

Graduate Handbook

Department of Mathematical Sciences

2021-2022



Contents

1	The Department of Mathematical Sciences	4
2	M.S. Data Science Program Guidelines	4
3	M.S. Mathematics Program Guidelines	5
4	MSMME Program Guidelines	5
5	M.S. Statistics Program Guidelines	6
6	Ph.D. Mathematics Program Guidelines	6
7	Ph.D. Mathematics Education Program Guidelines	6
8	Statistics Ph.D. Program Guidelines	7
9	Forming a Graduate Committee	7
10	Programs of Study	8
10.1	M.S. Program of Study	8
10.2	Ph.D. Program of Study	9
11	Comprehensive Examination Requirements	9
11.1	Minimum Registration to Take a Comprehensive Examination	10
11.2	Failed Component of Comprehensive Examination	10
12	Course Limitations for M.S. and Ph.D. Degrees	10
13	Dissertation Credit Requirements	11
14	Residence Credit Requirements for Ph.D.	11
15	Policy Regarding M 690 and STAT 690 Credits	11
16	Academic Probation and Dismissal	11
16.1	Good Standing	11
16.2	College Probation	12

16.3 University Probation	12
16.4 Dismissal (Suspension)	12
17 University Withdrawals	12
18 Readmission to Graduate Degree Standing	12
19 Application for Advanced Degree	13
19.1 One-Credit Extension	13
20 Dissertation Requirements	14
20.1 Defense of Dissertation	14
20.2 Registration during the Semester of the Defense	14
20.3 Defense of Dissertation Deadlines	14
20.4 The “Open” and “Closed” Defense	14
20.5 Advertising the Dissertation Defense	15
20.6 Reporting the Defense Results	15
20.7 Failed Defense of Dissertation	15
20.8 Invalid Defense of Dissertation	15
20.9 Video Conferencing during Defense of Dissertation	16
21 Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)	16
21.1 GTA Responsibilities	16
21.2 Grade Reporting Policies for GTAs	16
21.3 GTA Evaluation	17
21.4 GTA Offices	17
21.5 GTA Conduct	17
22 Policies Regarding GTA Support	18
22.1 GTA Tuition Waivers	18
22.2 GTA Progress and Performance	18
22.3 M.S. Timeline.	18
22.4 Ph.D. Timeline.	18
23 Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs)	19

23.1	GRA Responsibilities	19
23.2	GRA Evaluation	19
23.3	GRA Offices	20
23.4	GRA Conduct	20
24	Policies Regarding GRA Support	20
24.1	GRA Tuition	20
24.2	GRA Progress and Performance	20
25	Additional Graduate Student Information	21
25.1	Montana Residency	21
25.2	Continuous Enrollment	21
25.3	University Health Insurance	21
25.4	Conferences and Travel	21
25.5	Emergency Funding	22
26	Office Procedures	22
26.1	Mailboxes	22
26.2	Bulletin Board	22
26.3	Coffee Room	22
26.4	Copy and Fax Machines	22
26.5	Graduate Student Lounge	22
27	Contact Information	23
28	Resources	23

1 The Department of Mathematical Sciences

The Department of Mathematical Sciences (MathSci) is located in Wilson Hall room 2-214. The office is open from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM weekdays. Department office personnel are always pleased to assist students with any questions or problems.

Department of Mathematical Sciences Personnel:

DEPARTMENT HEAD	Dr. Beth Burroughs	994-3604	burroughs@montana.edu
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The purpose of this Handbook is to answer the most frequently asked questions regarding the Department of Mathematical Sciences graduate programs. This Handbook will be updated on a regular basis to reflect policy changes in the University, the Graduate School, and the Department of Mathematical Sciences. To request a copy of the most current version of the Handbook, contact the PROGRAM COORDINATOR.

Because changes do occur and may not be reflected in the Handbook, please refer to The Graduate School for the most current policies and procedures. It is the students' responsibility to be up-to-date with departmental requirements for their degree program. These requirements may be more specific than those stipulated by The Graduate School. If you have questions about your graduate program or any material in the Handbook, please contact department personnel, your graduate advisor, or members of the Graduate Program Committee (GPC).

Graduate Program Committee Members:

- Committee Chair and Mathematics representative: Dr. Lisa Davis
- Mathematics representative: Dr. David Ayala
- Mathematics Education representative: Dr. Megan Wickstrom (MSMME)
- Mathematics Education representative: Dr. Mary Alice Carlson (PhD)
- Statistics Representative: Dr. John Borkowski
- Statistics and Data Science Representative: Dr. Andy Hoegh

2 M.S. Data Science Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, and comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/ms-data-science/>

3 M.S. Mathematics Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, and comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/ms-mathematics/>

The department offers both thesis and non-thesis options for the master's program, but, in most cases, we advise students to follow the non-thesis option. In order to complete the degree in two years, a student typically takes six credits of coursework for each of two semesters and nine credits of coursework during each of the other two semesters. This degree requires the student to pass a written comprehensive examination. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for the description of the exam, and see Section 11 of this document for the minimum registration required in order to sit for the exam and other details.

As an addendum to the catalog description, note that each component of the M.S. comprehensive exam is graded as Ph.D. pass, M.S. pass, or fail. A Ph.D. level pass on both components of the M.S. written comprehensive exam *indicates quality of work and display of mathematical maturity that is indicative of a strong promise of success in a Ph.D. program*. Students enrolled in the M.S. program who are interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in Mathematics at MSU are encouraged to work toward the goal of attaining the Ph.D. level pass on the M.S. comprehensive exam. See Section 6 and the catalog description for more details.

Another addendum to the catalog description concerns the thesis option. The M.S. thesis option (Plan A) requires completing the required course work, writing a thesis, an oral defense of the thesis and passing the M.S. written comprehensive exam. Students who pursue the thesis option should identify a thesis advisor and graduate committee chair during their first year of study in order to complete all requirements in a timely manner.

4 MSMME Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, and comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/ms-mathematics-education-option-msmme/>

The Master of Science in Mathematics - Mathematics Education Option (MSMME) is designed for teachers of secondary-level mathematics. The goals of MSMME include deepening participants' understanding of secondary mathematics content, increasing pedagogical content knowledge for teaching and learning mathematics, and providing skills and habits for career-long professional reflection and growth. MSMME offers a combination of courses addressing key topics in secondary mathematics content and pedagogy and incorporates problem-based and active learning that aligns with current standards. The 30-credit-hour program includes four required core content courses, two required pedagogy courses from a choice of four, and a variety of electives. Programs of study may vary individually based on approved transfer credit, choices of elective courses, and other

constraints. A number of courses include classroom-based research projects that address specific challenges in teaching, investigate new instructional strategies, or allow opportunities to design, teach, and assess lessons in a target content area. Completion of the MSMME program typically involves taking online coursework over two academic years and at least two summers and the completion of a program portfolio. Students are expected to attend one three-week summer session in Montana in their first year.

5 M.S. Statistics Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, and comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/ms-statistics/>

This degree requires the student to pass a comprehensive examination. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for the description of the exam, and see Section 11 for the minimum registration required in order to sit for the exam and other details.

6 Ph.D. Mathematics Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, committee assignments, and both written and oral comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/phd-mathematics/>

This degree requires the student to pass both a written and an oral comprehensive examination. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for the description of the exams, and see Section 11 for the minimum registration required in order to sit for the exams and other details.

Addendum to the Catalog Description

Under the Written Comprehensive Exam section of the catalog, bullet number 7 discusses the program's option for a student to use a Ph.D. level pass on both portions of the M.S. written comprehensive exam to satisfy one of the three components of the Ph.D. written comprehensive exam. A Ph.D. level pass on the M.S. written comprehensive exam indicates *quality of work and display of mathematical maturity that is indicative of a strong promise of success in the Ph.D. program.*

7 Ph.D. Mathematics Education Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, committee assignments, and

both written and oral comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/phd-mathematics-education/>

The Ph.D. in Mathematics with an emphasis in mathematics education combines study in advanced mathematics, mathematics education, and quantitative and qualitative research methods in education. This pathway is designed for candidates who plan a future of teaching, research, and service focused on mathematics education. The program focuses on the teaching and learning of K-12 mathematics including curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher preparation or professional development in the K-12 education system. Graduates typically go on to faculty positions in mathematics departments that involve teacher preparation and research in mathematics education. Applicants are expected to possess K-12 teaching experience or to gain such experience through internships.

The dissertation is a study in mathematics education. Scholarship in mathematics education examines teaching and learning, with roots in the disciplines of mathematics and educational theory and practice. It is grounded in mathematics content through the study of curriculum and mathematical practice and is generally carried out through social science research methods, including both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Mathematics education research at Montana State University adopts an applied approach, and research efforts often focus on the development and ongoing support of K-12 mathematics teachers. Doctoral students conduct research in areas relevant to current faculty research interests or funded projects.

This degree requires the student to pass a comprehensive examination. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for the description of the exam, and see Section 11 for the minimum registration required in order to sit for the exam and other details.

8 Statistics Ph.D. Program Guidelines

The departmental requirements found in this Handbook supplement those set by the MSU Graduate School. Complete program guidelines, prerequisites and requirements, committee assignments, and both written and oral comprehensive examination information can be found in the MSU Graduate Catalog at the following URL. Students and advisors should refer to the catalog for the most current program information.

<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/mathematical-sciences/phd-statistics/>

This degree requires the student to pass a comprehensive examination. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for the description of the exam, and see Section 11 for the minimum registration required in order to sit for the exam and other details.

9 Forming a Graduate Committee

Each graduate student must have an advisor (the committee chair) and a Graduate Committee. The committee can approve the Program of Study as long as it adheres to the Graduate Catalog requirements and satisfies the guidelines established by The Graduate School and the department.

The committee will advise the student on selection of coursework and comprehensive exams, guide the student through research, conduct oral examinations, and certify that the student's work meets degree standards. After the Graduate Committee is formed, it is the students' responsibility to seek out their advisor to create a Program of Study and to meet at least once a semester to discuss progress towards the degree. Prior to registration for classes each semester, the student must meet with the chair and/or committee to plan coursework and to get the PIN number needed for registration.

M.S. students must form their committees before the end of the second semester in the M.S. program. The committee is comprised of three (3) faculty members. The committee chair must hold a doctoral degree and be a tenured or tenure track professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. M.S. students who pursue the thesis option must form their committee (and file the Program of Study, see Section 10) prior to enrolling in M 590 thesis credits. See the Graduate School's policies and procedures for more complete requirements.

Ph.D. students must form their committees before the end of the third semester in the Ph.D. program or before attempting any component of their written comprehensive exam, whichever occurs first. The committee is typically comprised of five (5) faculty members. A Graduate Representative may also sit on the committee if the student chooses to include one, and this representative will be appointed by the Graduate School. The committee chair must have a doctoral degree and be a tenured or tenure track professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. The majority of committee members must be tenured or tenure track Department of Mathematical Sciences faculty. The first three committee members will read and assess the dissertation and examine the students' understanding of their research at the time of the dissertation defense. The fourth and fifth also examine the student's research understanding at the time of the dissertation defense. All committee members support the student's research by providing feedback and suggestions over the course of the student's program of study. Students are encouraged to discuss their interests with departmental faculty members to ensure an appropriate committee is appointed. Graduate Committee forms are available online and in the Math office. Please submit completed forms to the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for processing.

No faculty member is required to accept more students than he or she believes can be advised successfully, and the department does not guarantee that a faculty member will be available to serve as an advisor. Students should plan well in advance in order to find an acceptable advisor. A student who is unable to secure an advisor in the required time frame will result in the student's dismissal from the program. The Ph.D. Statistics program requires students to find an advisor to direct their doctoral research within one year of qualifying for the Ph.D. program. See The Graduate School policies and procedures for a complete list of requirements.

10 Programs of Study

10.1 M.S. Program of Study

The M.S. Program of Study and M.S. Graduate Committee forms are filed at the same time, before the end of the student's second semester. The Program of Study is jointly developed by the student and the committee and defines the minimum requirements for the degree. Other requirements as determined by the committee may also be listed. The Program of Study must be approved by the student's Graduate Committee and the Mathematical Sciences Department Head with final

approval by The Graduate School. Program of Study forms are available online or in the Math office. Please submit completed forms to the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for processing.

A minimum of 30 credit hours is required by The Graduate School for graduation, although individual degree programs may require more. Only those courses listed on a graduate Program of Study are applicable toward degree credit requirements. A maximum of nine (9) credits from approved 400-level courses can be included in the Program of Study, (with an exception being 12 credits of approved 400-level credits for Math). A maximum of nine (9) credits of approved graduate level courses taken at other institutions can also be included in the Program of Study. Coursework more than 6 years old cannot be applied toward the degree.

To be in good academic standing students must meet the following Grade Point Average (GPA) standards: Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 semester GPA, a minimum 3.0 GPA in the entire Program of Study and a cumulative 3.0 GPA overall. Students whose cumulative GPA or Program of Study GPA is less than 3.0 at the end of any semester may be placed on probation or suspended from their degree program. Once a course on a graduate degree Program of Study has been completed, it cannot be removed. A course can be retaken in order to improve the grade, with written permission from the advisor. Any course with a grade lower than C must be repeated in order to improve the grade. This also requires written permission from the advisor. The student, however, should not expect the department to provide tuition waivers for a course that is retaken.

10.2 Ph.D. Program of Study

The Ph.D. Program of Study and the Ph.D. Graduate Committee forms must be filed at the same time, before the end of the third semester in the program. All students earning a Ph.D. must complete a minimum of 60 credits; they must include a minimum of 18 dissertation (690) credits. No more than 28 can be included on the Program of Study. The Ph.D. programs in Statistics and the Math Education option also require 3 doctoral reading (689) credits. A maximum of 30 credits from a previously earned Master's degree may be applied toward the 60-credit minimum. Each Ph.D. option (Mathematics, Statistics and Mathematics Education) have specific course requirements. Confirm your program with your advisor.

To be in good academic standing students must meet the following Grade Point Average (GPA) standards: Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 semester GPA, a minimum 3.0 GPA in the entire Program of Study and a cumulative 3.0 GPA overall. Students whose cumulative GPA or Program of Study GPA is less than 3.0 at the end of any semester may be placed on probation or suspended from their degree program. Once a course on a graduate degree Program of Study has been completed, it cannot be removed. A course can be retaken in order to improve the grade, with written permission from the advisor. Any course with a grade lower than C must be repeated in order to improve the grade. This also requires written permission from the advisor. The student, however, should not expect the department to provide tuition waivers for a course that is retaken.

11 Comprehensive Examination Requirements

Since the structure and content of comprehensive examinations vary among the programs within the department, the student is referred to the description of the individual program for that specific information. However, some requirements and guidelines are common to all degree programs in

the department which have some form of a comprehensive examination. Those requirements are described below.

11.1 Minimum Registration to Take a Comprehensive Examination

A student must be registered for a minimum of three (3) credits at Montana State University during the term in which any component of a comprehensive examination is taken. If a student wishes to take the comprehensive exam during the intersession (i.e., the time between terms), a student must receive approval from his/her committee and be registered for a minimum of three (3) credits in the term prior to the intersession or the term immediately following the intersession.

11.2 Failed Component of Comprehensive Examination

A student is allowed two (2) total attempts to pass each component of a written or an oral comprehensive examination. If the student fails a component, at least six (6) months must elapse before the examination can be repeated. Failure to pass the second attempt at the same component of the examination will result in the student's dismissal from the academic program. Students who are dismissed from the program are ineligible to reapply to the same degree program in the future.

12 Course Limitations for M.S. and Ph.D. Degrees

There are several requirements and limitations on the amount and type of courses that may be included on a student's Program of Study. The most common requirements for the department's programs are listed below. However, an exhaustive list and full description may be found in the Degree Requirements section of the Graduate School's website.

http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq_general.html

1. **Special Topics:** Credits allowed toward degree requirements for Special Topics courses may not exceed the number defined by each degree program.
2. **Individual Problems (592):** No more than six credits of Individual Problems (592) courses may be included on a doctoral Program of Study.
3. **Pass/Fail credits:** A maximum of three credits (excluding dissertation) may be included on a doctoral Program of Study.
4. **400 level courses:** a maximum of 9 credits are allowed on a graduate Program of Study.
5. **Limit on Age of Courses:** The age of courses on the Program of Study at the time of graduation for a master's degree may not exceed six (6) years. The age of courses on the Program of Study at the time of graduation for a doctoral degree may not exceed ten (10) years.
6. **Undergraduate Seminars (494), Undergraduate Independent Study (492), Undergraduate Internship (498/476), Undergraduate Research/Instruction (490), Professional Development (588) and Graduate Consultation (589) courses** are not allowed on a Program of Study and will not count toward requirements for the degree.

13 Dissertation Credit Requirements

All Ph.D. candidates are required to register for and complete a minimum of 18 dissertation credits (M 690). Although additional M 690 or STAT 690 credits may be taken to finish a dissertation, a maximum of 28 dissertation credits are applicable toward degree requirements.

14 Residence Credit Requirements for Ph.D.

1. A minimum of thirty (30) credits applicable to the degree must be taken from MSU.
2. A student must be registered for a minimum of three (3) credits during the semester of a comprehensive examination, a defense of dissertation, and the semester of graduation.

15 Policy Regarding M 690 and STAT 690 Credits

The Department of Mathematical Sciences policy is that all Ph.D. students taking 690 credits must submit a progress report at the end of each semester to keep their committee informed and to assess whether or not the student is making sufficient progress to justify continued GTA or GRA support. The report should be submitted to the student's committee chair at least two (2) weeks prior to finals week. Each Ph.D. student is responsible for maintaining contact with their committee chair throughout the semester to determine if satisfactory progress is being made.

- Failure to submit a report will result in an automatic F grade for the 690 credits.
- If a report is submitted, a grade of P or F will be determined based on whether or not sufficient progress was made. An N grade also may be assigned to students enrolled in 690 credits. This grade indicates that, though a student has made progress, he or she has not completed the course objectives successfully. The student must re-enroll in the course immediately in order to continue the course work and to complete the course objectives. The N grade does not affect the GPA.

Ph.D. students who have successfully completed the written comprehensive exam and are taking 690 credits are required to present a research seminar through the Math, Math Education, or Stat Group seminar series annually. Students may also satisfy this requirement by presenting research at a professional meeting (e.g., conference) deemed acceptable by the student's committee.

16 Academic Probation and Dismissal

16.1 Good Standing

If a student has a cumulative and semester GPA of 3.0 or higher and has met the provisions of admission as stated in The Graduate School admission letter, the student is in good standing.

16.2 College Probation

A student will be placed on College Probation if the semester GPA falls below a 3.0, even though the cumulative GPA remains above a 3.0. Students are placed on College Probation to indicate unsatisfactory progress toward degree completion.

16.3 University Probation

A student may be placed on University Probation for any of the following:

- The student's semester and cumulative GPA or graduate program GPA have fallen below a 3.0.
- The student fails to successfully complete ("B" or better) in a majority of the courses taken in a semester.
- The student did not meet The Graduate School or academic department provisions of admission.

16.4 Dismissal (Suspension)

A student may be suspended from a degree program and The Graduate School for any of the following:

- The student's cumulative or program GPA falls below 3.0 after a prior University Probation status
- The student failed to maintain a cumulative or program GPA of 3.0 for two (not necessarily consecutive) semesters.
- The student failed to make satisfactory progress toward their degree program.
- The student did not meet the provisions of admission.

17 University Withdrawals

All University withdrawals by graduate students must originate in The Graduate School.

18 Readmission to Graduate Degree Standing

Following suspension, consideration for readmission to degree seeking status within The Graduate School may be requested after the student has completed a minimum of nine (9) semester credits in non-degree status. The student must also achieve at a 3.0 GPA in each 400-level and higher course taken during non-degree status.

19 Application for Advanced Degree

During the semester of intended graduation, the student must file an Application for Advanced Degree with The Graduate School. Students must also enroll in at least three (3) credits the semester they intend to complete their degree. If a student fails to meet semester deadlines, they must resubmit an Application for Advanced Degree the next semester in which they expect to graduate. The deadline for filing the application is the third Friday of the semester of completion of degree requirements. Forms are available online or in the Math office. Submit completed forms to PROGRAM COORDINATOR for processing.

19.1 One-Credit Extension

If an Application for Advanced Degree is submitted after the published deadline and the student is currently registered for three credits, the student may submit the application for graduation for the next semester to be eligible for a one-credit registration (instead of the mandatory three-credit registration). To be eligible for the one-credit extension, the student must complete all degree requirements before the first day of the subsequent semester. The student will then be certified to graduate *the following semester*. If more time is needed beyond the first day of the following semester, the student will be required to register for at least three credits to be eligible for graduation that term.

A One Credit Extension allows students additional time past the intended semester of graduation up to the first day of the following semester. Appropriate reasons to utilize the one credit extension are as follows:

- To satisfactorily complete all coursework (including “I” grade make-ups).
- Defense of thesis/dissertation past the published deadline for the intended semester.
- Satisfactory completion of all recommended corrections to the thesis or dissertation and submission of all required copies in final format to The Graduate School past the published deadline for the intended semester.
- Approval of the thesis/dissertation by the graduate Dean.
- Successful completion of all other degree requirements as determined by the department and The Graduate School, including submission of all documentation required for graduation.

To use the One Credit Extension, the student must do the following:

- Withdraw their Application for Advanced Degree for the original semester of graduation on The Graduate School website:
http://www.montana.edu/gradstudies/withdraw_app.html
- Submit a new Application for Advanced Degree for the following semester; and
- Register for 1 credit the following semester. To register for the one credit, you may be able to do this yourself or contact your department staff or chair of your committee to register you for the appropriate credit/course.

The degree will not be conferred until the end of the following semester. If all degree requirements are not met by 5:00 p.m. on the first day of the following semester, the student will be required to register for an additional two (2) credits (to meet the minimum of 3 credits) to complete graduation requirements. Students who intend to take advantage of this option should contact The Graduate School.

20 Dissertation Requirements

After the Ph.D. candidate has passed the comprehensive exam (passed both written and oral components) the student will submit a draft of the dissertation to his/her committee prior to the Defense of Dissertation. The dissertation should embody the results of extended research by the candidate, be an original contribution to knowledge, and include new material worthy of publication. The dissertation must be submitted as an electronic dissertation, *in final form* to The Graduate School not later than fourteen (14) working days before the end of the term in which graduate work is completed.

20.1 Defense of Dissertation

The defense of dissertation has two components. The first is an oral examination of the student's research and the second is an examination of the dissertation written by the candidate. Each member of the graduate committee must be given a minimum of *four (4) weeks* to read the draft of the dissertation prior to the date of the oral defense. The date of the oral portion of the dissertation defense will be arranged by the committee chair and the graduate student. The student is responsible for reminding all of the committee members one (1) week in advance of the event. Examinations in which any committee member has had insufficient time to prepare should not take place and may need to be rescheduled. The committee chair should discourage a student from defending if the chair (or the committee) feels the student is not adequately prepared.

20.2 Registration during the Semester of the Defense

A student must be registered for a minimum of three (3) credits at MSU during the term in which the defense is held.

20.3 Defense of Dissertation Deadlines

If a student wishes to hold their defense during the semester of graduation, the defense must be held and passed at least fourteen (14) working days before the end of the semester of graduation.

20.4 The "Open" and "Closed" Defense

A portion of the defense must be open to the public. This is usually an oral presentation of the student's research followed by a brief period for the audience to ask questions. Following the open portion of the defense, the committee chair will excuse all attendees other than committee members

from the event. This begins the closed portion of the defense in which the student's knowledge of the subject matter will be assessed by the committee.

20.5 Advertising the Dissertation Defense

The student is responsible for submitting an announcement to the MSU calendar system;

<http://www.montana.edu/calendar>

containing the following information:

- a) the name of the candidate,
- b) title of the doctoral dissertation,
- c) time and place of defense, and
- d) the place where a copy of the dissertation may be obtained for inspection.

The oral defense date must be advertised to the MSU Calendar at least one (1) week in advance. The student is required to provide this information to the ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT so that the information can be posted within the department.

20.6 Reporting the Defense Results

The Defense of Dissertation report must be submitted by the committee chair or the PROGRAM COORDINATOR to The Graduate School no later than five (5) business days after the defense is held. Failure to submit the report of the defense may invalidate the examination.

20.7 Failed Defense of Dissertation

The candidate is allowed two (2) total attempts to pass the defense. If the student fails the defense, at least two (2) months must elapse before the examination can be repeated. Failure to pass a second defense will result in termination of doctoral work and dismissal from the academic program. Students who are dismissed from the program are ineligible to reapply to the same degree program in the future.

20.8 Invalid Defense of Dissertation

An examination held in the absence of the chair(s) will be considered invalid and must be rescheduled. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all committee members are available when scheduling an exam. All committee members approved by The Graduate School *must be present* at the oral portion of the defense of dissertation. Video conferencing by committee members is permitted, and requirements for this situation are described below. Last minute committee changes based on scheduling conflicts must be approved by The Graduate School.

20.9 Video Conferencing during Defense of Dissertation

The Graduate School allows for students to video conference with committee members during the defense. Video conference attendance by the chair and all committee members must follow the most recent requirements set forth by the Graduate School in its Video Conferencing Policy found at the following URL. https://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq_general.html

The department uses the following requirements, which are consistent with those of the Graduate School.

- The conference must have two-way video with audio for its duration. Neither the student nor any committee member is allowed to participate in the conference via telephone (audio only).
- Initiating and implementing the conference process is the responsibility of the student and/or the committee chair.
- The student is responsible for all costs incurred.
- If communication is broken during the examination or defense and cannot be re-established, the examination or defense must be terminated and rescheduled for completion at a later time/date.

21 Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

21.1 GTA Responsibilities

To be a Graduate Teaching Assistant you must take at least 6 credits each semester and remain in good academic standing. GTAs are required to teach one undergraduate class per semester, assist two undergraduate classes per semester, or work in the Math and Stats Center (tutoring). You must also hold four (4) office hours per week. GTAs will also be assigned other duties as appropriate (attend weekly course meetings, attend orientation and GTA development seminars, proctor one common hour exam outside of their own assigned each semester, etc...). Everyone who holds a teaching appointment will also fill out an electronic schedule card that will be emailed to you, which you are to complete and then return to PROGRAM COORDINATOR in the Math Office as well as post your hours outside your office door. A student enrolled in less than six (6) credits during their semester of graduation is eligible to be appointed as a GSA with teaching responsibilities.

21.2 Grade Reporting Policies for GTAs

The Registrar's office requires grades to be posted in the MSU Banner system within 48 hours after a final exam. Weekends are included in these 48 hours. Each course supervisor or Student Success Coordinator will explain the grading system used for the class you teach. Please be responsible and complete your grading on time. Your tests will be kept in your assigned test box located in the locked test room in the Math office.

Once you have completed final grade calculations you must turn in a copy of your grade sheet to PROGRAM COORDINATOR. Students come to the Math office questioning their grades and the

office staff need to have a record of student quiz grades, homework and test scores to show them why they earned the grade they earned. Therefore, it is important that you **do this at the same time as you enter the grades in Banner**.

Web grading instructions from the Registrar are online and this is updated by the Registrar's Office each semester, so watch for updates via email. Forms and instructions for incomplete ("I") grades, missing grades or grade changes are in the Math Office. Incomplete grades are not to be assigned without approval of the course supervisor. Please submit completed forms to the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for processing.

21.3 GTA Evaluation

Each semester your course supervisor or Student Success Coordinator will observe and evaluate your teaching skills. Your students will also complete an evaluation of the course. The metrics include overall satisfaction with the course and the instructor, observation of frequency of teaching methods and other criteria. The student evaluation will be emailed to your students and you should set aside class time for students to take out their devices to complete the evaluations. If there are any problems, tell the PROGRAM COORDINATOR immediately. These evaluations as well as your academic performance are reviewed each semester and are part of the GTA renewal process.

21.4 GTA Offices

Graduate Teaching Assistants will be assigned to a shared office. Assigned offices are associated with teaching an MSU course and a GTA assignment. This space is shared with your fellow graduate students and should be treated as a professional space. Keep your space clean and voices to a minimum. Office environment concerns should first be brought to the attention of your office mates, then your GPC Representative, GPC Chair and/or PROGRAM COORDINATOR and finally to the Department Head if needed. For maintenance issues, speak with the PROGRAM COORDINATOR. Feel free to bring personal items from home (pictures, lamp, books, etc. . .) to personalize the space. Keys may be picked up at the Plew Building once you've received email confirmation. The key works for the exterior doors of Wilson Hall, the assigned office door and the Math Office. The ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT will also issue a key for each desk, should your desk lock. You are responsible for these keys. When you leave MSU you must turn in your keys as well as clean out your desk and office area and return all borrowed textbooks to ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.

21.5 GTA Conduct

The Mathematical Sciences Department expects all GTAs to be professional and to treat their undergraduate students with respect and courtesy. GTAs have instructional responsibilities and as such are required to follow university policies, including those about appropriate instructor-student relationships.

Please follow professional standards for personal grooming. Sloppy or dirty clothing, strong body odor, strong perfume or cologne, or bare feet distract from students' learning and are not acceptable. Your Student Success Coordinator and course supervisor are there to help you. When questions arise such as cheating/academic dishonesty, grading disputes, class management issues or any other problem, contact your course supervisor or Student Success Coordinator for guidance.

22 Policies Regarding GTA Support

22.1 GTA Tuition Waivers

Tuition is waived for both in-state and out-of-state GTAs. However, fees are based on the in-state or out-of-state status of each student. Each year in February and October you will complete an online form listing the courses you plan to take in the coming summer (if any) and fall or spring semesters, preferences for the courses you wish to teach, and the number of tuition credit waivers you are requesting for the upcoming semester. If you change the number of waivers, add or drop classes, you **MUST** inform PROGRAM COORDINATOR otherwise you may have to pay for them yourself. Summer teaching assignments are not guaranteed. Priority for summer teaching assignments are assigned to those making adequate progress towards their degree.

Tuition waivers do not cover fees. Fees must be paid by the student by the 15th class day. In order for your stipend and tuition waiver paperwork to be processed by the university you must first register for courses each semester. If you do not register on time you risk losing your waivers and not being paid on time. It is your responsibility to register and to confirm your attendance. Be sure to confirm your appointment by visiting

http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/grad_appts.html.

If you fail to confirm your appointment, it is possible you will be responsible for your own tuition costs.

22.2 GTA Progress and Performance

When a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) is awarded it is understood that the teaching assistantship will continue to be available given satisfactory academic progress towards the degree as well as satisfactory performance of assistantship duties. Signs of unsatisfactory academic progress for GTAs might include failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA, dropping below 6 credits, withdrawing from a course, lack of progress towards examination milestones or lack of progress towards the final dissertation defense. Signs of unsatisfactory performance of assistantship duties might include not showing up to teach your class, being chronically late or unprepared, not performing your office hour or duties, receiving unsatisfactory student evaluations, or inappropriate behavior. GTA performance is reviewed at the end of each semester and GTAs will receive an annual review letter.

22.3 M.S. Timeline.

For students enrolled in an M.S. program, GTA support will not exceed three (3) years measured from the date the program is begun.

22.4 Ph.D. Timeline.

GTA support for Ph.D. Students will continue if the student demonstrates satisfactory performance of assistantship duties and makes satisfactory progress towards completion of the following Ph.D. degree milestones:

1. Pass the Ph.D. Written Comprehensive Exam within two and a half (2.5) years of entering the Ph.D. program (three (3) years for Math Education students on a non-masters Ph.D. track).
2. Pass the Ph.D. Oral Comprehensive Exam within one to two (1-2) years from the date of passing the Ph.D. Written Comprehensive Exam, as determined by your committee.
3. Make satisfactory progress toward dissertation completion, as documented in 690 reports and evaluated by your Graduate Committee.

The termination of GTA support does not necessarily constitute dismissal from the program. Students who are in good standing with the Department of Mathematical Sciences and The Graduate School may continue in the Graduate Program at their own expense.

23 Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs)

GRA support is based on the availability of funding from either a departmental source or an external source. This can take the form of funding from a grant secured by a faculty member, from a campus entity conducting research or from a grant secured by the individual student. The GRA is required to be aware of and to comply with all rules imposed by the specific funding source. Regardless of the source, the GRA will be assigned a research supervisor associated with the funding, typically a faculty member. Depending on the source of funding, the research supervisor and the student's faculty advisor within the department may be two distinct persons. If offered GRA funding from a source external to the department, the student must speak to both the faculty advisor and the PROGRAM COORDINATOR within the department before making the decision to accept the funding.

23.1 GRA Responsibilities

In order to be a Graduate Research Assistant, a student must take at least 6 credits each semester and remain in good academic standing. GRAs are required to assist the faculty research supervisor providing funding with research activities.

23.2 GRA Evaluation

Research performance evaluations as well as the student's academic performance are reviewed each semester and are part of the GRA renewal process. When the funding source is external to the department or when the research supervisor is distinct from the faculty advisor, the appointed research supervisor will evaluate the student's research performance. The student is also expected to meet with the departmental faculty advisor monthly to determine if the student's research workload is appropriately balanced with the student's academic workload in order to ensure continued progress towards the degree.

23.3 GRA Offices

Office space is prioritized for GTAs within the department. If space is available after all GTAs are accommodated, then GRAs can be assigned office space. The GRA should check with the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for availability. In the event that a GRA is assigned office space, then the GRA is subject to the same policies and expectations as that of a GTA; see Section 21.4 for details.

23.4 GRA Conduct

The Mathematical Sciences Department expects all GRAs to be professional and to treat their peers as well as other students with respect and courtesy. Your faculty supervisor is there to help you. When questions arise, contact your faculty supervisor for guidance.

24 Policies Regarding GRA Support

24.1 GRA Tuition

Tuition for both in-state and out-of-state GRAs must be paid by a grant sponsor, faculty research supervisor or other research entity. Each year in February and October student completes an online form listing the coursework plan for the coming summer (if any) and fall or spring semesters, preferences for the courses the student wishes to teach (for GTAs) in the following year, and the number of tuition credit waivers requested for the upcoming semester. If the number of waivers changes, if classes are added or dropped, the student **MUST** inform the PROGRAM COORDINATOR, otherwise the student may have to pay for them out-of-pocket. Summer research assignments are not guaranteed but are contingent upon funding availability. Priority for summer research assignments is assigned to those making adequate progress towards the degree.

Depending on the funding source, tuition may be covered, however, fees may or may not be covered. Any fees not paid by the funding source must be paid by the student by the 15th class day. In order for the stipend and tuition paperwork to be processed by the university, the student must first register for courses each semester. If the student does not register in time, funding may be lost or pay may be delayed. It is the student's responsibility to register and to confirm attendance. Be sure to confirm your appointment by visiting

http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/grad_appts.html.

Failure to confirm the appointment may result in the student being responsible for his or her tuition costs.

24.2 GRA Progress and Performance

When a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) is awarded it is understood that the assistantship is contingent upon funding availability, satisfactory academic progress towards the degree, as well as satisfactory performance of research duties. Signs of unsatisfactory academic progress for GRAs might include failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA, dropping below six (6) credits, withdrawing from

a course, lack of progress towards examination milestones or lack of progress towards the final dissertation defense. Signs of unsatisfactory performance of research duties might include not showing up to meetings with your research advisor, being chronically late or unprepared, receiving unsatisfactory performance evaluations from your research advisor, or inappropriate behavior. GRA performance is reviewed at the end of each semester and GRAs will receive an annual review letter.

25 Additional Graduate Student Information

25.1 Montana Residency

The Department of Mathematical Sciences encourages out-of-state students to establish Montana residency in order to minimize tuition waiver costs incurred by the University. The Registrar's website has all the required forms and instructions to petition to be classified as a resident; it is a full 12-month process. During that time, you may **not** enroll in more than six (6) credits per semester. It is your responsibility to read all the requirements and follow guidelines in order to become a Montana resident.

25.2 Continuous Enrollment

To maintain graduate status, a student must be enrolled in three (3) or more credits each fall and spring semester after completing their program of study or after passing any portion of the comprehensive exam. These may include thesis or dissertation credits.

25.3 University Health Insurance

Montana State University requires students who are enrolled in at least six (6) credits are eligible to purchase University Health Insurance. Students may also elect to purchase their own plan on the open market. Contact Student Health Services for information about signing up for university insurance or waiving the requirement.

25.4 Conferences and Travel

There are various calls for graduate student travel funding, usually in fall, spring and summer. Ask the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for more information about these opportunities. Graduate students who are funded for travel or will be participating in conferences must see BUSINESS MANAGER one month before traveling to be sure you have completed the necessary forms. Travel forms are required to be completed by the student before travel arrangements have been made and for reimbursement after travel is completed. Students who receive funding from department, college, or university sources are required to submit a report, upon their return, according to guidelines from the PROGRAM COORDINATOR. When traveling, you are a representative of the MathSci department and you are expected to exhibit professional behavior.

25.5 Emergency Funding

Generous donors have established an emergency fund to provide financial support to graduate students who find themselves with a temporary need. See the PROGRAM COORDINATOR for details.

26 Office Procedures

26.1 Mailboxes

Graduate students are assigned mailboxes located in the MathSci Office. Please check your box daily to keep informed on any departmental business or other messages. Your undergraduate students are **NOT** allowed to put materials in your box. Please make other arrangements for collecting tests and assignments. Do not have your students bring papers to the MathSci Office to be put in your box, but rather request that your students use the drop box located on the outside, north wall of the main Math Sciences Office.

26.2 Bulletin Board

Notices regarding seminars, special events, employment opportunities and other activities are posted on the bulletin board in the MathSci office coffee room and on the Graduate Bulletin Board in the hallway by the Hurst Conference Room.

26.3 Coffee Room

You must clean up after yourself and dispose of your trash. Be thoughtful and courteous as many people use this kitchen area. Both coffee and tea are provided by the department at no cost to you, for you to consume while you are at work. Please do not be wasteful of these items. Do not leave an empty coffee pot; if you use the last of the coffee then make another pot. The refrigerator and microwaves are also available for your use. If you make a mess in either of the appliances, clean it up. The refrigerator is cleaned out on a monthly basis. Be sure not to leave your items in the refrigerator for an extended period of time, otherwise they will be disposed of, dish and all.

26.4 Copy and Fax Machines

Graduate students may use the department's copy machine for teaching-related activities only. You will be assigned a code for the copier. The copy machine also scans and emails scanned documents. A fax machine is also available in the Math office. Please keep the copy room clean and orderly.

26.5 Graduate Student Lounge

There is a lounge in Wilson Hall that is reserved for graduate students in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. It is located in Wilson 1-136. This room is reserved as a place to study.

Office hours should NOT be held in this room. A refrigerator and a microwave are available for graduate student use. Students are expected to clean up after themselves when using the lounge.

27 Contact Information

The Math Office maintains a list of contact information for all faculty, staff, and students. It is your responsibility to inform the ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT of your most up-to-date address and phone numbers. You will be assigned an email address when you arrive and all departmental email will be sent to that address. DO NOT forward your work email to your personal email address. Check your email on a daily basis and respond accordingly. You will be held responsible for missed emails.

28 Resources

Department of Mathematical Sciences: <http://www.math.montana.edu>

Graduate School: <http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/>

University Health Partners: <http://www.montana.edu/health/>

Student Accounts: <http://www.montana.edu/ubs/studentaccounts/>

Financial Aid: <http://www.montana.edu/financialaid/>

Family Graduate Housing: <http://www.montana.edu/fgh/>

Residency Information: <http://www.montana.edu/registrar/Residency.html>

Conduct Guideline and Grievance Procedures for Students:

http://www.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/index.html