



# Dual Major PhD Degrees

## College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Guidelines

Background: Michigan State University offers doctoral students the exceptional opportunity to work in conjunction with faculty mentors to develop a dual major doctoral program. Such a program will reflect the required courses and standards for both programs with a single dissertation. All dual major doctoral degrees must be approved by the Graduate School. The request and subsequent plan regarding comprehensive exams and joint dissertations must be approved by the student, the student's major advisor, the graduate program director of both programs and the associate dean responsible for graduate education of both colleges. All policies and procedures for a student pursuing one major apply to a student with dual majors, including residency and time limits, other than those outlined below.

Policy: <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Print.aspx?Section=407>

Form: Dual Degree Memorandum of Understanding – find on the ANR.GraduatePrograms Team.

### Criteria for requesting dual major:

1. The intent to receive the degree in two areas must be outlined in the guidance committee report.
2. The guidance committee will include members from both doctoral programs.
3. The Ph.D. Degree Plan must reflect the required standards for both doctoral programs.
4. The integrated course work must be satisfactory to both graduate programs and meet the requirements for awarding of a degree in that program.
5. The comprehensive examination must be passed to the satisfaction of both departments.
6. Responsible Conduct of Research requirements will be approved by the guidance committee; they should meet the RCR requirements in both programs.
7. There must be a single dissertation that represents an integration of the two disciplinary areas.
8. Guidance committee members from both departments must be satisfied that the dissertation represents a contribution meeting the usual standards in both areas

### Process:

1. Within one semester of developing a dual major doctoral program and before the end of the student's second year as a student at Michigan State University, the request for a dual major degree program must be submitted for approval.
2. The student should use the Dual Major PhD Program Memorandum of Understanding form to outline the agreed upon courses, comprehensive exam topics and integrated dissertation. This form must be completed and approved before the student submits the dual major request in GradPlan.

3. The MOU is routed in the order of the signatures requested on the form.
  - a. Student
  - b. Student's major advisor
  - c. Dual major graduate program director
  - d. Dual major authorized college signature (generally the associate dean responsible for graduate programs)
  - e. Primary major graduate program director (for CANR students, this is the CANR major)
  - f. Primary major authorized college signature (for CANR students, this is Dr. Kelly Millenbah. Copy Lisa Duffey)
  - g. Graduate School Dean (CANR will forward for this signature).
4. After CANR has signed off on the dual major MOU, the form will be returned to the student to attach to the dual major request in GradPlan.
5. When the dual major request electronic approval reaches the CANR Senior Associate Dean, the Senior Associate Dean will route the form through the Graduate School's e-approval email address with the electronic approval routing number (FTU).
  - a. Beginning January 2021, all requests and approvals will take place in the new GradPlan in Campus Solutions.
6. If changes are needed to the approved dual major academic program plan, the changes will be made and approved through the GradPlan change process. No additional forms are needed.