified of academic consequences outside of routine evaluation processes if an issue must be addressed immediately.

Each year, no later than the first day of classes of the Fall semester, the department will distribute an updated version of the graduate handbook.

BENCHMARKS

- Year One: Completion of Plan of Study (https://www.davis.wvu.edu/current-students/graduate/plans-of-study/) and research proposal
- Year Two: Successful completion of written and oral comprehensive examination
- Year Four: Satisfactory progress (https://www.davis.wvu.edu/current-students/graduate/doctoral-degree-requirements/) toward completion of dissertation
- Year Five: Completion and defense of dissertation

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

- Satisfactory progress toward completion of dissertation includes literature review, data collection, and analysis.

Major Learning Outcomes

NATURAL RESOURCES SCIENCE

To train students to become leaders in sub-fields within the broad area of Natural Resources Science (in one of four program areas: Forest Resource Management; Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources; Wildlife and Fisheries Resources; and Wood Science and Technology).

To prepare students for assuming positions in academia, industry, government, or nonprofit agencies. Within this framework the learning outcomes of the PhD in Natural Resources Science are to develop students that demonstrate the following abilities:

1. Conduct independent, novel research in their sub-discipline.
2. Interpret and critically evaluate the existing literature published within their field.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking skills for application of statistics.
4. Effectively communicate their research in oral and written formats.