PhD in Natural Resources with Emphasis in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources

Application and Admission Information

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Emphasis Area Focus

The Human Dimensions of Natural Resources Emphasis Area (HDNR) addresses research and management questions including peoples’ attitudes, knowledge, values, perceptions, and behaviors associated with natural resources. As an interdisciplinary emphasis area, HDNR considers applicants with backgrounds in social sciences, environmental education, natural resources management and conservation, or related disciplines.

The Ph.D. degree in HDNR is designed to prepare students for careers in academic research and teaching, or advanced scientific professions. The Ph.D. degree is conferred upon students who have demonstrated a high level of achievement in their particular specialization and have completed independent research contributing to knowledge in their respective field.

Admission Criteria

- Minimum GPA: 3.0 in last 60 hours
- Minimum TOEFL scores:
  - Internet-based test (iBT) 80
  - Paper-based test (PBT) 550
- GRE Required
- Students are expected to have completed a Master’s or equivalent degree at the time they start their doctoral program

Required Application Materials

To the Graduate School:
- All application materials must be submitted to the Apply Yourself online application system
- Statement of interest
- Résumé or CV
- GRE scores
- TOEFL scores (if applicable)
- A minimum of three letters of recommendation and the accompanying evaluation sheets from people who can attest to the candidate’s scholastic ability and experience relevant to graduate study
- Publications (optional)

Coursework Requirements

All students in the HDNR Emphasis Area will be required to take at least one course from each of three categories:

1. Social science research methods
2. Quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis
3. Social science theory

Each student’s coursework requirements, including the selection of specific courses in the above categories, will be listed in the student’s plan of study and approved by their graduate committee.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

The HDNR doctoral program of study requires a minimum of 72 hours of graduate credit from courses taken at MU, transfer credit from a Masters or equivalent degree, and research hours. Doctoral students will be expected to follow a timeline toward completion of their degree:

1. Within one year of initial enrollment in the emphasis area, doctoral students must pass a qualifying examination. The qualifying exam will include a presentation by the student of his/her course of study. The course of study shall be approved by the student’s graduate committee. The graduate committee may also request a demonstration of the student’s research aptitude, competencies in subject matter, and communication skills.

2. Within three years of initial enrollment in the emphasis area, doctoral students must present a written proposal of their research and an oral defense of that proposal to be reviewed and approved by members of the students’ doctoral committee.

3. Within three years of initial enrollment in the emphasis area, doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination. The PhD comprehensive exam will be a written examination with questions from each of the graduate committee members followed by an oral examination. The format of each set of questions will be determined by the graduate committee members. The oral portion of the comprehensive examination may be combined with the research proposal oral defense.

4. Doctoral students will submit a written dissertation following the guidelines specified by the Graduate School. All doctoral students must present a public oral defense of their dissertation announced at least two weeks prior to the defense date.