Forestry, MS, PhD

Department: Wildland Resources Department
College: S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources

Overview

About This Degree

USU is the only university in the state with a college devoted to the study of natural resources, and it is the only university in the state and one of only a few in the region with degree programs in forestry.

Forestry is a land management degree focused on the integration of biological, social, and physical sciences and their application to the management of forest ecosystems. While studying forest ecosystem management, students can focus on a variety of related areas, including forest ecology, economics, social sciences, natural resource policy, wildlife species and their impact on forest ecosystems, hydrological dimensions, recreational dimensions, and more.

Each student works with their graduate committee to create an individualized plan of study that supports their area of research interests. Students are able to take courses in other areas and departments, gaining an interdisciplinary education in forestry and related aspects.

Career Options

Graduates in forestry are able to pursue careers as foresters in the following areas:

- U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- Other federal land management agencies
- State natural resource and forestry agencies
- Forest industry
- Forest land management
- The Nature Conservancy
- Native American tribes
- Faculty and research positions with universities

What it takes

Admissions Requirements

Students with undergraduate degrees in natural resources or sciences are preferred.

To be accepted to the program, it is recommended that applicants first contact a specific faculty member with whom they are interested in working. If the faculty member is accepting graduate students and agrees to work with the student, the student can then apply by completing the following application requirements:

Application Requirements:

- Complete the online application
- Pay the $55 application fee
- Score at or above the 40th percentile on the GRE
- Have a 3.0 or higher GPA on your last 60 semester or 90 quarter credits
- Provide transcripts of all college/university credits
- Provide three contacts for letters of recommendation

International students have additional admissions requirements.

Admissions Deadlines

Applications for graduate programs are accepted year-round. However, chances for acceptance are best if students

apply from October through January of each academic year. It is also encouraged that students begin in the fall if possible.

Master's Degree Plan Options

Students can receive the MS by pursuing one of two options:

- In the **Plan A** option, students complete graduate-level coursework and must write a thesis.
- The **Plan B** option requires the production of a paper or creative work of art and is expected to reflect equivalent scholarship standards as a thesis.

Financial Assistance

The Department of Wildland Resources provides funding for all of its graduate students through research assistantships, available through professors having contracts, grants, or other awards.

A variety of additional funding opportunities are available, including fellowships, scholarships, tuition awards, and travel support. Additionally, students may be eligible for subsidized health insurance through qualifying assistantships.

Program Requirements

Click here to see course requirements for the **Master of Science**.

Click here to see course requirements for the **Doctor of Philosophy**.

PhD Qualifying Exams:

PhD students must pass a comprehensive examination. This exam is used to assess whether a student is prepared to successfully conduct independent research. The assessment depends upon the student's knowledge in his or her area of concentration and in supporting areas, understanding of philosophical perspectives on scholarship, and ability to communicate this knowledge effectively.

It is recommended that the comprehensive exam be taken by the end of the student's second academic year, and it must be passed no later than one year prior to defending the dissertation and before candidacy will be recommended.

Contact

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Get Involved

Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

Society of American Foresters: SAF is the national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States. Founded in 1900, it is the largest professional society for foresters in the world. SAF aims to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems. SAF members include natural resource professionals in public and private settings, researchers, CEOs, administrators, educators, and students.

Labs, Centers, Research

Center for Integrated BioSystems: The CIB leads a progressive, interdisciplinary effort in research, core services, and education serving agriculture and life sciences. The CIB is where the first hybrid animal, a mule, was cloned, and was named one of “30 Awesome College Labs” by Popular Science magazine. The CIB has a research program with several active projects in diverse areas of life science that encompass plant, animal, and microbe functional genomics.

Rocky Mountain Research Station: The Rocky Mountain Research Station is one of five regional units that make up the US Forest Service Research and Development organization — the most extensive natural resources research organization in the world. It maintains 14 research locations throughout a 12-state territory encompassing the Great Basin, Southwest, Rocky Mountains, and parts of the Great Plains. One of these is the Logan Forestry Sciences Laboratory, which is situated on the campus of Utah State University and houses scientists who are actively involved in USU's graduate forestry program.

T.W. Daniel Experimental Forest: The T.W. Daniel Experimental Forest is located in the Cache Valley National Forest and is dedicated for the use of USU College of Natural Resources students. This property houses a cabin that serves as a base of operations for research, teaching, and road-building in the student forest. Since the 1950s, the 18x18-square-foot cabin has been restored by USU’s forestry club for the use of student outings.

Utah Botanical Center: The UBC, located in Kaysville, Utah, is home to research and demonstration projects focused on sustainable living in the Intermountain West. Studies of water conservation, horticulture, water quality enhancement, wetland ecology, integrated pest management, urban forestry, agriculture, fish and wildlife, highway enhancement, and storm-water management combine to make the center a living laboratory.