

## Doctor of Philosophy in Agriculture

### ***Who takes this program?***

- Students who want to be leaders in the agricultural industry are trained in a multidisciplinary, research-based curriculum that emphasizes a systems approach to problem solving.
- Students with a bachelor's degree plus a Master of Science degree (thesis preferred) with at least one degree in an agriculture discipline.
- Individuals with a D.V.M. degree or other agriculture-related professional degree may also be admitted on a case-by-case basis.

### ***How does the program work?***

- Traditional classroom courses with some classes offered in late afternoon or evening to accommodate students who work full-time.
- Each student will complete a research project and write a dissertation of appropriate length and rigor.
- Each student will have an advisory committee that will administer a written and oral qualifying examination. After completion of course work and research project, the student will defend his/her dissertation research.

### ***How will this degree benefit me?***

Students completing the program requirements will be able to demonstrate:

- Advanced technical knowledge of agricultural principles with an emphasis on multidisciplinary issues faced by agriculture and the use of a systems approach to problem solving.
- Ability to conduct research on a focused problem but using a holistic approach to understand how the problem relates to the agriculture system as a whole.
- Ability to effectively communicate technical information and explain complex agricultural issues by writing scientific publications and delivering verbal presentations and/or lectures.
- Professionalism, leadership, and ethics related to agricultural sciences.

Students that have graduated currently hold positions in teaching, research and extension at universities, technical support positions in agricultural firms, and teaching positions at community colleges.

### ***What courses will I take?***

Minimum of 90 semester credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree to include:

- 24 hours in core classes in systems agriculture and methods, dissertation, and leadership.
- Minimum of nine hours in multidisciplinary courses from the three areas in agricultural sciences (agricultural business and economics; animal science; and plant, soil and environmental sciences).
- Minimum of six hours of graduate-level statistics.
- Minimum of six hours in discipline courses in agricultural business and economics; animal science; or plant, soil, and environmental sciences.
- 45 hours of elective graduate-level courses including research credits.
- Up to 40 hours of courses may be applied to the 90 required hours beyond the baccalaureate degree with appropriate administrative approval.

### ***What sets this program apart from other programs?***

West Texas A&M University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, is centered in the midst of diverse agricultural opportunities. We serve the nation's largest cattle-feeding region and utilize the excellent agronomic conditions for the production of wheat, corn, sorghum, cotton, soybeans, peanuts, and vegetable crops. Other areas supporting the Department of Agricultural Sciences include the Dryland Agriculture Institute, the Beef Carcass Research Center, the Equine Industry Program, and the Feedlot Research Group.

The Ph.D. program in Agriculture is unique in the United States. It is designed to prepare graduates with a research-based degree with knowledge of agricultural principles and an emphasis on multidisciplinary issues faced by agriculture with the use of a systems approach to solving problems. Students not only have the opportunity to receive training from internationally renowned scientists on the WTAMU faculty but also with researchers from The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS), and other research agencies. In addition to state-of-the-art classrooms and laboratories, the department has the 2,500-acre Nance Ranch, a 600-head feedyard with feedmill, horse center, Federally inspected meat science laboratory, and greenhouse complex to support research.

The Department of Agricultural Sciences provides the graduate academic program for the Cooperative Research, Education and Extension Team (CREET). Team members include The Texas A&M University System AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Amarillo; USDA-ARS at Bushland; and Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory at Amarillo. Students have the opportunity to interact with more than 70 scientists and engineers through these agencies. The Department of Agricultural Sciences has close working relationships with Texas Cattle Feeders Association, American Quarter Horse Association, Texas Pork Producers Association, Texas Association of Dairymen, and Texas Wheat Producers Association, among others. The department is a member of the Consortium for Cattle Feeding and Environmental Sciences.

The department has a limited number of research assistantships (\$19,000 per year) and scholarships available on a competitive basis.

## **Admission Criteria and Application Guidelines**

### *Full Admission*

- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- Minimum GPA of 3.5 from Masters degree or 3.0 GPA on Masters coursework (not including thesis, research, or directed studies hours)
- Completion of Department of Agricultural Sciences "Application for Graduate Studies"

### *Conditional Admission*

Any applicant who does not meet the above requirements will be reviewed for conditional admission by program faculty.

### *Deadline to Apply*

- Fall admission: August 1
- Spring admission: December 1
- Summer admission: May 1

*For further information, contact:*

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