

Quick Guide
Graduate Programs in Plant and Soil Science

(Revised in spring 2025)

Master of Science (Thesis program):

- 1) The student's graduate advisory committee should be formed during the first semester of residence in the graduate program. The graduate advisory committee is comprised of a minimum of three (3) members, one of which must be external or from outside the Plant and Soil Science Department.
- 2) The first committee meeting must be held before the end of the first semester of residence in the graduate program. During this meeting, the plan of study will be finalized and approved by the advisory committee. The departmental graduate program of study form, signed by the advisory committee should be submitted to the graduate programs coordinator along with the completed graduate school program of study form at this time.
- 3) Minimum of 30 graduate credits is required for degree completion. This must be comprised of 18 credits of formal graduate courses, 6 credits of PSS 7000 (Research), and 6 credits of PSS 6000 (Master's Thesis).
- 4) Only courses at the 5000-level and above are accepted for graduate credits. Titled Special Topics (PSS 6001) are considered formal courses and count towards the 18 credits of coursework.
- 5) The 18 credits of formal graduate courses in item 3 may also include a maximum of 6 credits of titled Problems in Plant and Soil Science (PSS 5001).
- 6) PSS 5100 (Seminar) is required for degree completion and must be taken at least once during the degree program. Seminar credit is counted towards the 18 credit hours of formal graduate coursework in item 3.
- 7) Minimum of 6 credits of PSS 6000 (Master's Thesis) is required for degree completion.
- 8) Enrollment in PSS 6000 (Master's Thesis) must continue every semester once the student started enrolling in it. The student must register for a minimum of 1 credit of PSS 6000 every semester until degree completion, except during the semester when the student defends his/her thesis, where enrollment in a minimum of 3 credits of PSS 6000 is required. In consultation with the major advisor, the student must carefully plan when to begin taking PSS 6000 in order to avoid having too many unnecessary credits.
- 9) All graduate students should maintain an average grade of 'B' or better.
- 10) Graduate students on assistantship must be register for 9 credits during the fall and spring semesters, and 6 credits during summer.
- 11) For additional information, please refer to the PSS Graduate Programs Handbook (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/pss/student-resources/gradstudenthandbook.pdf>) or the Graduate School webpage (https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/masters_thesis.php).

Master of Science (Non-thesis program):

- 1) Non-thesis programs are offered in crop science (Master of Science in Plant and Soil Science) and horticulture (Master of Horticulture Science).
- 2) The student's graduate advisory committee should be formed during the first semester of residence in the graduate program. The advisory committee is comprised of a minimum of three (3) members, one of which must be external or from outside the Plant and Soil Science Department.
- 3) The first committee meeting must be held before the end of the first semester of residence in the graduate program. During this meeting, the plan of study will be finalized and approved by the advisory committee. The departmental graduate program of study form signed by the advisory committee must be submitted to the graduate programs coordinator along with the completed graduate school program of study form at this time.
- 4) Minimum of 36 graduate credits is required for degree completion. Additional leveling courses at the undergraduate level may be required by the student's graduate advisory committee. These credits are in addition to the minimum of 36 graduate credits required for degree completion.
- 5) Only courses at the 5000-level and above are accepted for graduate credits.
- 6) The 36 credits of formal graduate courses in item 4 may also include a maximum of 6 credits of titled Problems in Plant and Soil Science (PSS 5001).
- 7) Minimum of 12 graduate credits in item 4 must be formal Plant and Soil Science courses.
- 8) All graduate students should maintain an average grade of 'B' or better.
- 9) Passing a comprehensive examination is required for degree completion.
- 10) For additional information, please check the PSS Graduate Programs Handbook (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/pss/student-resources/gradstudenthandbook.pdf>) or the Graduate School webpage (https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/masters_nonthesis.php).

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD):

- 1) The student's graduate advisory committee should be formed during the first semester of residence in the graduate program. The advisory is comprised of a minimum of four (4) members, one (1) of which must be external or from outside the Plant and Soil Science Department.
- 2) The first committee meeting must be held before the end of the first semester of residence in the graduate program. During this meeting, the plan of study will be finalized and approved by the advisory committee. The departmental graduate program of study form signed by the advisory committee should be submitted to the graduate programs coordinator along with the completed graduate school program of study form at this time.
- 3) Minimum of 60 graduate credits is required for degree completion, not including Doctoral Dissertation (PSS 8000) credits.
- 4) Only courses at the 5000-level and above are accepted for graduate credits. Titled Special Topics (PSS 6001) are considered formal courses and count towards the 60 credits of coursework.
- 5) The 60 credits in item 3 must include a minimum of 36 formal coursework credits, 18 of which must be earned from Texas Tech University, and which may include Titled Special Topics (PSS 6001), Titled Problems in PSS (PSS 5001), and Research (PSS 7000). All to be approved by the student's graduate committee.
- 6) Formal courses from the Master's degree up to a maximum of 30 credits can be counted towards the 60 credits required in the doctoral program.
- 7) PSS 5100 (Seminar) is required for degree completion and must be taken at least once during the degree program. Seminar credit is counted towards the 60 credits of formal graduate coursework in item 3.
- 8) Minimum of 12 credits of PSS 8000 (Doctoral Dissertation) is required for degree completion.
- 9) Enrollment in PSS 8000 (Doctoral Dissertation) must continue every semester once the student started enrolling in it. The student must register for a minimum of 1 credit of PSS 8000 every semester until degree completion, except during the semester when the student defends his/her thesis where enrollment in a minimum of 3 credits of PSS 8000 is required. In consultation with the major advisor, the student must carefully plan when to begin taking PSS 8000 in order to avoid having too many unnecessary credits.
- 10) All graduate students should maintain an average grade of 'B' or better.
- 11) Graduate students on assistantship must be register for 9 credits during the fall and spring semesters, and 6 credits during summer.
- 12) For additional information, please check the PSS Graduate Programs Handbook (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/pss/student-resources/gradstudenthandbook.pdf>) or the Graduate School webpage (https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/academic/Doctoral_Students.php).