



Oregon State
University

ONLINE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN NATURAL RESOURCES

Graduate Student Handbook

2025

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Forestry, Forest Ecosystems and Society

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About the Handbook

This handbook is designed for graduate students and potential graduate students of the Master of Natural Resources degree and the affiliated certificates. This handbook includes information about admissions, program requirements, academic policies, and relevant resources. Other sections of the handbook provide suggested timelines, procedures, and strategies to help you get the most out of your graduate experience.

About the Programs



Master of Natural Resources

The Oregon State University Master of Natural Resources (MNR) program is designed for professionals interested in strengthening their natural resources knowledge and skills. This 45-credit program is delivered entirely online through Oregon State Ecampus—consistently rated as one of the premier providers of online education in the country.

The MNR degree carries the prestige of Oregon State University, which is recognized nationally for its natural resources programs. This interdisciplinary program taps the minds of leading scientists from multiple departments within the Colleges of Agricultural Sciences; Forestry; Science; Liberal Arts; and Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences. The College of Forestry administers the MNR degree and multiple departments administer the certificate programs, depending on the certificate focus. Since its inception in 2011, more than 250 students have earned the MNR degree.

You will benefit not just from the expertise of our faculty but also your fellow students who are working on the ground in various regions of the U.S. and beyond. You will develop the analytical and problem-solving skills necessary to provide workable solutions for complex natural resources challenges, learning to balance economic, social, and environmental interests.

The resource management issues associated with fisheries and wildlife management, water conflict management, sustainable natural resources, urban forestry, and climate change are important to Oregon, the nation, and the world. Thus, the MNR degree serves a broad audience in its mission to improve quality of life through education on critical environmental and natural resources issues.

The MNR degree is a non-thesis program culminating in a capstone project. MNR students apply cross-disciplinary approaches learned throughout the program to propose or implement solutions to natural resource problems. (See Appendix for example capstone projects that have been completed.) Many students choose to start the MNR program by pursuing one of seven affiliated certificates ranging from fisheries management to urban forestry. By completing one of the graduate certificates, you will have 18 of the required 45 credits needed for the MNR degree (see “Certificates in Natural Resources”).

You have the opportunity to cater the program to accommodate your interests and availability. With options to pursue coursework part-time, during evenings, and on weekends, the MNR program and affiliated certificates offer the flexibility you need to fulfill career and personal commitments. You may also choose from a variety of courses to assemble the right program for you and your individual “area of emphasis.”

Program website address: ecampus.oregonstate.edu/online-degrees/graduate/natural-resources/

Admissions for MNR

Admissions requirements

- Bachelor degree in any social science or natural science field
- Degree should include basic courses in biology, ecology, and economics
- Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0
- Highly Recommended: Two years of natural resources-related work experience
- An MNR faculty member who has agreed to serve as your major professor/advisor¹

The program coordinator or director can help you decide if you meet these requirements.

How to find a major professor (faculty advisor)

Faculty advisors help guide you through the program and offer mentoring as you work toward your degree. Before submitting your application, follow the steps outlined on the [choosing an advisor webpage](#) to identify a faculty member whose area of expertise aligns with your academic interest. We recommend that you identify several faculty members who could potentially serve as your advisor. These can be current members of our graduate faculty, or someone not on the list.

Once you have compiled your list, contact each faculty member separately and ask if they would be willing to serve as your MNR major advisor. Faculty will want to know background information about your academic experience and your capstone project idea before they agree to be your major advisor. The webpage has a template of a letter you can use to contact potential advisors.

How to apply as a degree-seeking student

1. Confirm who has agreed to serve as your MNR program advisor with the program coordinator.
2. Apply to the OSU Graduate School and the Master of Natural Resources program as a degree-seeking student via the Graduate School's [online application](#). Pay the \$75 nonrefundable application fee.
3. Submit a cover letter via the online application. This cover letter is a statement of objectives and request for admission into the MNR program, which should include a description of your professional and educational experience, an explanation of your interest in the MNR program, and a description of your ideas for a capstone project. (Your ideas for the capstone will undoubtedly evolve over time, but providing some initial ideas will give the admissions committee a sense of whether your interests are aligned with the MNR degree.)
4. Via the online application, provide the names and email addresses of three individuals who will supply letters of professional reference on your behalf. These individuals will be contacted directly by the OSU Graduate School and asked to independently upload their letters.
5. Submit official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended via the online application form or via mail to the Graduate School (Heckart Lodge, 2900 SW Jefferson Way, Corvallis, OR, 97331).

¹ The terms “advisor” and “major professor” are used interchangeably. Typically, Oregon State University uses the term “major professor”, and the MNR program uses the term “advisor.”

NOTE: International applicants must also submit documents and language test scores that are outlined on the graduate admissions [international applicants' webpage](#).

Deadline to apply

MNR students can start the program during the fall, winter, or spring terms. Your complete application including confirmation of your advisor is due at the posted [deadline](#) for the term on our website.. Applications submitted after this time will not be considered.

Certificates in Natural Resources

Oregon State offers seven graduate certificates (18-21 credits) related to Natural Resources entirely online. Although they are stand-alone programs, these certificates are designed to work hand-in-hand with the MNR program and can serve as a pathway to the MNR. Credits earned within each certificate option satisfy the 18-hour “area of emphasis” requirement in the MNR program. Certificate students are not required to have a major professor, nor are they subject to the continuous enrollment policy of the graduate school. We encourage students who are unsure about enrolling in the MNR degree to start by pursuing a certificate program.

We cannot guarantee advisor availability or admission into the MNR program for certificate students. Prospective students wanting to ensure their admission into the MNR program are advised to apply directly to the MNR program first.

Admissions for Certificates

Admissions requirements and deadlines vary for each graduate certificate program. All certificate programs require an undergraduate degree with a 3.0 minimum GPA. Visit the individual certificate websites [linked on this page](#) for more information about the different admissions requirements.

MNR Program Requirements

The Master of Natural Resources degree program requires students to take a minimum of 18 credits in core classes, 18 credits in an area of emphasis, and 9 credits for the MNR capstone project. Your total credits must equal at least 45. You can choose an area of emphasis from the certificate programs or you can opt for a self-designed area of emphasis based on your interests and goals. The program of study can be thought of as a contract between you, your committee, and OSU that outlines which courses and requirements you will need to complete in order to graduate. Your faculty advisor should help you create your program of study. Note that courses do not need to have the MNR prefix to be used in your program. View the complete list of the MNR course offerings in the [OSU Catalog](#). The program coordinator will give you a guide to completing the program of study when you are accepted to the program.

MNR Sections	Introduction	Ecology/Production	Human Systems	Methodology
Core (18 credits) <i>provides breadth</i>	3 credits MNR 511: Intro to Sustainable Natural Resources	6 credits See course offerings in the OSU Catalog .	6-9 credits in 2+ areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics • Policy • Sociology • Ethics • Communication 	3 credits See course offerings in the OSU Catalog .
Area of Emphasis (18 credits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic Information Science • Sustainable Natural Resources • Water Conflict Management • Fisheries Management • Wildlife Management • Forests and Climate Change • Urban Forestry • Or student-designed, advisor-approved area of emphasis 			
Capstone Project (6-9 credits)	<p>MNR students will choose one option below depending upon their area of emphasis choice. All students should choose option 1 unless they will complete the Sustainable Natural Resources or Forests and Climate Change certificate. Students cannot take MNR 560 (or SNR 506) and MNR 561 during the same term. MNR 561 credits should be taken after MNR 560, and the credits may be broken up over more than one term.</p> <p>Option 1: MNR 560 Master's Case Study (3 credits) MNR 561 MNR Capstone Project (6 credits)</p> <p>Option 2, only for SNR and FCC students: SNR 512 Sustainable Natural Resource Development (3 credits) SNR 506 Independent Project in Natural Resource Sustainability (2 credits) MNR 561 MNR Capstone Project (6 credits)</p>			

As with all graduate degrees at OSU, 50% of the credits in your program must be “stand-alone” graduate classes.

MNR Degree Milestones

Students are expected to check with their graduate program and the Graduate School regarding specific deadlines unique to the term and academic year they plan to complete their degree requirements. Visit the [Graduate School deadlines website](#) for more information about general graduate student requirements. The following are general guidelines:

1. During your first term, start drafting your [program of study](#) and assembling your graduate advisory committee. Establish best communication practices with your advisor and other committee members. The program of study is absolutely due 15 weeks before your final exam, though it is highly recommended that you complete it before you complete 18 credits.
2. By the beginning of the second term, enroll in a certificate program if you plan to complete one for your area of emphasis credits. If you started in a certificate and then transferred to the MNR program, disregard this step.
3. If you are a certificate student who has been accepted into the MNR program but are not currently enrolled in the MNR degree, you need to [submit a change of degree form](#) to enroll in the MNR program before starting the last term of your certificate. If you finish your certificate before submitting a change of degree, you will have to reapply to OSU.
4. Before you complete 18 credits, finalize your Graduate Advisory Committee and submit your [program of study](#) to the Graduate School.
5. Before you complete 30 credits, begin detailed planning of your capstone with your advisor and other committee members. We highly suggest discussing and agreeing on a timeline for writing, feedback, and final exam expectations with your committee at this time.
6. At the beginning of your last term, identify an exam date and time and [submit a diploma application](#) (at least two weeks before your final exam) for the term you will complete the program. If you have made changes to your program of study, submit a new program of study to the Graduate School. Any changes to your [Program of Study](#) must be submitted to the Graduate School using the [Petition for Change of Program Form](#) before taking your final exam. Finish any courses that were incompletes before scheduling your final exam.
7. During your last term, register for three or more credits, submit your [exam scheduling form](#) (no later than two weeks prior to your final exam), present your capstone project, pass your final exam, and complete all required coursework, totaling 45 credits from the [MNR curriculum](#).
8. After your final exam, make the necessary changes to your capstone report recommended by your committee, and submit your final capstone paper to the OSU ScholarsArchive <https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/>

Recurring degree requirements

1. Enroll in at least three credits every fall, winter, and spring term until you have graduated (or submit leave of absence). You are not required to register in the summer, but you should do so if you are taking classes or working with your advisor on your capstone project. If you need time off, submit a leave of absence form to the Graduate School at least 2 weeks before the term starts. Failure to enroll or submit a leave of absence will result in you being removed from the university.

2. Maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout your time in the program. This includes a 3.0 in all OSU coursework, a 3.0 total on your program of study, and a 3.0 each term.
3. Every spring you are required to complete the Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress. The student and advisor work on the form together and the student also submits a self-narrative of their progress. The coordinator sends out several reminders about this requirement throughout spring term. Failing to turn in the assessment materials on time will result in an enrollment hold being put on your account.
4. Check in with your advisor on a consistent basis every term and update them on your coursework and capstone progress. We recommend that you establish a communication schedule with your advisor. It is also highly recommended to check in with your committee members this often as well.
5. Check your OSU email regularly. This is the official, and only way OSU communicates with students.

Timeline for Degree Completion

The time it takes for students to complete the MNR degree varies based on each student's professional and personal situation, and you have the flexibility to work at your own pace. On average, MNR students complete their degree within three years; however, the degree can be finished in under two years if students are enrolled as full-time students. MNR students must complete the program within a seven-year period, after which classes start to expire. MNR students are still expected to check in quarterly, or once a term, with their major advisor, enroll in a minimum of three credits per term, and continue to work toward degree completion.

Students enrolled in one of the affiliated certificate programs who want to continue on in the MNR program should transfer to the master's degree before finishing their certificate. Students who complete the certificate program without doing so will need to apply to the MNR program separately and be accepted in order to continue with the MNR sequence. Students who start with a certificate must complete the MNR degree within seven years of starting the certificate program.

Forming your Graduate Advisory Committee

Every student enrolled in the MNR degree must have a Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) to determine a course of study and finalize their capstone project. The student's graduate advisory committee consists of three members total, including your advisor:

1. One graduate faculty member from the student's chosen area of emphasis (usually the major professor/advisor)
2. Two other graduate faculty members, reflecting either breadth (core area) or depth (area of emphasis) of the student's curriculum

Role of your advisor

Your major professor (faculty advisor) serves as an academic mentor who guides you in the completion of your degree. This advisor is your primary point of contact for your graduate school expectations and capstone work. The responsibilities of your major advisor include:

- Providing guidance and mentoring related to classes and your required tasks for the program
- Helping you assemble your Graduate Advisory Committee
- Assisting you with your program of study
- Contacting you quarterly by your mutually agreed upon communication practice
- Guiding you through any compliance requirements, such as Institutional Review Board approval for human subjects or animal care and use.
- Providing guidance, recommendations, and resources for developing your capstone project
- Giving feedback on two to three drafts of your final project report for your capstone, prior to your final oral examination
- Ensuring your final exam paperwork is submitted to the graduate school
- Overseeing your final oral examination with your Graduate Advisory Committee using video conferencing technology

The student/advisor relationship comes with responsibilities for both parties. Major advisors, in addition to their mentoring responsibilities, have other academic commitments. Be sure to check in each quarter to ask about their availability to work with you on your degree requirements. In the unlikely event that a student is considering a change of major professor, the student should speak to their major professor (if possible) and the Department Head or Graduate Program Director to understand how the change would impact their program and capstone project.

Policy on non-MNR or non-OSU Committee Membership

If an OSU faculty member is not a member of the OSU [Graduate Faculty](#) or is not approved for the role proposed, your major department/program will need to nominate the proposed member to act in those roles. Contact the MNR program coordinator if someone in your committee will need to be nominated to the role. Committee structure is evaluated when your program of study is received by the Graduate School and when you schedule your formal examination(s). Non-OSU committee members are only

allowed if they hold an academic degree of Masters or higher, already have an existing, durable relationship with OSU and are prepared to maintain an OSU email and complete some OSU required trainings. Contact the coordinator to see if a particular person is eligible.

Communicating with your Graduate Advisory Committee

After establishing committee membership, you and your committee should discuss and agree on expectations for committee meetings. This discussion should include:

- How often the committee will meet
- How you should prepare for each meeting
- Whether and how you will provide progress reports between meetings
- Scheduling and communication preferences
- Each committee member's role in your capstone project

In order to work around busy faculty schedules, ideally you should schedule meetings at least one month in advance. You can use teleconference services, like [Zoom](#) to hold meetings, and scheduling tools like Doodle to schedule committee meetings and your final exam.

Your [graduate committee](#) guides your course work and capstone and serves as your final examining committee. It is generally expected that all committee members or approved substitutes must be present for all formal meetings with the student (e.g. final oral exams). If a committee member needs to participate remotely, you and your committee must assure that all the conditions for remote participation are met. These conditions are also required of the student themselves during their final oral exam. Those conditions are as follows:

- Advance agreement of the student and all committee members has been obtained;
- All participants join in with two way audio and video connections; audio only connections must be approved by the major professor if the video connection is not possible. When the student is the remote participant, his or her connection must be an audio and video connection;
- Any visual aids or other materials have been distributed in advance to the remote participants;
- The committee members participate in the complete meeting, discussion, presentation, and evaluation; and
- The student is responsible for making arrangements.

Capstone Project

The MNR Capstone project is not a thesis. Rather it is the culmination of a student's academic program at OSU and should reflect an integrative knowledge of sustainable natural resource management for the situation and/or site selected. Ideas for projects may be generated by faculty, the student, or the student's "client" organization or agency. Projects must provide a practical problem-solving experience for the student that approximates a future work environment, while providing solutions and/or products addressing natural resource issue concerns. MNR capstone projects can be based on original data, a synthesis of existing data, or both. Final projects completed for graduate certificate programs cannot be used to meet the requirements for the MNR capstone.

(See Appendix for titles of completed capstone projects)

The advisor is expected to mentor the student in collecting, analyzing and synthesizing data and information to answer capstone project questions.

Students must take 9 credits associated with the Capstone project (see Table of Program Requirements). Students who do not complete SNR 512 and SNR 506 as part of a completed certificate will enroll in the 3-credit MNR 560 class. In this class, there are readings and assignments meant to build your capstone proposal and project outline. The professor and peers will provide feedback and suggestions. After taking MNR 560, students complete six credits of MNR 561 (ideally broken into two terms of three credits each) under the supervision of their faculty advisor.

The final capstone project results in a detailed report that demonstrates basic understanding and integrative knowledge of sustainable natural resource management for the site or situation selected for your capstone. Students are expected to devote 120 to 200 hours to the capstone project and prepare a 30- to 50-page final report (double-spaced, not including figures, tables, and references). The capstone project report is due during the last term of the MNR program of study.

Successful completion of a final oral examination is required for all master's degrees. The student will present their capstone project during an oral examination, during which the Graduate Advisory Committee will ask questions related to the capstone project, coursework and the student's topical knowledge about sustainable natural resource management. The final oral exam must be scheduled with the program and the OSU graduate school at least 2 weeks ahead of time. Contact the program coordinator for more detail.

MNR Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Upon successful completion of the program, students will meet the following learning outcomes:

- Conduct research or produce some other form of creative work.
- Demonstrate mastery of subject material.
- Conduct scholarly or professional activities in an ethical manner.
- Demonstrate skill in integrative thinking and collaborative learning across several disciplines within the natural resource professions; show familiarity with a wide range of disciplinary knowledge and the capacity to apply knowledge to natural resource problems at multiple scales.
- Construct a study project about a specific issue using appropriate data/information gathering techniques, cross-disciplinary interactions, and integrated analysis methods.
- Apply sound methodologies and work ethics to problems in management or sustainability of natural resources.

Costs and Funding

A clear and reasonable approach to paying for education is a key part of every student's success. Graduate students need to plan for expenses in three general categories:

Institutional expenses paid to OSU to facilitate the core components of their education. These may include [tuition](#), [fees](#), [textbooks](#), and [printing](#).

Research expenses that support the completion and communication of their research. These may include purchasing books or software, travel to research sites, equipment used to collect or analyze samples, and travel to conferences to present research.

Living expenses that support their basic survival. These include rent, food, clothing, and transportation.

Due to the unique research interests and lifestyles that each student brings to their graduate program, it is difficult for OSU to estimate the exact total cost of any specific student's attendance. It is important for students to assess their own expenses and how to pay them, both before their program begins and as their program progresses.

The MNR is a professional degree, and it is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure all of their costs are covered. OSU does not provide scholarships or research funding for MNR or other distance programs. However, students may qualify for financial aid such as federal student loans if they complete the FAFSA. Graduate degree students need to be enrolled in 5 or more credits per term to access financial aid.

<http://financialaid.oregonstate.edu/>

If you have questions regarding financial aid, this is the place to start. You can also call using the phone number listed on this site.

Academic Policies for OSU's Graduate Programs²



² Material taken from OSU websites

Student Conduct and Community Standards

Graduate students enrolled at Oregon State University are expected to conform to basic regulations and policies governing the behavior of students as members of the university community. The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) is the central coordinating office for student conduct-related matters at Oregon State University.

Choosing to join the Oregon State University community obligates each member to a code of responsible behavior which is outlined in the [Student Conduct Code](#). The assumption upon which this Code is based is that all persons must treat one another with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive. Violations of the regulations subject a student to appropriate disciplinary action.

Class registration

The OSU Schedule of Classes is available online and contains academic regulations and registration procedures that apply to all students in the university, as well as the final examination week schedule. The online [catalog](#) is the source for up-to-date changes for the current and immediately upcoming term. It is your responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for any funding eligibility and/or to meet the requirements of the continuous enrollment policy. Problems arising from registration procedures, such as late registration, adding or withdrawing from courses after deadlines, or late changes from letter or S/U grading are resolved through the [petition for late change in registration](#) filed with the Graduate School. A late registration fee may be applied.

Students are responsible for staying current on registration requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (e.g., international, financial aid, veteran's).

Unauthorized Break in Registration

Degree seeking graduate students who take an unauthorized break in registration relinquish graduate standing at the University.

To have graduate standing reinstated after an unauthorized break (i.e., not registering and failing to obtain an approved leave of absence), students are required to reapply to their program (complete the online graduate admission application, and pay the application fee). It is advisable that students in this situation state that they are applying for readmission in the application packet. A reapplication does not ensure re-admittance to the program.

Graduate-level Versions of Classes Taken as an Undergraduate at OSU

A graduate student who has taken a 4xx course at OSU in the past may not normally include the corresponding 5xx course on his or her graduate program of study.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Minimum Course Loads

Course load requirements for graduate students are established by the Registrar and the Graduate School. You are considered a “full-time” graduate student if you are registered for 9 to 16 credits in a given academic term. You are considered a “part-time” graduate student if you have less than nine credits (most MNR students are part-time every quarter). If you are a degree-seeking student you must be registered for a minimum of three graduate credits in every term except summer, including the term of the final defense, except when you have an approved leave of absence (see below). Students are responsible for staying current on course load requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (e.g., international, financial aid, veteran’s).

Grade Requirements

Grades below C (2.00) cannot be used on a graduate program of study. A grade-point average of 3.00 is required before the final oral or written exam may be undertaken. A grade-point average of 3.00 is required:

1. For all courses taken as a degree-seeking graduate student
2. For courses included in the graduate degree or graduate certificate program of study.

Enforced graduate-level prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade of C. Visit the OSU Catalog for information about [transfer credit requirements](#). MNR students are particularly affected by OSU transfer credit policy because their certificate classes count towards the 22 credit transfer maximum for masters degrees at OSU. Please contact the coordinator with any questions.

Incomplete Grades

An “I” (incomplete) grade is granted only at the discretion of the instructor. The [incomplete](#) that is filed by the instructor at the end of the term must include the grade to which the incomplete grade defaults at the end of the specified time period, if coursework is not completed. The time allocated to complete the required tasks for the course may be extended by petition to the University Academic Requirements Committee. You can obtain the form from the Registrar’s Office. It is the student’s responsibility to see that “I” grades are removed within the allotted time.

Academic Dishonesty

The [Code of Student Conduct](#) prohibits Academic Misconduct and defines it as:

Any action that misrepresents a student or group's work, knowledge, or achievement, provides a potential or actual inequitable advantage, or compromises the integrity of the educational process.

To support understanding of what can be included in this definition, the Code further classifies and describes examples of Academic Misconduct, as follows.

Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to doing or attempting the following actions:

1. **Cheating.** Unauthorized assistance, or access to or use of unauthorized materials, information, tools, or study aids. Examples include, but are not limited to, unauthorized collaboration or copying on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, unapproved use of cell phones, internet, or other electronic devices, etc.
2. **Plagiarism.** Representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, data, expressed ideas, or artistry as one's own. Examples include, but are not limited to, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, using another person's work or words (including unpublished material) without appropriate source documentation or citation, working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own, etc.
3. **Falsification.** Fabrication or invention of any information. Examples include, but are not limited to, falsifying research, inventing or falsely altering data, citing fictitious references, falsely recording or reporting attendance, hours, or engagement in activities such as internships, externships, field experiences, clinical activities, etc.
4. **Assisting.** Any action that helps another engage in academic misconduct. Examples include, but are not limited to, providing materials or assistance without approval, altering someone's work, grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else, compelling acquisition, selling, bribing, paying or accepting payment for academic work or assistance that contributes to academic misconduct, etc.
5. **Tampering.** Interfering with an instructor's evaluation of work by altering materials or documents, tampering with evaluation tools, or other means of interfering.
6. **Multiple submissions of work.** Using or submitting work completed for another or previous class or requirement, without appropriate disclosure, citation, and instructor approval.
7. **Unauthorized recording and use.** Recording and/or dissemination of instructional content without the express permission of the instructor(s), or an approved accommodation coordinated via Disability Access Services.

Continuous Enrollment

All MNR students [must register continuously](#) for a minimum of three graduate credits each term (fall, winter, and spring terms, but not summer) until all degree requirements are met, regardless of the student's location. Students on approved leave are exempt from the continuous enrollment policy for the term(s) they are on leave.

Graduate students who use facilities or faculty/staff time during summer session are required to register for a minimum of three credits during the summer session. Students defending in the summer term are required to register for a minimum of three graduate credits during summer.

Students may appeal the provisions of the continuous graduate enrollment policy if extraordinary circumstances arise by submitting a detailed request in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Scheduling difficulties related to the final oral exam are not considered an extraordinary circumstance.

NOTE: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the continuous enrollment policy.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence status is available to eligible MNR students who need to suspend their program of study for good cause. The time the student spends on approved leave will be included in any time limits prescribed by the university relevant to degree completion.

Students on approved leave may not:

- Use any university facilities
- Make demands upon faculty time
- Receive a fellowship or financial aid
- Take course work of any kind at Oregon State University.

A [leave of absence form](#) must be received by the Graduate School at least 15 working days prior to the first day of the term involved. Family Medical Leave (FML) may be granted at any point during a term. FML inquiries should be directed to medical.leave@oregonstate.edu.

NOTE: Students pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the Leave of Absence Policy.

If a MNR student does not intend to register for a specific term (fall, winter, or spring) while they are enrolled in their degree program, they may apply in advance for a leave of absence. A leave of absence is not required for students who do not register during the summer session. If you need to take a term off, you should discuss the issue with your advisor and/or the Graduate Program Director or the Department Head ([see program and department contacts](#)). They will work to resolve any issues within their control and help you decide if taking time off is the best option.

Your advisor, your committee, and your program administrators all want you to succeed, and they also want you to be healthy and happy. They may talk to you frankly about the challenges involved in taking a break, but they will not be upset if you decide that taking a leave of absence is your best option in facing personal challenges.

You can read more about the Graduate School's Leave of Absence policies in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Student Records

Both federal and state laws permit Oregon State University staff to release directory information (e.g. name, address, degree program, birth date) to the general public without your consent. You can prohibit the release of directory information to the public by signing the [Confidentiality Restriction form](#) available from the Registrar's Office. It will not prohibit the release of directory information to entities of Oregon State University that have a "need to know" to accomplish their required tasks. Nor will the restriction prohibit Oregon State University departments from including your name on mailing lists for distribution of materials that are essential to your enrollment at Oregon State University. View the [student records, right to privacy website](#) for more information.

People, Resources & Support



Program and Departmental Support

The MNR and certificate programs each have one (or more) key contact(s). If you are unsure who is the appropriate person to contact, start with the Program Coordinator, **Juliet Sutton**. We are here to help you. Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Academic Contacts

Kuuipo Walsh – College of Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences
Program Director, **Geographic Information Science Certificate**
Email: kuuipo.walsh@oregonstate.edu
Phone: 541.737.3795

Paul Ries, EdD – Instructor, Forest Ecosystems & Society, College of Forestry
Program Director, **Urban Forestry Certificate**
Email: paul.ries@oregonstate.edu
Phone: 541.990.7660

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Program Director, **Sustainable Natural Resources Certificate**
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Administrative Contacts

Juliet Sutton

Program Coordinator, **Master of Natural Resources**

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Office: Richardson Hall 321

Contact Juliet with administrative questions about the MNR program, the SNR, FCC, and UF certificates, or for some course overrides.

Eli Swanson, PhD, Forest Ecosystems and Society

Program Director, **Master of Natural Resources**

Email: Elizabeth.Swanson@oregonstate.edu

Contact Eli with program-specific concerns or grievances.

Kevin Bladon, PhD

Department Head, Forest Ecosystems and Society

Email: Kevin.Bladon@oregonstate.edu

Phone: 541-737-7421

Office: Richardson Hall 321B

Contact Kevin with concerns or grievances beyond the scope of the program

University Resources

OSU offers a wide array of academic and support resources designed to meet graduate student needs. Some of the more commonly used resources are included below. Note that some services are campus-specific. On-campus resources are available to Ecampus students when they visit OSU or if they are completing their distance education in proximity to the [Corvallis Campus](#) or [OSU Cascades Campus](#). However, some on-campus resources are unavailable to Ecampus students even if they are local to the Oregon region. The Graduate School and Ecampus Student Services websites are typically the best place to start when you need assistance that is not specific to your MNR or certificate program.

Ecampus

OSU Ecampus is consistently ranked among the nation's best providers of online education for the quality and strength of its programs. In each of the last seven years, Ecampus [has been top-ranked nationally](#) by several organizations based on rigorous criteria including academic quality, student engagement, faculty credentials and training, student support, and student satisfaction.

Ecampus strives to make your experience as a student as positive and successful as possible. They work to ensure your full access to our campus community, whether you are within driving distance of Corvallis or a thousand miles away. The Ecampus [Student Services webpage](#) is a hub for most of the information you could want or need during your graduate program in natural resources. Some of the most relevant webpages include:

- [Student Resources](#)
- [Technical Assistance & Discounted or Free Software, Hardware](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Step-by-step guide for new graduate students](#)
- [Starting your Ecampus Courses](#)
- [Career Guidance and General Career Resources](#)
- [Student Communities and Organizations](#)

In addition to these online resources, help from Ecampus is as close as an email or phone call away. Staff are available to assist you and act as your liaison to campus services and to your advisor. Email them at ecampus.ess@oregonstate.edu or call them at 800-667-1465 (select option 1).

The Ecampus Librarian can help answer your questions regarding library resources, research, access, and other general questions. The [Ecampus library](#) has a guide for online students to utilize library resources from a distance. You can ship books from the OSU Valley Library to you, request electronic versions of books, complete interlibrary loans and more. You can also review the [Natural Resources library guide](#) for relevant literature to your graduate research and coursework.

OSU Graduate School

The [Graduate School](#) at OSU assures quality and consistent interpretation of Graduate Council policies related to graduate education across all programs. The [OSU Catalog](#) is the official source for information regarding OSU graduate education policy and procedures. As a student, it is your responsibility to refer to the catalog for this information. Note: the term you first enroll defines your catalog year. The [graduate policies section of the catalog](#) has a wealth of information about OSU requirements for graduate school, covering degree requirements, policies, course listings, and other relevant information.

The Graduate School supports students throughout the academic [life cycle](#), from admissions to degree completion. Topics covered in these offerings include: research and ethics, teaching and facilitation, writing and communication, leadership and management, career skills, graduate student life, and wellness.

The [Graduate Student Success webpage](#) contains much of the information you will need throughout your time in graduate school. In particular, the [Graduate Student Resources page](#) is a helpful guide to many of the University resources available to you.

There are a wealth of resources available to you through the Graduate School and University, and the Graduate Student Success Guide is the best place to find them. The Graduate School is both a governing body and a resource for all graduate students and post-doctoral fellows at OSU. Email the Graduate School at graduate.school@oregonstate.edu with your questions or call them at 541-737-3313.

College of Forestry Resources

These College of Forestry (CoF) resources are available to all CoF members including students in the MNR degree, Sustainable Natural Resources certificate, the Urban Forestry certificate, and the Forests and Climate Change certificate.

- CoF Jobs

The [CoF Jobs webpage](#) lists job opportunities for graduating CoF students. If you are preparing for your next step after graduate school, we encourage you to check this page early and often.

- Forestry Computing Help Desk

The [CoF Help Desk](#) is available to all members of the College of Forestry. They can help with a wide variety of software and hardware issues. The computing help desk has helped MNR students to navigate teleconference services available to students, like [Zoom](#), so they can meet remotely with faculty, students, and staff at OSU.

- Statistical Consulting and Research Assistance

The [CoF Research and Statistics Consulting Services](#) staff offer training and assistance with research study design, statistical analysis, programming languages (e.g. R) and interpretation of statistical literature. The consultants encourage students to meet with them before beginning field work or data collection to ensure their methods and study design are as sound as possible.

OSU Services and Resources

Academic Success Center

The **Academic Success Center** (ASC) provides academic support services for all students at Oregon State University. In addition to Ecampus and the Graduate School, ASC has a wealth of information and strategies to enhance your experience as an OSU student. We encourage you to visit their page for tips on achieving balance, managing time, using OSU resources or even setting up meetings with coaches and tutors. The ASC was created specifically to ensure that all students are successful in their academic endeavors while studying at OSU.

Graduate Writing Center

The [Graduate Writing Center](#) understands that traveling to campus for an in-person writing consultation is not always possible. For those who need alternatives to the on-campus appointment, the Writing Center offers feedback through the [Online Writing Suite](#) (OWS). You can seek OWS feedback electronically via an email (asynchronous) consultation or via a Skype (synchronous) consultation.

Military and Veteran Services

The mission of the [Military and Veteran Services Office](#) is to provide support to military service members, veterans, and their families studying at Oregon State University in pursuit of their

educational goals. The office assists in navigating the requirements of higher education, ensuring awareness of available benefits and services, and achieving a successful learning experience at Oregon State University. If you are an active duty member, reserve member, or veteran of the U.S. Armed Services, we encourage you to connect with this office. You should also visit the [Ecampus webpage for military members and veterans](#).

Disability Access Services

[Disability Access Services](#) (DAS) provides accommodations, education, consultation and advocacy for qualified students with disabilities at Oregon State University. DAS works with students around the world [enrolled through Ecampus](#). If you need to speak with someone about accommodations, get in touch with DAS as soon as possible. You should also visit the [Ecampus webpage for disability services](#).

Online Tutoring

[Ecampus tutoring](#) is available. . You can connect to live tutors from any computer that has internet access. TutorMe provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in real time. You can also access an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 48 hours.

Zoom

[Zoom](#) is a web conferencing platform for participants to host meetings remotely. All students, staff, and faculty have a free Zoom account through OSU. Many of our MNR and certificate students use this tool to hold audio or video enabled meetings with faculty or staff on campus. You are very likely to use it during your final exam.

Additional Resources

- [Campus Safety](#) – Emergency phone numbers, university alerts, protocols for maintaining personal safety
- [Career Development Center](#) – Resume/CV, networking, job search strategies
- [Childcare and Family Resources](#) – University child care centers, child care assistance
- [Cultural Resource Centers](#) – Cultural based community centers, social support
- [Graduate Student Commons](#) – Lounge, study space, printing, meeting rooms
- [Financing your education](#) – Funding options and information, graduate awards
- [Health Insurance](#) – Plans for graduate students and graduate employees
- [Basic Needs Center](#) – Food pantry, housing and food stamp assistance. Also check out the CoF food pantry and resource center, [Rootstock](#).
- [Office of International Services \(OIS\)](#) – Visa and immigration advising
- [Recreational Sports](#) – Dixon Recreation Center, intramural sports
- [Student Health Services \(SHS\)](#) – Clinic and pharmacy
- [Media Hub](#) – Poster printing, equipment and laptop loans
- [Transportation Alternatives](#) – Bike, bus, SafeRide

- [Transportation and Parking Services \(TAPS\)](#) – Parking permits, maps
- [Valley Library](#) – Reference and research assistance, study spaces, research tools

Managing Your Health and Wellness

Many people believe that crushing stress, lack of sleep, and social isolation are all just a normal part of being a graduate student, but that is absolutely untrue! Graduate school is about discovery, challenging yourself and those around you, and making significant contributions to your field. This process does take a significant amount of work and it can be stressful, but the work should never feel hopeless, unsustainable, or unmanageable.

A graduate degree program is hard work. It is a complicated balancing act between your academic pursuits, supporting yourself and creating a sustainable life. Graduate students commonly lose steam now and then, especially as they hit obstacles or ruts in their research or courses. Students also tend to worry about their progress or feel overwhelmed by their to-do list. Recharging mentally and physically, allowing yourself to relax, and pursuing activities unrelated to your graduate program are vital to cope with graduate school stress. Keeping a healthy perspective is critical to your well-being. Remember that nobody does their best work when they are burned out.

When to Ask For Help

Some students may not realize the effect that their stress is having on them, or may not recognize it as an issue needing attention. Some potential negative effects of stress are:

- Difficulty concentrating or paying attention
- Problems eating
- Poor sleep (trouble falling asleep, nightmares, etc.)
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, or difficulty breathing
- Waves of sadness with urges to cry
- Ongoing headaches, muscle aches/spasms or back aches
- Stomach problems, diarrhea or frequent urination
- Increase in severity and duration of illnesses
- Low frustration tolerance

If you experience these symptoms, or if you are feeling like...

- The harder and longer you work, the less you seem to get done
- Talking to your peers, advisor or committee might 'expose' you as a fraud
- Resting, eating, and taking time to relax or socialize makes you feel guilty because you are not working
- You are unable to focus on or accomplish easy things
- It is hopeless – there is just too much to do, and you are not good enough to do it

...then we want you to ask for help.

If you are comfortable talking about personal matters with your advisor, you should go to them first. Remember: they have been through this too! If you are not comfortable talking with your advisor, you can speak to the Graduate Program Director or the Department Head instead. If you would rather talk with someone outside the department, consider visiting a counselor or finding local support groups where you can talk through your concerns in a safe and confidential environment. [Counseling & Psychological Services](#) has a page on their available [services for Ecampus students](#).

Grievances, Advocacy and Mediation

The following resources are all available to help you resolve any issues that are affecting your experience as an OSU graduate student. Please review your options carefully and contact the department that best fits the type of assistance you need.

MNR Program | [See “Program and Department Contacts” for contact information](#)

You are always welcome to discuss any issues with the [MNR Graduate Program Director](#) or the [FES Department Head](#). We are committed to providing you with a quality education and a positive experience, and we take all complaints seriously. If your issue is beyond the scope of the program, we can refer you to other resources that may be better able to help.

Graduate School | 541.737.4881 | gradschool.oregonstate.edu

All graduate students desiring to appeal matters and file a formal grievance at the university level should follow [the Grievance Procedures Policy for graduate students](#). These procedures are designed to maintain harmonious relations among students, faculty, and staff and address all facets of graduate education and employment of graduate students at Oregon State University, except for those explicitly noted.

Office of Equal Opportunity and Access | 541.737.3556 | eo.oregonstate.edu

Individuals who feel they are being treated unfairly because of a protected status such as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or physical ability, or individuals who believe they are subjected to retaliation for engaging in a protected activity or to behavior that rises to the level of bullying should contact the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Access](#). Through the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, students can begin an informal process to resolve a disagreement or file a formal complaint.

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Access promotes the principles of equity, inclusion, and diversity. They engage in community development, deliver and develop programs, initiatives and resources related to campus-wide diversity and social justice issues, and provide an opportunity for individuals who believe they have experienced bias or discrimination to come forward, file a complaint, and have their concerns addressed.

The OSU Office of Equal Opportunity and Access defines sexual harassment as the following: Unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
- Submission to or reject of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education-related decisions affecting such an individual; or
- Such conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it has the effect, intended or unintended, of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance because it has created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment and would have such an effect on a reasonable person of that individual's status.

**Employee conduct directed towards a student – whether unwelcome or welcome – can constitute sexual harassment under OAR.*

There are two confidential resources to discuss reporting options: Center against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV) provides 24/7 confidential crisis response at 541-754-0110 or 800-927-0197, and OSU Sexual Assault Support Services is available weekdays at 541-737-7604.

Ombuds Conflict Management Services | 541.737.4537 | ombuds.oregonstate.edu

The [Ombuds Conflict Management Services](http://ombuds.oregonstate.edu) Office has designated impartial conflict resolution practitioners who provide confidential and informal assistance on a variety of issues and concerns. The Ombuds Office operates independently and has no formal decision-making authority or disciplinary responsibilities. Ombuds do not act as advocates for any one position in a dispute, rather they strive for fairness of process and healthy campus conflict resolution. If you are unsure where to report a resolve a conflict, the Ombuds Office is a safe place to start.

Associated Students of Oregon State University | asosu.oregonstate.edu

ASOSU promotes academic excellence, encourages the intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development of the student body, and enables the student body to assert its varied interests as citizens and members of the academic community through democratic representation. ASOSU can help you with issues pertaining to academic dishonesty, financial aid, privacy, student conduct, tuition and fees, faculty misconduct, grade appeals, parking, and more.

Appendix: Examples of MNR Capstone Projects

The continually updated MNR capstone archive can be accessed at [this link](#).

Topic Area	Project Title
Human Dimensions of Natural Resources	Homeowner Association Residents' Perceptions of Stormwater Retention Ponds and Clean Drinking Water: Montgomery West Homeowners Association (MWHOA) Gaithersburg, Maryland
	Attitudes Toward Water Allocation Policy in the Willamette Valley, Oregon
	Stakeholder Preferences for Payment for Ecosystem Service Benefit Distribution Systems
	Analyzing a Collaborative Approach to Forest Management Planning on the Evitts Creek Water Company Property in Bedford County, Pennsylvania
	Eugene Residents' Risk Perception of Water Scarcity
	Assessing Impacts on Stakeholders from Climate Change Adaptation in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park
Land Management	Managing Human Resources to Protect Wildlife and Natural Ecosystems: A Case Study of the Weekiwachee Preserve, Hernando County, Florida
	Managing Natural Resource Sustainability Alternatives on a Former Military Base: A Case Study of the U.S. Army's Camp Bonneville, Clark County, WA
	The Nisqually: A Collaborative Approach to Habitat Restoration Planning & Monitoring
	An Overview of General Basin Information and Current Challenges & Management Strategies within Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area, Davis & Salt Lake Counties, Utah
	Sustainable Natural Resource Management: Identifying Land Cover Change and Associated Environmental Impacts of Wetland Conversion in the Upper Klamath Basin, Oregon
	Badger Hill Genetic Resource Site Management Plan
	Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into the Management of Alaska's Kenai River Watershed
	GIS Solutions to the Proposed Siskiyou Crest National Monument
Fisheries	Proposed Recovery Plan for Pacific Bluefin Tuna
	Forecasting the Most Likely Status of Wild Salmon in the Central Valley of California in 2100
	Effectiveness of Three and Four Capture Occasions Using Baited Minnow Traps for Estimating Abundance of Age 0+ Coho Salmon in Southeast Alaska
	Possible Effects of Salmon Anemia Virus on Pacific Salmon Species of British Columbia and Their Fisheries
	Spruce Beetle and Colorado River Cutthroat Trout
	Mason's Run Brook Trout (<i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i>): History, Management Challenges, and Recommendations
	A Landscape-scale Watershed Assessment Method to Support Fish Passage Restoration Strategies in Puget Sound, Washington State: A Case Study for the Fish Barrier Removal Board
	Municipal Water Impacts on Steelhead Trout in the Gales Creek Watershed

Water Resources	Willamette River Watershed Management: Portland Oregon's Green Streets Initiative as a Resource to Manage Stormwater Flows and Retention of Heavy Metals and Other Pollutants
	Effects of Urbanization on the Salt River Watershed
	Klamath Reclamation Project: Approaches to Sustainable Groundwater Management
	Vulnerability of Irrigation Water Resources in a Changing Climate
	Water Reclamation for Wildfire Control and Management
	Saline Seep Management in North-central Montana
	What Do We Know about Stream-road Crossings? An Evaluation of Information Needs and Available Databases on Forest Service Lands in the Pacific Northwest
	Toledo Bend: The Potential of Changing from Hydropower to Water Sales
	Evaluating and Predicting Impacts of CO ₂ and CH ₄ Intrusion into a Confined Sandstone Aquifer: Fate of As and Cd
	Emiquon Preserve Connection: A Case Study of Reconnecting the Illinois River to Its Original Floodplain
	Resuspension of Legacy Pollutants from Historical Mining and Agricultural Land use, Summersville Lake, Summersville, West Virginia
Wildlife	Information Needs, Proposed Research, and Management for the Black Oystercatcher: A Report to Region 1 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
	Will Hair of Known Predators Act as a Repellant of White-tailed Deer?
	Supporting Wolverine Persistence in the United States: The Endangered Species Act and Corridors for Connectivity -- A Literature Review
	Managing the Factors Threatening the Health of Isle Royale National Park Ecosystems, Considering the Decline of Population Status and Loss of Genetic Variability of the Wolf Population Due to Ongoing Anthropogenic Factors
	Invasion of <i>O. rusticus</i> in Valley Forge National Historical Park, Pennsylvania
Vegetation Management	The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation's Invasive Plant Species Management Plan
	Monarch Vegetation Management Plan
	Haleakala National Park Vegetation Management Plan
	Remotely Sensed Shrub Density as a New Layer in Habitat Prediction Models
Forestry	Sustainable Energy for Galena, Alaska: Timber Harvest Management Plan
	Round Mountain Young Stand Development Capstone Project
	The Herting Tree Nursery: Moving Toward Sustainability
Urban Areas	The Benefits of Urban Natural Areas: Use, Management, and Conservation
	Climate Adaptation Planning: Preparing Bologna, Italy through a Comparative Analysis with Portland, Oregon USA
	Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Practices in Hamburg, Germany
	Siberian Elm in New Mexico: A Community Landscape Approach to an Invasive Species
	Understanding Vulnerability: A Study of the Euclid Creek Watershed
	Martha Gardens Green Alleyways: A Case Study in Stormwater Management through Low Impact Development Practices

Traditional Ecological Knowledge	A Traditional Environmental Knowledge and Cultural Reconstruction: A Practical Application at the Red Bluff Recreation Area, Mendocino National Forest, Graindston District
	Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Sustainable Ecosystems: Integrating Indigenous and Western Science and Philosophy
	Baseline Socioeconomic Assessment of Traditional Villages in American Samoa with Village Marine Protected Areas
Other	An Overview of Natural Gas Well Pad Surface Disturbances and Techniques Used to Increase Reclamation Success within the Vermillion Basin, Wyoming
	Using Community Gardens to Help Solve the Hunger Crisis in San Diego County
	Lake Solano Regional Park: Master Plan Assessment and Update
	Mill Creek Nature Center: A Framework for Sustainability
	Cyber-software Combining User-defined Time-lapse Digital Photography and Time-series Data for Sustaining Research and Advancing Discovery in GLOBE and Beyond