Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Academic Assessment Plan 2012-2013

College of Agricultural and Life Sceinces
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Office of the Provost

University of Florida

Institutional Assessment

Continuous Quality Enhancement

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2012-2013 Academic Assessment Plan for Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

A. Mission

The mission of the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation is to foster education, expand knowledge, and reward scholarship, using multi-disciplinary approaches, for the purpose of understanding, managing, and conserving biological resources. The primary goal of our teaching, research, and extension programs is to develop and communicate the knowledge necessary for enhancing the conservation and management of wildlife and their habitats for the greatest aesthetic, ecological, economic, and recreational values.

The Wildlife Ecology and Conservation graduate program supports the missions of the college and university to serve the nation's and state's critical needs by contributing to a well-qualified and broadly diverse citizenry, leadership and workforce through graduate education and to expand our understanding of the natural world, the intellect and the senses through graduate student research.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

SLO Type	Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Degree Delivery
Knowledge	Describe and explain concepts and theories of wildlife ecology and conservation science, and the appropriate methods and techniques in a specialization.	Evaluation of the comprehensive written and oral qualifying (candidacy) exams and the final dissertation defense by the Supervisory Committee using a faculty-developed rubric.	Campus
Knowledge	Plan, conduct and analyze independent/original research.	Evaluation of the comprehensive written and oral qualifying (candidacy) exams and the final dissertation defense by the Supervisory Committee using a faculty-developed rubric.	Campus

Skills	Apply quantitative, spatial or qualitative research approaches to address wildlife ecology and conservation problems.	1) Evaluation of the dissertation seminar, final dissertation, and dissertation defense by the Supervisory Committee using a faculty- developed rubric. 2) Evaluation of WEC Seminar presentation by a faculty committee using a faculty-developed rubric.	Campus
Skills	Communicate proficiently and productively in oral and written form.	1) Evaluation of the comprehensive written and oral qualifying (candidacy) exams and the final dissertation defense by the Supervisory Committee using a faculty-developed rubric. 2) Evaluation of WEC Seminar presentation by a faculty committee using a faculty-developed rubric.	Campus
Professional Behavior	Display ethical behaviors and professional conduct to contribute as responsible professionals in the field of wildlife ecology and conservation.	1) Adherence to the University of Florida's Honor Code; 2) Observations by faculty of professional behavior during class, seminars, research work, qualifying examination, dissertation defense, and participation in professional societies. These observations will be shared with the Supervisory Committee and the WEC Chair as part of the student's exit interview and evaluated using a faculty-developed rubric; 3) Adherence to all safety, animal and human subject guidelines as assessed by having no IACUC or IRB compliance issues.	Campus

C. Research

Doctoral-level research expectations reflect the broad spectrum of departmental research drivers including intellectual curiosity, conservation need, funding availability, opportunistic occurrences, knowledge gaps, institutional capacity, stakeholder needs, research paradigms, and a diverse suite of other factors related to the conservation and ecology of wildlife, habitats and natural systems. This breadth of research makes it challenging to characterize and bind our doctoral-level research program in a simplistic framework. However a cohesive, formal research proposal must be developed during the first or second semester of a student's doctoral program. This proposal should be in the format required for an appropriate funding source in the student's field, such that the proposal could be submitted to help garner funding for the student's program. At a minimum, a doctoral proposal includes a title, concise statement of objectives, thorough review of pertinent literature, an outline of research objectives, procedures, and a discussion of possible inferences. At best, a dissertation proposal should conform to the format used by the National Science Foundation. All members of the student's supervisory committee must approve the student's doctoral research proposal.

D. Assessment Timeline

Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Assessment SLOs	Qualifying Exam	Dissertation	Seminar	Annual Evaluations
Knowledge				
#1	X			
#2	X			
Skills				
#3		X	X	
#4		X	X	
Professional Behavior				
#5				X

E. Assessment Cycle

Assessment Cycle for:
Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation — College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Analysis and Interpretation: 2012-13 and 2015-16
Program Modifications: Completed by Fall 2013 and Fall 2016
Dissemination: Completed by Fall 2013 and Fall 2016

Year / SLOs	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Content Knowledge						
#1		C	C,A	C	C	C,A
#2		C	C,A	C	C	C,A
Skills						
#3		C	C,A	C	C	C,A
#4		C	C, A	C	C	C,A
Professional Behavior						
#5		C	C, A	C	C	C,A

C = Collect; A = Analyze

F. Measurement Tools

The Department's Student Services Office will track the following: 1) curriculum plans ("Form 2") submitted by each student with concurrence of faculty supervisor/graduate committees from end of first academic year to graduation for compliance assurance for meeting departmental "area of emphasis" and programmatic requirements. 2) Graduate advisors will report academic progress to Student Services Office from end of first academic year to graduation for all students. For PhD students, progress will be measured by 1) submitting/defending a cohesive, formal research proposal by the end of first academic year; 2) completing Qualifying Exams by the third semester (not counting summer sessions) of the student's program. Finally, successfully completing Final Defenses of Dissertations and meeting requirements for exit seminars will represent the last assessment for each doctoral student.

Example of Measurement Tool:

WEC Graduate Program Assessment

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Degree: Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

Milestone:

___ MS Thesis Research Proposal

___ MS Non Thesis Technical Paper Proposal

___ Doctoral Research Proposal

___MS Symposium Research Presentation

___Doctoral Research WIS 6933 Seminar Presentation (or equivalent)

___ Master's Thesis Defense

___ Non-Thesis Master's Project Defense

___ Doctoral Qualify Examination

___ Doctoral Dissertation Defense

Knowledge Outcome 1:

Describe and explain concepts and theories of wildlife ecology and conservation science, and the appropriate methods and techniques in a specialization.

Has student achieved this outcome at a level commensurate with the degree?

Basis: Evaluation by the Supervisory Committee of (1) the student's Program of Study and (2) his or her performance during Master's thesis or non-thesis project defense or qualifying examination and dissertation defense using the rubric at http://www.wec.ufl.edu/grad/.

___ Yes

___ No

___ Partially

Comment (optional)

_____

_____

Knowledge Outcome 2:

Plan, conduct and analyze independent/original research.

Has student achieved this outcome at a level commensurate with the degree?

Basis: Evaluation by the Supervisory Committee of (1) the student's Program of Study and (2) his or her performance during Master's thesis or non-thesis project defense or qualifying examination and dissertation defense using the rubric at http://www.wec.ufl.edu/grad/.

___ Yes

___ No

___ Partially

Comment (optional)

_____

_____

Skills Outcome 1:

Apply quantitative, spatial or qualitative research approaches to address wildlife ecology and conservation problems.

Has student achieved this outcome at a level commensurate with the degree?

Basis: Evaluation by the Supervisory Committee of (1) the student's Program of Study and (2) his or her performance during Master's thesis or non-thesis project defense or qualifying examination and dissertation defense using the rubric at http://www.wec.ufl.edu/grad/.

___ Yes

___ No

___ Partially

Comment (optional)

_____

_____

Skills Outcome 2:

Communicate proficiently and productively in oral and written form.

Has student achieved this outcome at a level commensurate with the degree?

Basis: Evaluation by the Supervisory Committee of (1) the student's Program of Study and (2) his or her performance during Master's thesis or non-thesis project defense or qualifying examination and dissertation defense using the rubric at http://www.wec.ufl.edu/grad/.

___ Yes

___ No

___ Partially

Comment (optional)

_____

_____

Professional Behavior Outcome 1:

Display ethical behaviors and professional conduct to contribute as responsible professionals in the field of wildlife ecology and conservation.

Has student achieved this outcome at a level commensurate with the degree?

Basis: Evaluation by the Supervisory Committee of (1) the student's Program of Study and (2) his or her performance during Master's thesis or non-thesis project defense or qualifying examination and dissertation defense using the rubric at http://www.wec.ufl.edu/grad/.

___ Yes

___ No

___ Partially

Comment (optional)

_____

_____

Signatures of Supervisory Committee Members:

_____	_____	
Committee Chair	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
Co-Chair (optional)	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
External Member (doctoral only)	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
Member	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
Member	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
Member	(Signature)	(Date)
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Member	(Signature)	(Date)
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Member	(Signature)	(Date)
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Member	(Signature)	(Date)
_____	_____	
Member	(Signature)	(Date)

G. Assessment Oversight

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