

Your Path to a Degree

While timelines are different for each student, the list below provides an overview of what to plan for and expect as you work to complete your degree, with links to the section of this manual where you can find more information.

Before the beginning of your first semester:

- Communicate regularly with your Major Professor in the weeks or months before your arrival at Purdue about research, courses, and your arrival plans.
- Arrive one week before classes start (at the latest) as graduate assistantships start one week before classes. Attend ABE Graduate Student Orientation and the Graduate School's Orientation during this week.
- Meet with Major Professor to plan first semester courses and research expectations.
 - Register for courses (often 6-9 credits) and research credits, which should normally total 10 credits for fall/spring. Include graduate student orientation seminar ABE 69400. See Section 3 of the ABE Graduate Manual for more details.
 - Discuss research expectations with your Major Professor. Complete the Research Registration Form, which should help ensure that you and your major professor have shared expectations. See Section 3 and Appendix D of the ABE Graduate Manual.

Semester 1

- Take courses and ABE 69400, the new ABE Graduate Student Seminar.
- If you had any admissions conditions (submit official transcripts, etc.) that remain to be satisfied per the Graduate School, complete these.
- Develop your Plan of Study (Section 3), based on discussions with Major Professor, your research project, and your interests. You must include a draft Committee, which can be changed later if needed.
- Before the end of the semester, register for the following semester including research credits. Complete the syllabus form for the following semester of research credit registration, discussing research expectations with your advisor.

Each Semester

- Meet with your Committee to discuss courses, research, and progress each semester.
- Take ABE 696 Seminar in a Spring semester before completing your degree.
- Register for the next semester including research credits. Discuss expectations with your advisor and complete the Research Registration Form.

PhD students only

- If you are a Direct to PhD student, complete Qualifying Sequence starting in Year 2. See Section 1 for details.
- *(All PhD students):* Complete Preliminary Exam (Section 5), normally in year 2 after the master's degree, or in year 3 for Direct to PhD students. You must complete this at least one full year before you graduate.
- Complete ABE 697 seminar.

Before Final Semester

- Register as CAND 991 or 992 for the semester you plan to graduate (See Section 6)
- Plan process for final exam with your Major Professor and committee.
- Ensure that your Plan of Study is complete, courses in your Plan are correct, and all degree requirements are met, including ABE 694, 696, and if required, ABE 697 (PhD Only)

Final Semester

- Schedule Defense date with Major Professor and committee. The Defense date must be at least 2 weeks before the end of the semester.
- Follow the details of the defense and submittal process in Section 6. Your responsibilities include filing Form 8 “Request for Appointment of Examining Committee” and getting electronic approvals *at least 2 weeks before the exam*, preparing a Defense Announcement using ABE template, printing rubric forms, and uploading your thesis to the Graduate School. Read these carefully and discuss with Nikki and your Advisor to make sure all are clear.

After Graduation

- Keep in touch with your Major Professor and the ABE Graduate Program. We look forward to hearing about your successes!