



LEARNING PLAN: RESEARCH OPTION

Effective September 2006 (v.2006.11.20)

Before beginning the second semester, each Research Option student, in consultation with his or her advisor(s) and Thesis Committee, must design and sign an individualized “learning plan.” This document sets out a balanced plan of cross-training electives, and an abstract of the intended thesis project, that fits the student’s needs and goals.

The Thesis Committee consists of an advisor (or of two co-advisors) and at least two other professors. A minimum of two committee members must be Agroecology Program Faculty. The advisor(s) and the two additional committee members must also represent a minimum of two academic departments. Drawing advisors and committee members from multiple departments will facilitate faculty-to-faculty and faculty-to-student interactions to promote the multidisciplinary ideal embodied in the Agroecology Program.

Submitted by: _____

Name _____ Date _____

Approved by Student Thesis Committee

Advisor Signature _____

Name _____ Department _____

Committee Member Signature _____

Name _____ Department _____

Committee Member Signature _____

Name _____ Department _____

1. Core Curriculum

Minimum Requirement: 10 credits

Course (Dept./No.)	Descriptive Title	Semester/Yr.	Credits
Agroecol 701	The Farm as a Socio-Environmental Endeavor	Fall	3
Agroecol 702	The Multifunctionality of Agriculture	Spring	3
Agroecol 720	Agroecology Field Study	Summer	1
Agroecol 710	Seminar in Agroecology*		1
Agroecol 710	Seminar in Agroecology*		1
Agroecol 710	Seminar in Agroecology*		1
			TOTAL

*The Seminar in Agroecology is offered both fall and spring semester for 1 credit. Faculty organize the fall semester seminar around some important issue in Agroecology (e.g., eutrophication, the Farm Bill, biodiversity, land use policy, organic production). Spring seminar is organized by the students. Sessions may take a variety of forms, e.g. faculty and guest speakers, student presentations, and panel discussions. Students are encouraged to enroll every semester, but must take at least 3 credits total.

2. Cross Training Electives

Minimum Requirement: 12 new credits in Master's Program

Cross-training electives will be selected so that between upper-level undergraduate experience and Agroecology MS coursework, the student will have taken courses in:

- *Ecology*, e.g., Botany 460, 461, or 468, or EnvSt 506, Agron/Botany/Soils 370
- *Social Science*, e.g., Comm&Env Soc or AAE course on food systems, agricultural technology, the agricultural environment, or agricultural policy
- *Data Analysis*, e.g., a graduate-level GIS, statistics, or qualitative methods course
- *Agricultural Science*, e.g., Agron 300, SoilSci 301, Entom 541

Prior coursework:

Course Category: E, SS, DA, AS	Course (Dept./No.)	Descriptive Title	Institution where taken	Semester/ Yr.	Undergrad (U) or Grad (G)	Credits

Agroecology Master's coursework:

						TOTAL

Note: In addition to these 22 credits of graduate core courses and cross training electives, the Thesis Committee may require additional coursework as background for the specific research problem selected by the student.

3. Research Topic

The Research Option provides students the opportunity to obtain experience in the scholarship of original research, culminating in the writing of a thesis, and to prepare for Ph.D. work in a field related to agroecology. Research topics addressed by students in this option will range from institutional constraints on options available to farmers to biological interactions of pests and cultivated plants and animals. The research programs will be based in the traditional disciplines of the academy, but specific problem framing and student training strongly shaped by the interdisciplinarity of the Agroecology program. **The student must present the thesis in a public seminar.**

Please attach an abstract (250 words or less) of the intended thesis project.

Research and Thesis

Minimum Requirement: 12 credits

Course (Dept./No.)	Descriptive Title	Semester/Yr.	Credits
Agroecol 990			
Agroecol 990			
Agroecol 990			
			TOTAL

4. Learning Plan Summary

Coursework minimum requirements include the 10 credits of the core curriculum, 12 credits of cross-training electives, and 12 research and thesis credits for a minimum total of 34 credits.

Total credits from Core Curriculum: _____

Total credits from Cross Training Electives _____

Total credits Research and Thesis _____

TOTAL credits in Learning Plan _____