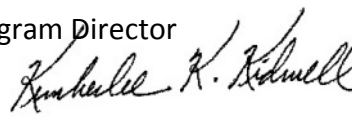


TO: Dr. Jerry Goodstein, Graduate Studies Committee

FROM: Dr. Kimberlee K. Kidwell, MS-Agriculture Program Director
Executive Associate Dean, CAHNRS 

DATE: October 24, 2013

RE: Revised proposal for Plant Health Management Option, MS-Agriculture

Thank you for your feedback on the initial proposal for the Plant Health Management Option, MS-Agriculture. We have revised the proposal and addressed the concerns of the committee. Responses to the committee's concerns are also provided here:

- (1) Currently there are twelve credits of undergraduate coursework included in the proposal. The maximum allowed for a Masters degree is nine credits.**
- (2) In the current proposal 15 of the 30 credit hours are undergraduate courses. This struck the GSC as high for a Masters degree program.**

We have introduced a Plant Health Core, and a Management Core, consisting of only 500-level courses. The undergraduate courses are listed as Supporting Online Coursework options. This leaves 12 undergraduate credits presented, but we are careful to point out that only 9 (non-thesis) or 6 (thesis) may be used on a program of study. We recommend that students entering the program have established competencies in agriculture, plant science or a related discipline and/or have a B.S. degree in agriculture or a biology-based field prior to entering the program.

- (3) The current proposal as presented on pages 4 & 5 does not include the internship/practicum, although this is referenced earlier in the proposal as an important component of the degree. The sense from the GSC is that the internship/practicum should be integrated into what is presented on pp. 4-5.**

We have further described the internship/practicum on page 4 of the proposal and have appended to the proposal an MS-AG Internship/Practicum Guidelines document which details with all aspects of the internship/practicum and related enrollment in AGRI 702.

(4) The proposal references an AGRI 702 course, but does not indicate in the proposal the nature of this course - is this course designed to be project based, an exam, etc.? Some broad description beyond what is on page 4 would be helpful.

AGRI 702 is the course through which students receive credit for effort devoted to the internship/practicum or projected-based experience and for final examination. AGRI 700 is the course through which students receive credit for effort devoted to thesis preparation based on a project conducted with guidance from the committee and for final examination. Further details of AGRI 700 and 702 are outlined in the MS-Ag student handbook and on the MS-Ag website (<http://msag.wsu.edu/requirements>).

(5) On pages 6 & 7 student learning outcomes are presented. The program student learning outcomes are well defined, but the assessment rubric presented on page 6 is quite broad and does not correspond to these specific program outcomes. There should be a closer correspondence between the program student learning outcomes and the rubric that outlines the assessment of these program-specific student learning outcomes.

The assessment rubric initially provided is that of the MS-Ag degree program Assessment Plan which applies to all MS-Ag options. In the revised proposal, we have provided a program-specific final examination rubric to be used for students in the Plant Health Management option, which closely aligns with the student learning outcomes.

I believe we have addressed the concerns of the committee in full, and look forward to educating future plant health management specialists.

We look forward to your acknowledgement of an approved proposal.

Thank you.

KKK/dm