

School of Nutrition and Food Sciences

Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College

Graduate Student Handbook

A Supplement to the
LSU General Catalog and Graduate Bulletin
for Graduate Students
in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences

Revised August 2026

Contents

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHOOL OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCES.....	4
Graduate Faculty (Ph.D.):.....	4
Graduate Program Committee:	4
Major Professor/Advisor:.....	4
Graduate Advisory Committee:	4
Examination Committee:	5
No Clear Path to Degree Completion:.....	5
Program of Study:	5
Dean's Representative: (Ph.D. only):	6
Practicing Dietetics in Louisiana:	6
School of Nutrition and Food Science Master of Science	7
Requirements for Master of Science in Food Science and Technology Concentration.....	8
Requirements for Master of Science in Food and Bioprocessing Systems Concentration.....	9
Requirements for Master of Science in Human Nutrition Concentration.....	10
Requirements for Master of Science in Molecular Nutrition Concentration	11
School of Nutrition and Food Sciences Master's Degree Procedures:	12
Master's Degree Proposal and Thesis:.....	12
Thesis Committee Requirements:.....	13
Application for Master's Degree and Master's Final Examination:	13
Concentration Faculty.....	14
Other Degree Requirements and Regulations:	14
Course Registration:.....	15
GA Vacation Policy:	15
GA Leave of Absence Policy:	15
LaCarte, Purchasing & Travel:	15
Health Insurance for Domestic and International Graduate Assistants (GAs):	17
Master's Student Progress Checklist	19
School of Nutrition and Food Science Doctor of Philosophy	21
Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Food Science and Technology Concentration.....	22
Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Food and Bioprocessing Concentration.....	23
Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Human Nutrition Concentration.....	24
Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular Nutrition Concentration	25

School of Nutrition and Food Science Doctor of Philosophy Procedures:.....	26
Time Limit:	27
Doctoral Committee Requirements:.....	27
Doctoral Degree Audit and Request for General Examination:.....	27
General Examination:.....	27
Concentration Faculty.....	28
Ph.D. Dissertations:.....	29
Application for Degree and Final Examination:	29
Other Degree Requirements and Regulations:.....	30
Course Registration:.....	30
GA Vacation Policy:	30
GA Leave of Absence Policy:	30
LaCarte, Purchasing & Travel:	31
Health Insurance for Domestic and International Graduate Assistants (GAs):	32
PhD Student Progress Checklist	35

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN THE SCHOOL OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCES

Graduate students are responsible for reading and knowing the policies, rules, and regulations of the University and the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences found on the LSU website, the General Catalog, the Graduate Bulletin, and this School handbook. Each graduate student is responsible for following the LSU Code of Student Conduct, policies on Academic Integrity, safety rules, Policy Statements (PS) of LSU, and Presidential Memoranda (PM) of the LSU System. Additionally, students should know the policies and regulations of the LSU Agricultural Center (LSU AgCenter) when conducting their research.

Graduate students must follow the schedules and deadlines contained in the resources in the previous paragraph for their protection and completion of their graduate degree in a satisfactory and timely manner. The information in this handbook is intended as a guide to supplement the information in other resources and will not answer all questions that may arise. Additional information can also be obtained by the student from the Major Professor, the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences Graduate Coordinator, and the Graduate School, in that order of communication sequence.

The following definitions are some basic terminologies of graduate studies.

Graduate Faculty (Ph.D.): Graduate faculty members are either on a tenure track, have completed the tenure and promotion process, or have been appointed to the graduate faculty because of their expertise. Graduate faculty will generally be assistant, associate, or full professors. Faculty members from other campuses, such as the LSU AgCenter, Pennington Biomedical Center, or LSU Health Sciences, and other institutions require approval from the Graduate School for appointment to graduate faculty. A full graduate faculty member has completed the tenure and promotion process and is an associate or full professor.

Graduate Program Committee: Members of the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences graduate faculty who make recommendations to the Director and the School graduate faculty on policies, procedures, and standards for graduate education, graduate courses, and graduate programs in nutrition and food sciences.

Major Professor/Advisor: The chair of the Graduate Advisory Committee who bears the primary responsibility in the day-to-day supervision of the student's research. This may be a full member or an associate member of the graduate faculty.

A student may be able to seek a major advisor from other schools and departments within the LSU College of Agriculture and other colleges and institutions within the LSU system. In that case, the advisor must have an adjunct professor appointment with the SNFS, and a co-advisor, who is a full member or an associate member of the graduate faculty, must come from the SNFS.

Graduate Advisory Committee: The committee for each graduate student that advises on coursework and research and supervises the Program of Study and research project for a graduate student on behalf of the school. The Graduate Advisory Committee must have three faculty members for M.S. students and at least four for Ph.D. students, with at least two

members from the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, of which at least one member must be a full member of the graduate faculty and one Dean's Representative. Any declared minors or areas of concentration require representation on the Graduate Advisory Committee, either from among the first three (M.S.) or four (Ph.D.) members or by additional appointments. Minors also require approval from the Head of the Minor Department and the Minor representative. Members of the Graduate Advisory Committee who are not either full or associate members of the graduate faculty must be appointed as affiliate graduate faculty members through LSU Graduate School approval procedures.

Examination Committee: The Examination Committee will ordinarily be the Graduate Advisory Committee, with one additional member for doctoral committees assigned by the Graduate School to conduct General Examinations and Final Examinations of Theses or Dissertations. Examinations are open to other members of the faculty, but without a vote.

No Clear Path to Degree Completion: A new policy recently approved by the LSU Graduate Council, discussed with the LSU Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and signed by the Office of Academic Affairs. In rare circumstances, a graduate student may remain in good academic standing but be unable to identify a faculty member willing to serve as their major professor or participate on a graduate committee. Because the Graduate School cannot require faculty members to serve in these roles, students may remain enrolled while having no viable path toward degree completion. The new policy provides a formal mechanism for academic programs to address such situations. Under this policy, departments may request that a student be placed on No Clear Path to Degree Completion status. Once placed on this status, the student will have until the end of the next full semester (fall or spring) to secure a major professor and/or establish a graduate committee in conformance with graduate school committee requirements.

During this period:

- The department is expected to make reasonable efforts to work collaboratively with the student to resolve the situation.
- These efforts must be documented and reported to the Graduate School.
- The responsibility for identifying a major professor and forming a committee remains with the student.
- If the issue remains unresolved by the end of the designated semester, the department may request dismissal of the student from the degree program.

If you feel this policy may apply to you, please meet with your major professor to discuss and confirm the lack of a full committee. Your major professor will initiate the paperwork on your behalf.

Program of Study: A listing of the specific courses to be taken by the graduate student for their graduate degree. This is established by the students and approved by their Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee. Specific courses required of M.S. and Ph.D. students in nutrition and food sciences concentrations are in the following sections. Additional courses required of a graduate student will depend on their academic background, as well as their proposed research area, and whether they have declared minors or areas of concentration. The courses for each graduate student will be discussed and approved by the student's Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee. The student has the ultimate responsibility for the graduate academic program, so students need to establish their committees as early as possible,

preferably during the first semester of graduate work. In addition to these courses, students may also be required to take English courses as determined by the Graduate School and the English Department, usually in the first semester.

Dean's Representative: (Ph.D. only): The Dean of the Graduate School appoints an outside member to the Graduate Advisory Committee to ensure that the general and final examinations are correctly conducted and, in a manner, consistent with maintaining program quality, and that students are questioned and treated fairly. The Dean's representative is a full voting member of the committee.

Practicing Dietetics in Louisiana: The State of Louisiana has a licensing law for the practice of dietetics. At this time, only RDs (RDNs) can obtain a license to practice dietetics in Louisiana. Therefore, students need to refrain from providing nutrition/diet advice to individuals, since students violating this law will be referred to the Licensing Board. In addition, since giving such advice is a violation of Louisiana law, this is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. If you choose to violate this law, under no circumstances should you identify yourself as being an LSU student, since LSU does not condone this practice. If you have any questions about this, don't hesitate to get in touch with Dr. McKinley, who is directing the Didactic Program.

School of Nutrition and Food Science Master of Science

The M.S. degree in Nutrition and Food Sciences requires a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit (includes a minimum of 24 coursework hours and 6 hours of thesis research). At least 12 of the 24 hours of course work must be in courses numbered at or above the 7000 level.

The 24 coursework hours may include no more than 9 hours of NFS 7030 (Advanced Food and Nutrition Research). The 9 hours of NFS 7030 is the total a student can take while a graduate student in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences; thus, if a student takes 9 hours at the M.S. level, they may not take this course at the doctoral level.

Students without nutrition courses as undergraduates may be required to complete selected undergraduate courses that are a prerequisite for graduate study in nutrition. More than 30 hours may be needed to ensure a thorough understanding of the field, and this determination is made by the Major Professor and/or the Graduate Advisory Committee.

Students must have a 3.0 GPA at the time of thesis defense.

All M.S. graduate students are required to take the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences' core courses:

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 8000 (Thesis Research)	6
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)	2
EXST 7004 (or EXST 7003 or EXST 7005*)	4
Total core course hours	15
<u>Concentration Courses or Electives</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	30

**EXST 7003 Statistical Inference I; EXST 7004 Experimental Statistics I (4); EXST 7005 Statistical Techniques I (4)*

Requirements for Master of Science in Food Science and Technology Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 8000 (Thesis Research)	6
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)	2
EXST 7004 (or EXST 7003 or EXST 7005*)	<u>4</u>
Total core course hours	15

The following courses or demonstration to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience* are required, and may be included in the 15 hours required for the Food Science and Technology Concentration:

NFS 4060 (Food Chemistry)	4
NFS 4075 (Food Preservation)	3
NFS 4050 (Food Composition and Analysis)	4
NFS 4162 (Food Microbiology)	<u>4</u>
	30

Depending on prior coursework and experience (often obtained through an undergraduate degree in Food Science and Technology), additional courses may be required to satisfy the 24-hour course requirement* for the M.S. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Agricultural Sciences, Biological Sciences, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Business or other disciplines related to the student's course of study.

*Competency can be determined by asking the LSU instructor of the course to evaluate the transcript and syllabus of a course taken at another institution, by taking a test on the course materials developed and administered by the LSU instructor, or through review by the LSU instructor of other materials or evidence that the student has gained competency in the course. Students must obtain written verification from the LSU instructor that they have competency in the course material. Demonstration of competency will not result in credit hours for the course being given. Additional courses that are equivalent to the core course in credit hours must be taken.

Requirements for Master of Science in Food and Bioprocessing Systems Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 8000 (Thesis Research)	6
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)	2
EXST 7004 (or EXST 7003 or EXST 7005*)	<u>4</u>
Total core course hours	15

The following courses or demonstrations to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience are required, and may be included in the 15 hours required for Food and Bioprocessing Systems Concentration:

NFS 4060 (Food Chemistry)	4 OR
NFS 4075 (Food Preservation)	3 OR
NFS 4050 (Food Composition and Analysis)	4 OR
NFS 4162 (Food Microbiology)	<u>4 OR</u>
For a total of	7-8
 NFS 4005--Food Engineering	 3
Technology Courses 4000/7000 level*	<u>5-4</u>
	30

Depending on prior coursework and experience (often obtained through an undergraduate degree in Food Science and Technology), additional courses will be required to satisfy the 24-hour course requirement for the M.S. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Food Science or Engineering.

*The Major Professor or the Graduate Advisory Committee will determine which technology courses will be acceptable to meet the requirement. The courses must be related to food and/or bioprocessing applications in systems. The examples of technology courses are ANSC 4094, Meat Technology; ANSC 4020, Dairy Foods Technology: Frozen and Cultured Dairy Products (4); CHEM 7010, Macromolecular Systems III (3); BE 4341, Biological Reactor Systems Design (3); BE 7350, Advanced Instrumentation and Control for Biological Systems (3); and ISDS 7150, Emerging Markets Supply Chain Management (3).

Requirements for Master of Science in Human Nutrition Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 8000 (Thesis Research)	6
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)	2
EXST 7004 (or EXST 7003 or EXST 7005*)	<u>4</u>
Total core course hours	15

The following courses or demonstration to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience are required, and must be included in the 15 hours required for the Human Nutrition Concentration:

BIOL 4087 (Biochemistry)	4
NFS 7001 (Macronutrients)	3
NFS 7002 (Topics in Micronutrients)	3
1 NFS course*	2-3
Electives	<u>3-2</u>
Total	30

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses will be required to satisfy the 24-hour course requirement for the M.S. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Biological Sciences, Kinesiology, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Psychology, Sociology, or Business.

*NFS Nutrition and Food Science courses include: NFS 7006, Obesity Biology, Brain and Behavior (2); NFS 7007, Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments (2); NFS 7011, Current Advances in Food and Nutrition (1-4); NFS 7021, Food and Chronic Disease Management (3); NFS 7003, Integrated Nutrition (3); NFS 7008, Nutrition and Health Behavior (3); and NFS 7009, The Microbiota (3)

Requirements for Master of Science in Molecular Nutrition Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 8000 (Thesis Research)	6
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)	2
EXST 7004 (or EXST 7003 or EXST 7005*)	<u>4</u>
Total core course hours	15

The following courses or demonstration to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience are required, and may be included in the 15 hours required for the Molecular Nutrition Concentration:

BIOL 4093 & 4094 (Biochemistry)	6
NFS 7001 (Macronutrients)	3
NFS 7002 (Topics in Micronutrients)	3
NFS 7006 & 7007 (Obesity Biology, Brain, and Behavior; and Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments)	<u>4</u>
Total	31

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses will be required to satisfy the 24-hour course requirement for the M.S. degree*. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Biological Sciences, Kinesiology, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Psychology, Sociology, or Business.

* Other optional courses will be selected based on the students' interests within the proposed Molecular Nutrition concentration, in collaboration with the Major Professor and the students' Graduate Advisory Committees. These courses may include classes in biology, biochemistry, physiology, immunology, and so on. Additional Nutrition courses include: NFS 7006, Obesity Biology, Brain, and Behavior (2); NFS 7007, Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments (2); NFS 7011, Current Advances in Food and Nutrition (1-4); NFS 7021, Food and Chronic Disease Management (3); NFS 7003, Integrated Nutrition (3); NFS 7008, Nutrition and Health Behavior (3); and NFS 7009, The Microbiota (3).

School of Nutrition and Food Sciences Master's Degree Procedures:

1. Graduate Students on assistantships will be evaluated four times a year by their Major Professor at the end of each semester. Three are for the LSU Grad School, and one is strictly for SNFS.
2. Students on any funded assistantship are required to be enrolled in at least 9 credit hours Fall and Spring (6 of the 9 credit hours must be graduate-level courses) and 6 credit hours in the Summer (3 of the 6 credit hours must be graduate-level courses).
3. The student and Major Professor must select the Graduate Advisory Committee during the student's first semester and a signed copy of "Academic Course Plan" must be signed by the Major Professor and School of Nutrition and Food Science Graduate Advisor (Dr. Erin McKinley) and turned into Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker) 295 Knapp Hall or scan to, pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu.
4. Research
The Graduate Advisory Committee must approve an oral or written (about five pages) research proposal within the first year the student begins the degree. The Major Professor will advise the graduate student on the proper format for the proposal.
The proposal typically includes:
 - a. Justification
 - b. Objectives, hypotheses, and/or research questions
 - c. Review of literature
 - d. Methodology
 - e. Current ResultsGraduate students will meet with their Advisory Committee annually.
5. A signed copy of the proposal approval sheet and course schedule must be turned into the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker), 295 Knapp Hall or scan to, pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu.
6. Students are encouraged to submit one manuscript for publication and have one national presentation before graduation. For copyright and ethical matters, see the LSU Graduate School's "[Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines](#)."
7. Nutrition and Food Science Seminars – graduate students are encouraged to attend all departmental graduate, faculty, and invited speaker seminars.
8. A minor in a related field is encouraged but not required.
9. Expected time to complete the degree is from 1 ½ to 2 years with the potential of an additional semester of support, pending completion of milestones and recommendation of the committee; however, the maximum time allowed by the Graduate School is five years.
10. International students on a F-1 or J-1 visa beginning a new degree have a fixed maximum of 4 years to complete a degree at any US institution as of September 15, 2026. The post-graduation departure or transfer period drops from 60 days down to 30 days.

Master's Degree Proposal and Thesis:

MS students should meet with their Major Professor to determine the members of their Advisory Committee within the first semester of the program and to discuss courses required and fill out the Academic Course Plan, indicating the expected completion date (semester,

year). Students must prepare a written or oral proposal of their research for approval by the Advisory Committee within the first year. Laboratory areas required by the student should be identified, and appropriate laboratory leaders contacted for requirements regarding protocols, supplies, and safety.

The master's thesis should demonstrate capacity for research, originality of thought, and facility in organizing materials. It must be acceptable in subject matter and exhibit creditable literary workmanship. Inclusion of words, ideas, or data of other researchers must be appropriately acknowledged and referenced. The School of Nutrition and Food Sciences requires all graduate students to include a Review of Literature in their thesis. It is the student's responsibility to know and follow proper citation methods to prevent actual or perceived plagiarism. The thesis style should be discussed and accepted by the student and their Major Professor and must meet Graduate School requirements. Graduating students are expected to attend Graduate School seminars and meetings on thesis format, submission, and approval.

Thesis Committee Requirements:

Final acceptance of the master's thesis rests with a committee of three or more members of the graduate faculty nominated by the chair of the major department and appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. See the [Graduate Faculty list website](#) for definitions of full, associate, and affiliate members of the graduate faculty.

The major professor, who must be from the major department, is designated as chair or co-chair of this committee. If either an adjunct or a non-tenure-track faculty member is the major professor, a full-time tenured or tenure-track graduate faculty member must co-chair the committee. Other committee members may be from the major department or other pertinent departments. If there is an external minor, one committee member must represent the minor department. Both thesis and non-thesis committees must include at least one full member of the graduate faculty, and at least one-half of the committee's graduate faculty members must be full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members at LSU. Any additions to or changes in the makeup of this committee must be approved in advance by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School may serve as a member of any committee or may appoint additional members.

All members of the committee must have LSU Graduate Faculty Status. To check if someone has "grad faculty status," you can go to

<https://lsu.app.box.com/s/l3huww9trcft8q3v66by7ghulqi8b4a> and search by last name. Just because someone works here or has adjunct status does not automatically mean they have graduate faculty status.

Application for Master's Degree and Master's Final Examination:

Once graduate students have filled out the forms for graduation, they will make an appointment with Petrie to verify that committee members needing Administrative Approval have been approved. At that time, they will get a printout of the courses they have taken while at LSU. Next, they will go to the faculty member responsible for verifying that all concentration requirements have been met. If you are exempt from taking any courses, then you need an email from the faculty teaching the course showing your exception.

Concentration Faculty

Dr. Erin McKinley – Food Science and Technology Concentration

Dr. Erin McKinley – Food and Bioprocessing Systems Concentration

Dr. Mike Keenan - Human Nutrition Concentration and Molecular Nutrition Concentration

Then the student will go to Dr. McKinley's office (285 Knapp) to verify that everything has been completed. They will sign off on their paperwork and then take it to Petrie, who will email all forms to the Graduate School.

Early before each semester or summer term, there is a deadline for submitting the "Application for Degree" to the Graduate School. When MS students intend to graduate during a given semester, they should complete and submit their "Application for Degree" and "Request for Final Examination."

The student has the responsibility of scheduling the location, date, and time when all committee members can attend the master's Final Examination. The examination should be preceded by a publicly announced School seminar on the thesis research. The Final Examination and seminar may not be scheduled when LSU is not in session. The "Request for Final Examination" form must be approved by the Major Professor and Department Head or Graduate Coordinator and submitted at least three weeks before the proposed examination date and by the current semester deadline if the student is a candidate for a degree (see the current "Academic Calendar" for pertinent dates/deadlines). Two originals of this form are forwarded to the Graduate School, one copy to each Examination Committee member, and one copy to the Graduate Coordinator. The finished thesis should be distributed to your Major Professor six (6) weeks in advance and the Examination Committee two (2) weeks before the examination date.

The master's degree Final Examination is a comprehensive oral examination that will evaluate the thesis, the student's ability to understand, explain, and defend the thesis, as well as assess the student's broader knowledge of the major field (and minor field, if applicable). Outcome of the Final Examination, as well as acceptance of the thesis, rests with the Final Examination Committee. This committee is nominated by the chair of the student's major department and appointed by the dean of the Graduate School. It will ordinarily be the faculty members who serve as the student's thesis committee. The thesis may be accepted at this time, but if revisions are recommended, the approval of the thesis will be delayed until those revisions are made. The Major Professor is responsible for providing two copies of the "Exam Results Form" to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (*Petrie Baker*), 295 Knapp Hall.

After the committee has approved the final version of the thesis, required copies must be submitted to and accepted by the Graduate School. One electronic copy must also be sent to the Major Professor, to each Graduate Advisory Committee member, and the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (*Petrie Baker*) in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences.

Other Degree Requirements and Regulations:

Graduate students are responsible for knowing the policies, rules, and regulations of the University and the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences found on the LSU website, the General

Catalog, and the Graduate Bulletin that are not discussed in this departmental handbook. Each graduate student is responsible for following the LSU Code of Student Conduct, policies on Academic Integrity, safety rules, Policy Statements (PS) of LSU, and Presidential Memoranda (PM) of the LSU System.

Course Registration:

All graduate students are required to register for courses at the time of registration during each semester. Not registering for courses for the following semester will lead to issues with the continuance of your GA position. Please alert Dr. McKinley or Petrie Baker of an issue with your registration as soon as you realize there is an issue. They can fix problems and request overrides into courses.

Late adds for classes offered over the full 15-week term are no longer accepted by the University Registrar. NEVER ASSUME WE KNOW THERE IS AN ISSUE (unless you tell us) OR THAT THE ISSUE HAS BEEN FIXED (if you do not hear from us after you alert us, please ask for a status check).

GA Vacation Policy:

Graduate students do not earn annual leave according to the LSU policy statement PM-20, therefore you are not granted vacation time automatically. If graduate students must be absent from the worksite, they must get approval from their major professor and the SNFS Graduate Advisor (Dr. Erin McKinley). Requests must be made by writing via email. It is the student's responsibility to make up any hours or work during their absence. Please do not pre-plan trips before receiving approval.

GA Leave of Absence Policy:

Graduate students who wish to take a leave of absence from the program must discuss this with their Major Professor and Thesis Committee. A "leave of absence" is defined as leaving LSU for one or more semesters, unenrolling as a student, and being terminated as a GA. Depending on your funding as a GA, your position and funding may not be available upon your return. International students must follow the rules of their Visa and may be required to return to their home country during this leave of absence.

LaCarte, Purchasing & Travel:LaCarte

- If you are a Graduate Student on an assistantship, to travel, you must have a LaCarte card. Contact Tiffany Jones for details, 578-4475, or email her at tiffanyjones@agcenter.lsu.edu
- If you have a LaCarte card, please make sure your delegations are set to Tiffany Jones. If you need additional details, please reach out to Tiffany.
- Please review the LaCarte rules and allowable charges: LSU PM-78

Purchasing

- If you need to purchase something on Workday, please get in touch with Hunter Anthony for instructions at haanthony@agcenter.lsu.edu.
- If you purchase something on your LaCarte, be sure it falls within the perimeters of purchasing; otherwise, you will have payroll deducted for any disallowed purchases.

Travel

- The official University policy for travel is PM-13 “University Travel Regulations” and is updated yearly.
- You must have a LaCarte card if you plan to travel. We need to eliminate the sharing expenses of other Graduate students on each other’s cards. Suppose you do not have a LaCarte, your major professor needs to cover your allowed travel expenses on their cards, not another student. Please get in touch with Tiffany with questions or issues before you travel.
- For all hotel lodging, including AirBnB, only the first night’s lodging should be paid to secure the reservation. Lodging should not be prepaid in total; payment should be made upon checkout. If the travel is canceled for any reason and the total lodging amount was prepaid, only the first night of lodging may be allowed as a university expense. The other prepaid lodging days will be the responsibility of the traveler.
 - We cannot have multiple people staying in one room and receive just one bill. We need each person in the room to pay for their share of the room. The hotel can split the bill between people. Most recent conference travel was very confusing with the room share. For the department to cover the cost, each person in the room must pay their share of the expense on their card.
- Christopherson Business Travel (CBT) remains the State of Louisiana contract travel agency and use is mandatory for university business travel. Travelers are encouraged to use CBT’s Concur Online Booking System which is available through myLSU under Travel Resources. The online booking fee is \$7, in contrast to the agent-assisted service fee of \$24.
- Travel to the 48 continental US and District of Columbia is subject to GSA rates for mileage, lodging, and meal per diem and incidentals (M&IE).
- Travel to foreign countries is subject to US Department of State rates for lodging and M&IE.
- Travel to Alaska, Hawaii and US territories are subject to the M&IE rates as published PM-13. Refer to Appendix A for the rates.
- If you plan to travel on department funds or grant funds, you will need to complete the new department travel form. This is to ensure we are all on the same page about who is paying for what and the dollar amount covered.

Key Policy changes as of July 1, 2026

- **International Travel** - Please keep in mind that all international travel requires approval of Director of Accounting Services, Caryn McGlinchey, sends the request to Tiffany and she will forward and cc you on the request. Overall, the international travel approval process will not change, however, there is a new required approval role of Entity Head in Workday. This role will be fulfilled by Dr. Salassi.
- **Pre-Travel Authorization** - There is an emphasis on ensuring that all official University travel has an approved spend authorization **prior** to making travel arrangements and incurring expenses. Instances where travel expenses are incurred before obtaining a fully approved spend authorization will be documented via email to the traveler and have the risk of potential reimbursement denial.
- **Contracted Travel Services** – Use of the contracted travel agency remains mandatory for airfare reservations unless an exemption is approved prior to travel. To qualify for an

exemption, the alternate airfare must provide at least 10% savings and a minimum cost savings of \$200, excluding the travel agency fee.

- **In-state Vehicle Rentals** - Box trucks are now available under the Enterprise/National and Hertz contracts.
- **Uber or Lyft Services** – Uber Priority (along with the previously named Uber Black, Uber Black XL, and Uber Premier) and the same upgraded rides for Lyft are not reimbursable.
- **Registration Fees for Conferences and Conventions** - Membership fees included as part of the conference registration are allowable expenses when directly associated with the conference registration.
- **Special Meals** - The AgCenter will retain the requirement of an all-day event to be considered a special meal event.

Travel Covered by a Third Party

- It is the responsibility of the university and the employee to comply with all ethics laws and requirements. When any part of travel expenses is covered by a third party, the Board of Ethics' affidavit must be approved by Dr. Lee **IN ADVANCE** of the travel and filed with the Board of Ethics within 60 days after such acceptance. Please refer to the following link for more information and specific submission process: [Travel Expenses Covered by a Third Party](#).

Rental Cars

- Driver Authorization is required for official University business when traveling by motor vehicle, including rental or personal vehicles if driving is part of the employee's written job description, is assigned by a department as a routine duty, or when otherwise required by institutional procedures.
- Enterprise, National and Hertz remain the vehicle rental vendors for both in-state and out-of-state travel, and use is mandatory for employees. Use of the contracted vendors is encouraged for non-employee University students, guests, and contractors. It is at the traveler's discretion which rental company is utilized.

Health Insurance for Domestic and International Graduate Assistants (GAs):

To improve the student quality of life, increase competitiveness of its graduate programs, support its undergraduate teaching mission, and enhance its mission to produce top-tier scholarship, LSU has partnered with UnitedHealthcare to provide an affordable health insurance plan for GAs (see table below) in which LSU will cover 75% of the total premium cost. The health insurance plan is a student plan and does not provide any coverage for family members. Any options to enroll family members will have to be discussed outside of the LSU student health insurance plan.

All GAs (domestic and international) who meet the eligibility criteria listed below will automatically be enrolled and assessed the premium (by term) for the student health insurance plan. The GA will also receive credit on their student account for 75% of the premium covered by LSU. The GA will be responsible for the remaining 25%. The amounts will appear on the student's fee bill for that term.

Eligibility Criteria

- Enrolled full-time as a graduate student

- Appointed as a Graduate Assistant in Workday at 50% effort

Coverage Starting in Fall

To ensure student health insurance for Fall, departmental administrators must ensure that Fall GAs are accurately appointed and approved by all required departmental signatories in Workday by late June. Approval processes may differ by department, but in each case, GAs must be ready for Graduate School review by late June.

- It is understood that some international GAs may not have arrived on campus and may not be eligible for appointment by June. Departments should maintain and provide the Graduate School with a list of projected GAs in this category, with the time allocation and salary.
- There may also be some other projected GAs not ready to be appointed by June, and they should also be added to the above list and sent to the Graduate School at graddeanoffice@lsu.edu.

Coverage for Spring and Summer

- New GAs for Spring can be added on a rolling basis, and waiver deadlines will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Continuing GAs in the Spring will be automatically enrolled in and assessed the Spring/Summer premium.
- GAs will get the Spring-only rate if they are graduating and have diploma fees posted to their account for Spring. Bursar Operations will automatically make this conversion. However, contact Bursar Operations at bursar@lsu.edu by the 14th class day if you are graduating and see the Spring/Summer premium.

* Graduating GAs are covered under SHIP until the end of the paid policy period (term).

Option to waive the LSU insurance plan

- Students who have an alternate health insurance policy and do not wish to enroll in the LSU student health insurance plan must request a waiver by submitting their insurance information using the following link: www.gallagherstudent.com/lsu-batonrouge.
- Waiver requests must be submitted each term (Fall, Spring & Summer).
- If a waiver is approved, the student health insurance premium and LSU share will be removed from the student account.
- Students granted a waiver will not be responsible for purchasing the student insurance plan, and LSU will not be obligated to cover any costs associated with the GA's health insurance.
- If a waiver is not filed by the set deadline for Fall, Spring/Summer, or Summer, the GA will remain enrolled in the student health insurance plan and will be responsible for 25% of the premium. A waiver will not be considered after the determined date.
- The student health insurance plan is non-refundable and cannot be prorated or end early.

Questions can be sent to the Graduate School at graddeanoffice@lsu.edu.

Master's Student Progress Checklist

Tri-Annual Evaluation by Major Professor**

Completion of Academic Coursework

- Year one
 - Semester one
 - Semester two
 - Semester three
- Year two
 - Semester one
 - Semester two
 - Semester three (if needed)

Required Paperwork

- School -level academic course plan** (approved 1st semester)
- Form Advisory Committee (within 1st year)
- Written/Oral Proposal (Proposal Cover Page**) (approved within 1st year)
- Written proposal and/or oral presentation to advisory committee.
- Annual Committee meeting
 - Year 1
 - Year 2

Semester of Graduation

- Application for master's degree (refer to graduate school deadlines)
- Request for master's Final Examination (Thesis Defense) (refer to graduate school deadlines)
- Thesis document distributed to Major Professor six (6) weeks in advance and the Examination Committee two (2) weeks before the examination date.

Thesis Defense (Final Examination)

- Student to email Petrie Baker 2 weeks before the defense to fill out graduate forms.
- Major Professor (Chair) will bring the following forms to the defense and give them to Petrie Baker after completion.
 - Defense results forms* (2)
 - Master Approval Sheets* If corrections are needed; the Major Professor (chair) will keep forms (2).
 - Assessment Forms* (1 from each committee member)

Expected time to completion with funding

1 ½ to 2 years of completion, with the potential of an additional semester of support, pending completion of milestones and recommendation of the committee.

*Forms emailed to the Major Professor

**** Forms must be returned to the Administrative Program Specialist for Student Services (Petrie Baker, 295 Knapp Hall)**

Students may submit graduate school forms directly to gradsvcs@lsu.edu, and copy the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker)

Contact Petrie Baker (pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu) to schedule a conference room in Knapp Hall.

To schedule 102 Knapp Hall, please contact Ms. Piccola Thomas, PTThomas@agcenter.lsu.edu.

To schedule a room in AFSL, please contact Ms. Sharon Hymel, SHymel@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Please refer all questions about this checklist to your major professor or the Graduate Program Advisor, Dr. Erin McKinley (emckinley1@lsu.edu).

School of Nutrition and Food Science Doctor of Philosophy

Admission to the Ph.D. program in the School of Nutrition and Food Science requires approval by the School of Nutrition and Food Science Graduate Faculty members. To earn a Ph.D. in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, students are required to complete at least 54 hours beyond the B.S. or B.A. degree. This includes 45 hours of coursework and 9 hours of 9000 dissertation. At least 50% or 23 of the 45 coursework hours MUST be 7000-level and above. A maximum of 27 *hours* can be “transferred” from a previously completed MS degree in Nutrition and/or Food Science EXTERNAL to LSU towards the required coursework. This coursework must be approved by the School of Nutrition and Food Science Graduate Faculty after evaluation of the course syllabi. The 50% 7000 course rules still apply.

Students who wish to switch from an M.S. program to a Ph.D. program without completing the M.S. requirements must get approval from their Major Professor and advisory committee and have been in the school for 2 semesters, completed six graduate courses with a GPA of 3.50. Individual Major Professors may have additional requirements.

To graduate, a PhD student must have a total of three hours of NFS 7071 before graduation; a maximum of two hours of seminar taken as part of the master’s degree can be applied to the total.

The total hours may include no more than 9 hours of NFS 7030 (Advanced Food and Nutrition Research). The 9 hours of NFS 7030 is the total a student can take while a graduate student in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences; thus, if a student takes 9 hours at the M.S. level, they may not take this course at the doctoral level.

Graduate students who apply to the doctoral program after completion of the M.S. at LSU must be approved by the School of Nutrition and Food Science Graduate Faculty after evaluation of credentials in the same process as outside applications for admission into the school's graduate program are evaluated. All MS coursework completed at LSU (minus any 8000 hours) can be counted towards the required hours for the PhD, as long as all other requirements are completed.

Students must have a 3.0 GPA at the time of dissertation defense.

All Ph. D. graduate students are required to take the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences core courses:

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)*	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)*	3
EXST 7013, 7014, or 7015	4
NFS 9000 (Dissertation Research)	<u>9</u>
Total core course hours	19
 <u>Concentration Courses or Electives</u>	 <u>35</u>
	54

EXST 7013 Statistical Inference II; EXST 7014 Experimental Statistics II (4); EXST 7015 Statistical Techniques II (4)

Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Food Science and Technology Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)*	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)*	3
EXST 7013, 7014, or 7015	4
NFS 9000 (Dissertation Research)	<u>9</u>
Total core course hours	19

The following courses or demonstration to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience are required, and must be included in the 35 hours required for the Food Science and Technology Concentration:

Students must have credit in or demonstrated competency* in:

NFS 4060 (Food Chemistry)	4
NFS 4075 (Food Preservation)	3
NFS 4050 (Food Composition and Analysis)	4
NFS 4162 (Food Microbiology)	4
Elective Hours**	<u>20</u>
	54

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses may be required to satisfy the 54-hour course requirement for the Ph.D. degree. Elective hours or additional courses required for each student's program of study will be determined by the Major Professor and the Graduate Committee. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken in Agricultural Sciences, Biological Sciences, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Business.

*Competency can be demonstrated through the same procedures as for M.S. students in the *Requirements for Master of Science in the Food Science* concentration section.

**If a student has credit or competency in any or all these courses, additional elective hours will need to be taken.

Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Food and Bioprocessing Concentration

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)*	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)*	3
EXST 7013, 7014, or 7015	4
NFS 9000 (Dissertation Research)	<u>9</u>
Total core course hours	19

The following courses or demonstration to the students' Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience are required, and must be included in the 35 hours required for the Food and Bioprocessing Concentration:

Students must have credit in or demonstrated competency* in:

NFS 4060 (Food Chemistry)	4 OR
NFS 4075 (Food Preservation)	3 OR
NFS 4050 (Food Composition and Analysis)	4 OR
NFS 4162 (Food Microbiology)	<u>4 OR</u> 7-8
NFS 4005 (Food Engineering)	3
Technology Courses (4000 or 7000 level) **	12
Elective hours	<u>13-12</u> 54

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses will be required to satisfy the 54-hour requirement for the Ph.D. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken in Biological Sciences, Experimental Statistics, or Engineering; however, they could also be taken from other departments, as appropriate to the student's career goals.

*Competency can be demonstrated through the same procedures as for M.S. students in the *Requirements for Master of Science in the Food Science* concentration section.

** The Major Professor or the student's Graduate Advisory Committee will determine which technology courses will be acceptable to meet the requirement. The courses must be related to food and or bioprocessing applications in systems. The examples of technology courses are ANSC 4094, Meat Technology; ANSC 4020, Dairy Foods Technology: Frozen and Cultured Dairy Products (4); CHEM 7010, Macromolecular Systems III (3); BE 4341, Biological Reactor Systems Design (3); BE 7350, Advanced Instrumentation and Control for Biological Systems (3); and ISDS 7150, Emerging Markets Supply Chain Management (3).

Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Human Nutrition Concentration

Students without nutrition courses as an undergraduate or master's student may be required to complete selected undergraduate courses, which are a prerequisite for graduate study in nutrition. Other prerequisite courses, such as biochemistry, may also be required. The Major Professor and advisory committee will guide a student in course selections. The Major Professor and advisory committee may determine that coursework beyond the minimum credit hours is needed to round out a student's academic preparation.

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)*	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)*	3
EXST 7013, 7014, or 7015	4
NFS 9000 (Dissertation Research)	<u>9</u>
Total core course hours	19

The following courses or demonstration to the student's Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience*, are required, and must be included in the 35 hours required for this Human Nutrition Concentration:

BIOL 4087 (Biochemistry)	4
NFS 7001 (Macronutrients)	3
NFS 7002 (Topics in Micronutrients)	3
NFS or related courses**	15
Elective Hours	<u>10</u>
	54

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses may be required to satisfy the 54-hour course requirement for the Ph.D. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Biological Sciences, Kinesiology, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Psychology, Sociology, or Business.

*If the student enters the Ph.D. program with a master's in nutrition, substitutions for required courses will be considered by the student's Major Professor and advisory committee.

**NFS Nutrition courses include: NFS 7006, Obesity Biology, Brain and Behavior (2); NFS 7007, Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments (2); NFS 7011, Current Advances in Food and Nutrition (1-4); NFS 7021, Food and Chronic Disease Management (3); NFS 7003, Integrated Nutrition (3); NFS 7008, Nutrition and Health Behavior (3); and NFS 7009, The Microbiota (3)

Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular Nutrition Concentration

Students who did not emphasize nutrition or dietetics as an undergraduate or master's student may be required to complete selected undergraduate courses that are a prerequisite for graduate study in nutrition.

<u>NFS Required Core Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
NFS 7022 (Current Controversies in Food and Nutrition)*	3
NFS 7071 (Seminar in Nutrition and Food Sciences)*	3
EXST 7013, 7014, or 7015	4
NFS 9000 (Dissertation Research)	<u>9</u>
Total core course hours	19

The following courses or demonstration to the student's Graduate Committee of proficiency in one or more of these courses from previous coursework and experience*, are required, and must be included in the 38 hours required for the Molecular Nutrition Concentration:

BIOL 4093 & 4094 (Biochemistry)	6
NFS 7001 (Macronutrients)	3
NFS 7002 (Topics in Micronutrients)	3
NFS 7006 & 7007 (Obesity, Biology and Behavior; and Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments)	4
NFS or related courses**	8
Elective Hours	<u>11</u>
	54

Depending on prior coursework and experience, additional courses may be required to satisfy the 54-hour course requirement for the Ph.D. degree. The Major Professor and the Graduate Committee will determine additional courses required for each student's program of study. Courses would reflect the students' professional interests and are generally taken from Biological Sciences, Kinesiology, and Experimental Statistics; however, they could also be taken from Psychology, Sociology, or Business.

*If the student enters the Ph.D. program with a master's in nutrition, substitutions for required courses will be considered by the student's Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee.

** NFS Nutrition courses include: NFS 7006, Obesity Biology, Brain and Behavior (2); NFS 7007, Obesity Comorbidities and Treatments (2); NFS 7011, Current Advances in Food and Nutrition (1-4); NFS 7021, Food and Chronic Disease Management (3); NFS 7003, Integrated Nutrition (3); NFS 7008, Nutrition and Health Behavior (3); and NFS 7009, The Microbiota (3)

School of Nutrition and Food Science Doctor of Philosophy Procedures:

1. Graduate Students on assistantships will be evaluated four times a year by their Major Professor at the end of each semester. Three are for the LSU Grad School, and one is strictly for SNFS.
2. Students on any funded assistantship are required to be enrolled in at least 9 credit hours Fall and Spring (6 of the 9 credit hours must be graduate-level courses) and 6 credit hours in the Summer (3 of the 6 credit hours must be graduate-level courses).
3. The student and Major Professor must select the Graduate Advisory Committee during the first semester and a signed copy of "Academic Course Plan" must be signed by the Major Professor and School of Nutrition and Food Science Graduate Advisor (Dr. Erin McKinley) and turned into Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker) 295 Knapp Hall or scan to, pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu.
4. Research
 - a. An oral or written (about five pages) research proposal must be approved by the graduate Advisory Committee by the first year. The Major Professor will advise the graduate student on the proper format for the proposal.
 - b. The proposal typically includes:
 - c. Justification
 - d. Objectives, hypotheses, and/or research questions
 - e. Review of literature
 - f. Methodology
 - g. Current Results
 - h. Graduate students will meet with their Advisory Committee annually.
5. A signed copy of the proposal approval sheet must be turned into the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker), 295 Knapp Hall or scan to pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu.
6. The proposed research must be given as an oral presentation at the Graduate Seminar (1 h)
7. Publication *suggestions* are one manuscript accepted, one manuscript submitted, and two national presentations before graduation. For copyright and ethical matters, see the LSU Graduate School's "Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines."
8. Nutrition and Food Science Seminars – graduate students are encouraged to attend all departmental graduate, faculty, and invited speaker seminars.
9. A Minor in a related field is encouraged but not required.
10. The Final Examination is a closed-door defense before the Doctoral Advisory Committee. A public oral seminar on the dissertation research must be presented before the dissertation defense.
11. Expected time to complete the degree is from 3 to 3 ½ years with the potential of an additional semester of support, pending completion of milestones and recommendation of the committee; however, the maximum time allowed by the Graduate School is seven years.
12. International students on a F-1 or J-1 visa beginning a new degree have a fixed maximum of 4 years to complete a degree at any US institution as of September 15, 2026. The post-graduation departure or transfer period drops from 60 days down to 30 days.

Time Limit:

The program for the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years from the time a student is classified as a doctoral student. This time limit may not be exceeded except by special permission of the Dean of the Graduate School. Also, at least three calendar months must elapse between the passing of the General Examination and the completion of all requirements for the doctoral degree. International students on a F-1 or J-1 visa have a fixed maximum of 4 years to complete a degree at any US institution as of September 15, 2026.

Doctoral Committee Requirements:

The full advisory committee must comprise at least three members of the graduate faculty, including the major professor, who acts as chair or co-chair and who must be from the major department. If either an adjunct or a non-tenure-track faculty member is the major professor, a full-time tenure or tenure-track graduate faculty member must co-chair the committee.

At least one-half of the graduate faculty on doctoral committees must be full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty at LSU. A minimum of two of those faculty members must be from the student's major department, and at least one of them must be a full member of the LSU graduate faculty. The remaining members may be from the major department or may be from outside the department if pertinent to the student's area of concentration, with the proviso that at least one of the remaining members must be a full member of the graduate faculty. See the [Graduate Faculty list website](#) for definitions of full, associate, and affiliate members of the graduate faculty.

All members of the committee must have LSU Graduate Faculty Status. To check if someone has "grad faculty status," you can go to <https://lsu.app.box.com/s/l3huww9trcft8g3v66by7ghulqi8b4a> and search by last name. Just because someone works here or has adjunct status does not automatically mean they have graduate faculty status.

Doctoral Degree Audit and Request for General Examination:

Students are encouraged to select elective courses at the 7000 level that will complement their research projects and satisfy Graduate School and the School of Nutrition and Food Science requirements. All courses must be approved in the Program of Study by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee. In addition to these courses, students may also be required to take English courses as determined by the Graduate School and the English Department. Usually, in the first semester of graduate enrollment, these courses will not count toward the course requirement. The "Doctoral Degree Audit and Request for General Examination" form must be submitted by the Graduate Advisory Committee to the Graduate School for approval within the first three years. The Graduate School is particular about how the "Doctoral Degree Audit and Request for General Examination" form is completed. Two originals of the form are forwarded to the Graduate School, one copy to each committee member, and one copy to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services, *295 Knapp Hall*.

General Examination:

The General Examination is ordinarily the most rigorous test in the entire doctoral program. The examination must be comprehensive enough to demonstrate expert competence over broad

segments of the major field and, if a minor is chosen, a high degree of familiarity with the content and current progress in that field. It will encompass all subject areas that compose the student's Program of Study as well as their proposed research project. All graduate students should be familiar with all core coursework taken for their concentration. The General Examination is the occasion when committee members have both the opportunity and the obligation to require the student to display a firm and substantial grasp of nutrition and food sciences in a broad sense, and a sophisticated depth of understanding in those more limited areas of the specialization being pursued in nutrition and food science. As a test of successful performance, the committee should question whether the student has demonstrated a qualified knowledge of the field(s) to such a degree that the student will be recognized as a professional and an academic colleague.

A Ph.D. student becomes eligible to take the General Examination after demonstrating to the Graduate Advisory Committee adequate academic and professional aptitudes. This typically occurs when the coursework proposed in the Program of Study has been completed. Students on probation will not be allowed to take the General Examination.

The student is responsible for scheduling the location, date, and time when all committee members can attend. The examination may not be scheduled between semesters when the University is open. The "Request for General Examination" form must be submitted by the Major Professor and Department Head at least three weeks before the proposed examination date. Two originals of this form are forwarded to the Graduate School, one copy to each Examination Committee member, and one copy to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services, 295 Knapp Hall. The suggested General Examination Committee will be approved when the "Request for General Examination" is submitted to the Graduate School. The finished dissertation proposal and literature review should be distributed to your Major Professor six (6) weeks in advance and the Examination Committee two (2) weeks before the examination date.

It is the responsibility of the student's Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee to determine how best to conduct the General Examination for that student. The School of Nutrition and Food Science requires an oral examination. The General Examination must include evaluation of the students' proposed dissertation research project and the students' in-depth understanding of the research area, as well as major/minor field(s).

Once graduate students have filled out the forms for the general exam, they will make an appointment with Petrie to verify that committee members needing Administrative Approval have been approved. At that time, they will get a printout of the courses they have taken while at LSU. Next, they will go to the faculty member responsible for verifying that all concentration requirements have been met. If you are exempt from taking courses, then you need the email from the faculty teaching the course showing your exception.

Concentration Faculty

Dr. Erin McKinley – Food Science and Technology Concentration

Dr. Erin McKinley – Food and Bioprocessing Systems Concentration

Dr. Mike Keenan – Human Nutrition Concentration and Molecular Nutrition Concentration

Then the student will go to Dr. McKinley's office (285 Knapp) to verify that everything has been completed. They will sign off on their paperwork and then take it to Petrie, who will email all forms to the Graduate School.

Note: A student **cannot** complete their general exam and final dissertation (examination) defense in the same semester. The time between the two must be at least **90 days (3 months)** or the graduate school will deny your request for final defense.

Ph.D. Dissertations:

The dissertation must be a contribution to knowledge in the major field of study. It must demonstrate that the student has a mastery of research techniques, the ability to do original and independent research, and the skill in formulating conclusions that in some way enlarge upon or modify accepted ideas.

The dissertation style/format should be discussed and accepted by the student and the Advisory Committee and must meet Graduate School requirements. "Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations" from the Graduate School will help to prevent a delay in Graduate School acceptance. The School of Nutrition and Food Sciences requires all graduate students to include a Review of Literature in their dissertations. It is advisable to have the Graduate School check the dissertation format early in the writing process. Graduating students are expected to attend Graduate School seminars and meetings on dissertation format, submission, and approval. Inclusion of words, ideas, or data of other researchers must be appropriately acknowledged and referenced. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and follow proper citation methods.

Application for Degree and Final Examination:

Each semester or summer term, there is a deadline for submitting the "Application for Degree" to the Graduate School. When Ph.D. students intend to graduate during a given semester, they should complete and submit their "Application for Degree" form, listing all coursework that applies toward the degree. A copy of the "Application for Degree" must be turned in to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker), 295 Knapp Hall. The student is responsible for scheduling the location, date, and time when all committee members are available. The Examination can be scheduled whenever the university is open. The "Request for Final Examination" form must be submitted by the Major Professor and Department Head at least three weeks before the proposed exam date, or by the current semester deadline if the student is a degree candidate (see the current "Academic Calendar" for important dates and deadlines). Two original copies of this form should be sent to the Graduate School, one copy to each Exam Committee member, and one copy to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services at 295 Knapp Hall. A departmental seminar on the dissertation research should take place before the Final Examination. The Administrative Program Specialist needs to receive an announcement of the Dissertation Seminar for posting and distribution. The completed dissertation should be provided to your Major Professor six (6) weeks in advance, and the Examination Committee should receive it two (2) weeks before the exam date.

The outcome of the Final Examination, as well as acceptance of the dissertation, rests with the Graduate Advisory Committee. The dissertation may be accepted at this time, but if revisions

are recommended, the approval of the dissertation will be delayed until those revisions are made. The Major Professor is responsible for providing a copy of the "Exam Results Forms" to the Administrative Program Specialist.

After the committee has approved the final version of the dissertation, required copies must be submitted to and accepted by the Graduate School. One copy must also be sent to the Major Professor, Graduate Advisory Committee, and one copy sent to the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (*Petrie Baker*) in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences.

Other Degree Requirements and Regulations:

Graduate students are responsible for knowing the policies, rules, and regulations of the University and the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences found on the LSU website, the General Catalog, and the Graduate Bulletin that are not discussed in this departmental handbook. Each graduate student is responsible for following the LSU Code of Student Conduct, policies on Academic Integrity, safety rules, Policy Statements (PS) of LSU, and Presidential Memoranda (PM) of the LSU System.

Course Registration:

All graduate students are required to register for courses at the time of registration during each semester. Not registering for courses for the following semester will lead to issues with the continuance of your GA position. Please alert Dr. McKinley or Petrie Baker of an issue with your registration as soon as you realize there is an issue. They can fix problems and request overrides into courses.

Late adds for classes offered over the full 15-week term are no longer accepted by the University Registrar. NEVER ASSUME WE KNOW THERE IS AN ISSUE (unless you tell us) OR THAT THE ISSUE HAS BEEN FIXED (if you do not hear from us after you alert us, please ask for a status check).

GA Vacation Policy:

Graduate students do not earn annual leave according to the LSU policy statement PM-20, therefore you are not granted vacation time automatically. If graduate students must be absent from the worksite, they must get approval from their major professor and the SNFS Graduate Advisor (Dr. Erin McKinley). Requests must be made by writing via email. It is the student's responsibility to make up any hours or work during their absence. Please do not pre-plan trips before receiving approval.

GA Leave of Absence Policy:

Graduate students who wish to take a leave of absence from the program must discuss this with their Major Professor and Thesis Committee. A "leave of absence" is defined as leaving LSU for one or more semesters, unenrolling as a student, and being terminated as a GA. Depending on your funding as a GA, your position and funding may not be available upon your return. International students must follow the rules of their Visa and may be required to return to their home country during this leave of absence.

LaCarte, Purchasing & Travel:

LaCarte

- If you are a Graduate Student on an assistantship, to travel, you must have a LaCarte card. Contact Tiffany Jones for details, 578-4475, or email her at tiffanyjones@agcenter.lsu.edu
- If you have a LaCarte card, please make sure your delegations are set to Tiffany Jones. If you need additional details, please reach out to Tiffany.
- Please review the LaCarte rules and allowable charges: LSU PM-78

Purchasing

- If you need to purchase something on Workday, please get in touch with Hunter Anthony for instructions at haanthony@agcenter.lsu.edu.
- If you purchase something on your LaCarte, be sure it falls within the perimeters of purchasing; otherwise, you will have payroll deducted for any disallowed purchases.

Travel

- The official University policy for travel is PM-13 “University Travel Regulations” and is updated yearly.
- You must have a LaCarte card if you plan to travel. We need to eliminate the sharing expenses of other Graduate students on each other’s cards. Suppose you do not have a LaCarte, your major professor needs to cover your allowed travel expenses on their cards, not another student. Please get in touch with Tiffany with questions or issues before you travel.
- For all hotel lodging, including AirBnB, only the first night’s lodging should be paid to secure the reservation. Lodging should not be prepaid in total; payment should be made upon checkout. If the travel is canceled for any reason and the total lodging amount was prepaid, only the first night of lodging may be allowed as a university expense. The other prepaid lodging days will be the responsibility of the traveler.
 - We cannot have multiple people staying in one room and receive just one bill. We need each person in the room to pay for their share of the room. The hotel can split the bill between people. Most recent conference travel was very confusing with the room share. For the department to cover the cost, each person in the room must pay their share of the expense on their card.
- Christopherson Business Travel (CBT) remains the State of Louisiana contract travel agency and use is mandatory for university business travel. Travelers are encouraged to use CBT’s Concur Online Booking System which is available through myLSU under Travel Resources. The online booking fee is \$7, in contrast to the agent-assisted service fee of \$24.
- Travel to the 48 continental US and District of Columbia is subject to GSA rates for mileage, lodging, and meal per diem and incidentals (M&IE).
- Travel to foreign countries is subject to US Department of State rates for lodging and M&IE.
- Travel to Alaska, Hawaii and US territories are subject to the M&IE rates as published PM-13. Refer to Appendix A for the rates.
- If you plan to travel on department funds or grant funds, you will need to complete the new department travel form. This is to ensure we are all on the same page about who is paying for what and the dollar amount covered.

Key Policy changes as of July 1, 2026

- **International Travel** - Please keep in mind that all international travel requires approval of Director of Accounting Services, Caryn McGlinchey, sends the request to Tiffany and she will forward and cc you on the request. Overall, the international travel approval process will not change, however, there is a new required approval role of Entity Head in Workday. This role will be fulfilled by Dr. Salassi.
- **Pre-Travel Authorization** - There is an emphasis on ensuring that all official University travel has an approved spend authorization **prior** to making travel arrangements and incurring expenses. Instances where travel expenses are incurred before obtaining a fully approved spend authorization will be documented via email to the traveler and have the risk of potential reimbursement denial.
- **Contracted Travel Services** – Use of the contracted travel agency remains mandatory for airfare reservations unless an exemption is approved prior to travel. To qualify for an exemption, the alternate airfare must provide at least 10% savings and a minimum cost savings of \$200, excluding the travel agency fee.
- **In-state Vehicle Rentals** - Box trucks are now available under the Enterprise/National and Hertz contracts.
- **Uber or Lyft Services** – Uber Priority (along with the previously named Uber Black, Uber Black XL, and Uber Premier) and the same upgraded rides for Lyft are not reimbursable.
- **Registration Fees for Conferences and Conventions** - Membership fees included as part of the conference registration are allowable expenses when directly associated with the conference registration.
- **Special Meals** - The AgCenter will retain the requirement of an all-day event to be considered a special meal event.

Travel Covered by a Third Party

- It is the responsibility of the university and the employee to comply with all ethics laws and requirements. When any part of travel expenses is covered by a third party, the Board of Ethics' affidavit must be approved by Dr. Lee **IN ADVANCE** of the travel and filed with the Board of Ethics within 60 days after such acceptance. Please refer to the following link for more information and specific submission process: [Travel Expenses Covered by a Third Party](#).

Rental Cars

- Driver Authorization is required for official University business when traveling by motor vehicle, including rental or personal vehicles if driving is part of the employee's written job description, is assigned by a department as a routine duty, or when otherwise required by institutional procedures.
- Enterprise, National and Hertz remain the vehicle rental vendors for both in-state and out-of-state travel, and use is mandatory for employees. Use of the contracted vendors is encouraged for non-employee University students, guests, and contractors. It is at the traveler's discretion which rental company is utilized.

Health Insurance for Domestic and International Graduate Assistants (GAs):

To improve the student quality of life, increase competitiveness of its graduate programs, support its undergraduate teaching mission, and enhance its mission to produce top-tier

scholarship, LSU has partnered with UnitedHealthcare to provide an affordable health insurance plan for GAs (see table below) in which LSU will cover 75% of the total premium cost. The health insurance plan is a student plan and does not provide any coverage for family members. Any options to enroll family members will have to be discussed outside of the LSU student health insurance plan.

All GAs (domestic and international) who meet the eligibility criteria listed below will automatically be enrolled and assessed the premium (by term) for the student health insurance plan. The GA will also receive credit on their student account for 75% of the premium covered by LSU. The GA will be responsible for the remaining 25%. The amounts will appear on the student's fee bill for that term.

Eligibility Criteria

- Enrolled full-time as a graduate student
- Appointed as a Graduate Assistant in Workday at 50% effort

Coverage Starting in Fall

To ensure student health insurance for Fall, departmental administrators must ensure that Fall GAs are accurately appointed and approved by all required departmental signatories in Workday by late June. Approval processes may differ by department, but in each case, GAs must be ready for Graduate School review by late June.

- It is understood that some international GAs may not have arrived on campus and may not be eligible for appointment by June. Departments should maintain and provide the Graduate School with a list of projected GAs in this category, with the time allocation and salary.
- There may also be some other projected GAs not ready to be appointed by June, and they should also be added to the above list and sent to the Graduate School at graddeanoffice@lsu.edu.

Coverage for Spring and Summer

- New GAs for Spring can be added on a rolling basis, and waiver deadlines will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Continuing GAs in the Spring will be automatically enrolled in and assessed the Spring/Summer premium.
- GAs will get the Spring-only rate if they are graduating and have diploma fees posted to their account for Spring. Bursar Operations will automatically make this conversion. However, contact Bursar Operations at bursar@lsu.edu by the 14th class day if you are graduating and see the Spring/Summer premium.

* Graduating GAs are covered under SHIP until the end of the paid policy period (term).

Option to waive the LSU insurance plan

- Students who have an alternate health insurance policy and do not wish to enroll in the LSU student health insurance plan must request a waiver by submitting their insurance information using the following link: www.gallagherstudent.com/lsu-batonrouge.
- Waiver requests must be submitted each term (Fall, Spring & Summer).

- If a waiver is approved, the student health insurance premium and LSU share will be removed from the student account.
- Students granted a waiver will not be responsible for purchasing the student insurance plan, and LSU will not be obligated to cover any costs associated with the GA's health insurance.
- If a waiver is not filed by the set deadline for Fall, Spring/Summer, or Summer, the GA will remain enrolled in the student health insurance plan and will be responsible for 25% of the premium. A waiver will not be considered after the determined date.
- The student health insurance plan is non-refundable and cannot be prorated or end early.

Questions can be sent to the Graduate School at graddeanoffice@lsu.edu.

PhD Student Progress Checklist

Tri-Annual Evaluation by Major Professor**

Completion of Academic Coursework

Year one

- Semester one
- Semester two
- Semester three

Year two

- Semester one
- Semester two
- Semester three

Year three

- Semester one
- Semester two
- Semester three

Required Paperwork

- School -level academic course plan** (approved 1st semester)
- Form Advisory Committee (within 1st year)
- Written/Oral Proposal (Proposal Cover Page**) (approved within 1st year)
- Written proposal and/or oral presentation to advisory committee (within 1st year)
- Annual Committee meeting.
 - Year 1
 - Year 2
 - Year 3

General Exam (Oral Exam)

- Doctoral Degree Audit and Request for General Examination** 3 weeks before general exam
- Schedule General Examination in the semester following completion of coursework.
- Student to email Petrie Baker 2 weeks before the exam to fill out the General exam forms.
- Major Professor (Chair) will bring the following forms to the General Exam
 - Exam results forms (2) (Chair will give forms to Petrie Baker afterwards)

Semester of Graduation

- Application for Doctoral Degree (refer to graduate school deadline)
- Request for Doctoral Final Examination (refer to graduate school deadline)
- Dissertation documents are distributed to Major Professor six (6) weeks in advance and the Examination Committee two (2) weeks before the examination date.
- Survey of Earned Doctoral Degree.

Dissertation Defense (Final Examination)

- Student to email Petrie Baker 2 weeks before the defense to fill out graduate forms.
- Major Professor (Chair) will bring the following forms to the defense and give them to Petrie Baker after completion.
 - Defense results forms* (2)
 - Doctoral Approval Sheets* if corrections are needed, the Major Professor (chair) will keep forms (2)
 - Assessment Forms* (1 from each committee member)

Expected time to completion with funding

3 to 3 ½-year completion, with the potential of an additional semester of support, pending completion of milestones and recommendation of the committee.

*Forms emailed to the Major Professor

** Forms must be returned to the Administrative Program Specialist for Student Services (Petrie Baker, 295 Knapp Hall, or email, pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu)

Students may submit graduate school forms directly to gradsvcs@lsu.edu, and copy the Administrative Program Specialist in charge of Student Services (Petrie Baker)

Contact Petrie Baker (pbaker@agcenter.lsu.edu) to schedule a conference room in Knapp Hall.

To schedule 102 Knapp Hall, please contact Ms. Piccola Thomas, PTThomas@agcenter.lsu.edu.

To schedule a room in AFSL, please contact Ms. Sharon Hymel, SHymel@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Please refer all questions about this checklist to your major professor or the Graduate Program Advisor, Dr. Erin McKinley (emckinley1@lsu.edu).