

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences



Graduate Student Handbook
for
the Department of Natural Resource Management

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
The Borderlands Research Institute for Natural Resource Management (BRI)	1
Admission	1
Code of Conduct	2
Mandatory Use of SRSU E-mail Account	2
Office Etiquette	2
Lab Rules	3
Conduct on Public and Private Lands	3
Attire/Appearance at Professional Gatherings.....	4
Academics.....	5
Degrees Awarded.....	5
Committee.....	5
Degree Plan	5
Proposal.....	5
Vertebrate Research: Animal Care and Use Committee & State/Federal Permits	6
Thesis Guidelines.....	6
Application for Candidacy	6
Application for Graduation	7
Duty to Keep Your Advisor Informed.....	7
Use of University Facilities by Graduate Students	7
Building/Room Access	8
Driver Authorization.....	8
Vehicle Use.....	8
Field Safety Regulations for Students, Volunteers, and Assistants	9
All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) Training.....	9
Employment as an RA/TA.....	10
Time Sheets.....	10
Teaching Responsibilities	11
Purchasing.....	11
Departmental Credit Card.....	11
Specific Purchase Order.....	11
Open Purchase Order	12
Reimbursement	12
State Taxes.....	12
Travel	13
Additional Policies.....	14
Online EEO Training.....	14
Online “Securing the Human” (Computer Security) Training	14

Copy Machine Codes.....	14
“Check Out” Upon Separation from Employment, Commencement, or Permanent Departure from the Area	14
Timeline/Checklist.....	15
Signature Acknowledgement Page	
Compliance with Directives of this Manual	16
Mandatory Use of SRSU E-mail Account.....	16
Duty to Keep Your Advisor Informed.....	16
Data/Publication.....	16
Books & Other Materials Purchased by Grant	16
Satisfactory Academic Progress (stipend loss, probation, expulsion)	16
Timelines.....	16
Appendix 1: Selected Web Links	17
Appendix 2: Forms	18

Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Natural Resource Management (NRM), College of Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (ANRS), at Sul Ross State University (SRSU or the "University"). We have worked to develop this manual for your benefit. Always check with the online student catalog and your advisor to validate any academic instructions provided in this manual.

This manual outlines the Department of Natural Resource Management graduate program policies and procedures. Its purpose is to help graduate students understand the change from undergraduate student to graduate student and to help you successfully chart your course through a graduate degree program. It is your responsibility to learn and utilize all of the policies and requirements established herein.

The main purpose of the graduate program is to provide opportunities for students to gain knowledge and skills not readily available from baccalaureate studies. The principle difference between bachelor's and advanced degree programs is your participation in research and involvement in the decision-making processes. The major task of the graduate student seeking the Master of Science degree is learning how to design, conduct, interpret, and report the results of a research project.

The Borderlands Research Institute for Natural Resource Management (BRI)

The Borderlands Research Institute for Natural Resource Management (BRI) was formed in 2007 and serves as a "sister institution" to the department. Its mission is to provide land managers with the most current scientific information on the management of the natural resources of the area. To meet this goal, we plan and conduct research investigations on various aspects of our natural world. We provide science-based management alternatives to land owners and managers to enhance their ability to serve as land stewards. The BRI is the "research and outreach arm" of the department, and while fulfilling that capacity, it significantly enhances the teaching and learning opportunities afforded by the department. As a graduate student, should you choose to undertake the thesis-track degree plan, you will work with the BRI as you engage in your project research.

Admission

General admission requirements include GRE scores of 290 (verbal and quantitative) and 280 for full admission to the M.S. thesis program or non-thesis program, respectively. Additional requirements for all graduate options include a letter of intent, a resume, and two letters of recommendation from outside the department. Departmental GPA requirements are the same as

general admission requirements outlined for the University (refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog, http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/provost_office/2014-2016_catalog.pdf).

For more information and to apply, refer to Apply Texas online at: https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX

Code of Conduct

For a complete discussion of SRSU policies and procedures regarding conduct and disciplinary procedures, refer to the Student Handbook at: <http://www.sulross.edu/page/2454/student-handbook>. Topics include, but are not limited to, academic honesty, hazing, and racial and sexual harassment.

Mandatory Use of SRSU E-mail Account

SRSU provides an e-mail account with an SRSU suffix (@sulross.edu) to all students, faculty, and staff. This is the primary means of communication between you and your advisor, your instructors, other students in your classes or working with you on projects, admissions, registration, and financial aid personnel, etc. It is MANDATORY that you use this account for ALL e-mail communications related to any matter in your capacity as a student, faculty, or staff member. Your failure to do so will result in you having missed important communications.

Office Etiquette

Graduate students will spend a great deal of time working in their personal office spaces, in computer labs, and in other campus office areas. In order that all students be comfortable and work efficiently in these areas, each student must exercise proper office etiquette. Adherence to the following directives will ensure that all students utilizing these areas will be comfortable and able to work efficiently.

1. Business dress is not required, but proper hygiene must be observed and attire must not be unnecessarily scant nor otherwise sexually suggestive.
2. Boisterous conversation, loud music, horseplay, and other distractive activity is not conducive to work and study. Obviously, foul language, jokes of a racial or sexual nature, and other off-color language are inappropriate.
3. Personally assigned work spaces must be left in tidy condition, and valuables, including portable hard drives, should never be left unattended and unsecured.
4. Within personally assigned areas, do not change desks without checking with the office of the

department chair and do not tamper with the personal property of others.

5. Do not remove staplers, tape dispensers, and other amenities provided by the University.
6. Personally-owned electrical appliances (coffee makers, refrigerators, microwave ovens, etc.) are prohibited. Personally owned laptop computers, tablets, telephones, and similar devices may be plugged in temporarily for use and or charging.
7. The last one out of a classroom, office area, etc. should turn off the lights.
8. Possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited. Use of tobacco products is prohibited.
9. Graduate student office doors have swipe card access and should be closed for security purposes when they are unoccupied. Always carry your key card (student ID), and if you are leaving the office, close the door.

Lab Rules

In addition to those rules delineated above detailing appropriate “office etiquette,” the following rules apply to students using any ANRS laboratory facility.

1. Food and drink are prohibited, including within the computer lab.
2. Perform only those experiments/procedures authorized by your instructor/advisor.
3. When using chemicals, wear eye protection, closed shoes, and clothing that provides adequate coverage or a lab coat or apron. Eye protection must also be worn when heat or glassware are used.
4. Know the location and proper use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets, safety showers, eye wash stations, and first aid kits.
5. Report any accident and/or injury, however minor, to your instructor immediately.
6. Use fume hoods when toxic or irritating vapors are involved.
7. Never return unused chemicals to their original container.
8. Dispose of all chemical waste properly, in accordance with instructions from your instructor/advisor. Never pour unused chemicals down sink drains. Sinks are for water only.
9. Before leaving, make sure your work area is clean and dry, and ensure that all gas, water, vacuum, and air valves are completely turned off.
10. The computer lab is accessible via swipe card and the door should always be closed following entry or exit.

Conduct on Public and Private Lands

NRM graduate students will almost always have opportunities to conduct or assist with field research on public and privately owned lands. In both cases, students must be aware of the laws, regulations, or rules associated with entry onto and conduct while on the property.

In the case of public lands, such as national or state parks, national wildlife refuge areas, wildlife

management areas, etc., special permits may be needed to collect, trap, or otherwise handle animals and plants. These must be in place prior to the commencement of work and, in addition to submission to the proper authority in charge of the property, copies must be on file in the office of the BRI.

In the case of privately owned lands, rules will be determined by the owner or manager and will vary from property to property. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the student to get to know the owner or manager, be familiar with his or her conditions for entry and research, and maintain such conduct that the owner or manager is comfortable with the presence of SRSU students on the property. In most cases regarding privately owned property, it is appropriate and courteous to let the owner or manager know prior to each visit that you are coming and to provide a description of your vehicle, even if the owner or manager has previously indicated that this is not necessary. If required, ranch risk and release forms must be completed, sent to the ranch owner, manager, or other agent, and filed with the appropriate ANRS office (NRM or BRI).

As a reminder, firearms are prohibited in all state and BRI-owned vehicles. This policy is unaffected by the enactment of the recent Texas “campus carry” law. (For the University's Weapons Possession Policy, refer to: <http://www.sulross.edu/page/782/weapons-possession-policy>.)

Attire/Appearance at Professional Gatherings

Graduate students will often have the opportunity to attend professional meetings or gatherings and will often make presentations, either at these events or on campus. Sometimes photographs of persons making presentations or simply present at the meeting or gathering will be taken for SRSU publications or more widely available news media outlets. Because of the potential to be photographed, and simply to represent the University in a professional manner, graduate students must be cognizant of the need to maintain a standard of professional appearance and attire in these situations.

Suit and tie, a formal dress, or other attire considered “Sunday best,” is not necessarily required, especially since the field work associated with the natural resource management profession has generally dictated a more utilitarian mode of dress, but common sense standards apply. In no case should the student appear in the aforementioned settings, in any shirt, hat, or other attire where the logo of a school, company, or organization is displayed, unless it is that of SRSU or the BRI, or an organization affiliated with one or the other, such as the SRSU Range and Wildlife Club.

A long and detailed dress code is otherwise unnecessary here, but a few examples as follows should provide appropriate guidance. Long pants are more appropriate than shorts, and denim

pants (“jeans”), when worn, should be clean and in good repair. Baseball caps should be avoided, especially indoors and in photographs. T-shirts should be avoided and, for gentleman, shirts with collars are preferred. Western boots and dress shoes are preferred. Athletic shoes, hiking boots, work boots, etc., when worn, should be in good condition and as clean as possible.

Academics

Degrees Awarded

All in “Range and Wildlife Management”:

Master of Science (Thesis) - 30 hours course work + thesis, including oral defense;

Master of Science (Non-thesis) - 30 hours course work + record of study + oral exam;

Master of Agriculture (Online Degree Program) - 27 hours course work + internship + written or oral exam (as determined by advisor).

Students will enroll for at least one graduate semester credit hour (sch) each semester or summer term in which assistance is provided by graduate committee members or when the student will make use of the library or other facilities of the University.

Committee

The student must select the members of his/her Graduate Advisory Committee by the end of the first long semester (fall or spring) with substantial input from the student’s advisor, who will serve as chair of the committee. The committee must be selected from members of the SRSU Graduate Faculty, except that recognized scholars who are not faculty of SRSU may serve on the committee as visiting members of the graduate faculty following nomination and approval by the chair of the committee, the NRM department chair, the ANRS dean, and the University Graduate Council. The committee shall normally consist of at least three members, two of which must be of the SRSU Graduate Faculty and at least one of which must be a tenure-track faculty member.

Degree Plan

The student in consultation with the Graduate Advisory Committee shall develop a proposed degree plan, and the final version, on the official form and signed by the committee and department chair, shall be on file in the office of the dean of the college of the ANRS by the end of the first long semester.

Proposal (M.S. with thesis only)

The research proposal, including formal presentation to and approval by the committee, shall be

completed by the end of the first summer of enrollment. The proposal document shall be prepared in the style specified by the student's advisor and advisory committee, shall consist of a maximum of ten pages of narrative, and shall include the following elements.

- a. Justification and rationale – summarize previous research on the subject including literature citations and identify particular problems that the study will help resolve.
- b. Statement of hypothesis – specify questions that the research will answer.
- c. Objectives – discussion of hypotheses to be tested and the limits of the proposed study.
- d. Procedures – methods to be used to accomplish objectives, including data analysis.
- e. Budget – estimate from experience, where practical.

A copy of the proposal with cover sheet signed by the advisory committee indicating approval shall be filed in the office of the department chair.

Vertebrate Research: Animal Care and Use Committee & State/Federal Permits

Before research involving vertebrate animals will be approved, University procedures must be fulfilled pertaining to the proper approval and documentation of protocols for the capture, care, use and handling of animals. For more information regarding said procedures, ask your advisor for the contact information for the current chair of the University's Animal Care and Use Committee.

Also, state and possibly federal permits may be required for research involving vertebrate animals. Consult with your advisor regarding the need for and procedures for obtaining these permits.

Thesis Guidelines

Refer to the comprehensive ANRS Thesis Manual at (http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/gradcenter/nrm_thesis_guide2015.pdf), and Information for Electronic Submission of Thesis at (http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/gradcenter/sul_ross_instructions_feb_2015_3.pdf).

Application for Candidacy

By the end of the second semester or upon completion of 12 graduate semester credit hours (sch), whichever is later, graduate students must apply for candidacy. The form may be obtained from the office of the department chair, and, when completed, should be delivered to the student's advisor who will review and forward for filing in the office of the NRM department chair.

Application for Graduation

Graduate students anticipating graduation must apply for same by the end of the long semester just prior to the semester of commencement. For appropriate forms and related information refer to <http://www.sulross.edu/page/2229/graduation-and-commencement>.

Duty to Keep Your Advisor Informed

A graduate student engaged in research for the purpose of thesis, record of study, or otherwise, must keep his or her advisor informed of progress and other details on a schedule as dictated by the advisor (twice-weekly, weekly, twice-monthly, etc.). Such reporting must include information with regard to the number, identity, status (undergraduate student, interested citizen, etc.), and duties of any volunteers assisting the project. Should there be any change regarding volunteer assistance, or for any significant incident associated with the conduct of the research, the student should seek out and report same to the advisor and not wait for the next regularly scheduled briefing.

Use of University Facilities by Graduate Students

In accordance with SRSU Administrative Policy Manual (APM) 2.01, no full or part-time University employee “engaged in outside remunerative activities shall use, in connection therewith, the official stationery, supplies, equipment, or personnel services of the University.” Further, no employee “shall accept pay from private persons or corporations for tests, assay, chemical analysis, computer programming, bacteriological examinations, or other work of a routine character which involves the use of property owned by the University.” For the complete APM 2.01, refer to http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/president/chapter_2.01_use_of_university_property.pdf.

For facility use polices related to scheduling, fees, alcoholic beverage possession/consumption (generally prohibited), tobacco use (prohibited), food service, event advertising (prohibited prior to facility confirmation), use of A/V equipment, exhibits, etc., refer to SRSU APM 2.02 at http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/president/chapter_2.02_facility_use_policy.pdf.

For specific instructions with regard to requesting University facilities, including classrooms, Kokernot Lodge, etc. and for the Facility Use Request form refer to <http://www.sulross.edu/page/870/meeting-and-event-services>.

Building/Room Access

Students engaged in project research or employed as teaching assistants may need after-hours access to certain buildings and rooms. Access via swipe card is normally sufficient but door keys may be needed in rare instances. Requests for swipe card access and for keys are initiated on separate forms by the NRM department secretary, following approval from your advisor.

Driver Authorization

A graduate student who will be driving University (including BRI) vehicles (thesis students almost always) must obtain from the office of the department chair a Driver Record Authorization Form, complete same, and attach copies of the back and front of his or her driver's license. The student will then deliver the form to the NRM administrative secretary who will fill in the appropriate account number and fax to the office of Physical Plant.

Vehicle Use

Vehicles used by students for research are "leased" to specific research projects. Therefore, students must have advisor approval prior to check-out. If the student will be going into the field on a regular basis, the advisor may choose to grant a "blanket approval" covering a period of time such as a month or a semester.

BRI has a fleet of eight trucks, several ATVs, and four trailers. A graduate student will contact the BRI Administrative Coordinator in RAS 136 for vehicle checkout and, for first time check-out, to fill out a driver authorization form and submit a copy of his/her driver's license.

Each truck is numbered, as is every trailer and ATV. If one has specific needs (4 wheel drive, towing capacity, etc.), he or she must be sure to mention these to the coordinator. A truck can be reserved for no longer than seven consecutive days unless something has been worked out between the student, advisor, and the coordinator. For recurring needs, (e.g. truck needed every week for field visits), vehicle reservations must be made well in advance.

The key booklet for each truck will contain a mileage form and a vehicle inspection form. At the beginning of each trip, record driver name, project name, corresponding project account name (and number, if known), date, and odometer reading. Record odometer reading upon return. Complete the vehicle inspection form noting any damage or maintenance the vehicle may require. Be sure to factor the inspection time into the vehicle reservation. Once the inspection is complete, return keys and mileage and inspection forms to the coordinator. If the trip is completed earlier than expected, be sure to return the keys and forms as soon as possible.

Each booklet also contains the proof of vehicle liability insurance paperwork (required by state law to be in the vehicle) and a fuel card. Fuel can be purchased at any retail location using this card, but it's cheaper to use the Physical Plant gas station, open 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays, and this site should be used whenever possible. Submit any gas receipts to the Coordinator at the time keys and mileage and inspection forms are returned.

Pets of any kind are not allowed in the cab of any truck or vehicle. Pets or animals used for research must be kept in a kennel or carrier in the truck bed. When the vehicle is in motion, all items in the truck bed or trailer must be secured.

If others are traveling in the vehicle, only those who have completed a driver authorization form and received clearance via driver's license check can drive BRI vehicles.

To check out any ATVs owned by the NRM department, contact the NRM administrative secretary. The process is the same as for BRI vehicles.

Use of vehicles is a privilege. Failure to abide by the aforementioned rules, including tardiness in returning keys and forms and leaving vehicles in a state of excessive dirtiness or disrepair, may result in revocation of this privilege. Personal or University-owned property left in a BRI vehicle will be removed and must be claimed from the BRI office.

Field Safety Regulations for Students, Volunteers, and Assistants

All part-time employees, students, and volunteers who drive or travel in University (including BRI)-owned vehicles, who operate University-owned equipment (including ATV's and UTV's), and/or who perform University-related academic or work activity in the field must sign the appropriate Assumption of Risk and Release Agreement form. In some cases, a form may be signed once to cover a time period covering multiple trips into the field. In other cases, a signed form may be needed for each foray. Consult with your advisor in order to determine which applies, and file same with the BRI administrative coordinator.

Graduate students, especially in the course of conducting field research, will often travel through or into areas with no cellular telephone coverage. Prior to such travel, contact the office of the BRI in order to check out a satellite telephone or satellite texter, and, prior to departure, check to make sure that this equipment is in operable condition.

All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) Training

An all-terrain vehicle (ATV) is defined by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as a vehicle that travels on low-pressure tires, with a seat that is straddled by the operator, along

with handlebars for steering control. All graduate students may have occasion to operate an ATV as part of their own course or research work, while assisting other students or instructors, or in the conduct of other ANRS activities.

Therefore, all graduate students will complete mandatory ATV training by the end of the first long semester or before anticipated use of an ATV. Students will: (1) complete online training at <http://www.atvsafety.org/>; (2) print the training certificate indicating test completion; (3) obtain from the NRM administrative secretary the SRSU "Sport ATV Usage and Safety Guidelines" form; (4) read and sign the form; and (5) deliver the training certificate and signed form to the BRI administrative coordinator.

ATV operators are required to wear a helmet. Helmets with face shields in a variety of sizes are available for check-out from the department. Should you choose not to check-out a helmet from the department, you must provide your own eye protection and United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)-compliant helmet. Refer to the following National Highway Transportation Safety Association website in order to determine if your helmet is USDOT-compliant:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/motorcycle/unsafehelmetid/pages/page2.htm>.

Employment as RA/TA

Employment of a graduate student as a Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant is only guaranteed on a semester-by-semester basis and is awarded contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Both positions are compensated at a rate corresponding to 20 hours worked per week, but the student may have to put in more time than this to meet academic requirements. This is part of the graduate student developmental experience. Graduate students must be enrolled full-time (9 sch or more during long semesters; 3 sch or more during each summer semester) to be eligible for RA or TA employment. (For purposes of their development as future professionals, thesis track students are normally given preference for research and teaching assistant positions.)

Time Sheets

Graduate students employed as Research Assistants or Teaching Assistants must complete the Student Monthly Time Record form each month (<http://www.sulross.edu/page/1372/human-resources-forms>) each month, reflecting 20 hours worked during each week. At least one day prior to the last business day of the month, have the department chair sign the time sheet and ask the NRM administrative secretary to fax the form to Human Resources.

Graduate students employed as the instructor of record of an academic course (the primary

instructor) need not complete time sheets for their instruction time.

Teaching Responsibilities

State law (HB 2504) requires that course syllabi and CV's (curriculum vitae) for all teaching faculty be posted on the University's website by the seventh class day of each semester. A graduate student who is employed as the instructor of record of an academic course is subject to these same directives and must e-mail the aforementioned items to the NRM administrative secretary prior to the deadline.

A student employed as the instructor of record of an academic course must plan to have office hours during the same day(s) and time(s) each week for availability for one-on-one visits with students taking the course. The schedule for office hours must be listed in the course syllabus and posted outside the office of the instructor, if an office has been provided. A student employed as a teaching assistant must also plan to have office hours and should inform the students taking the course of his or her office hours schedule early during the semester. The teaching assistant should also request that his or her office hours be included in the syllabus of the instructor of record.

Purchasing

Each advisor has several project accounts which fund graduate student payroll and the purchasing of supplies and services. Except under urgent circumstances, clear all purchases with your advisor. If approved, contact the BRI administrative coordinator to start the process. There are several ways to make a purchase.

Departmental Credit Card

If the purchase is less than \$999, the item can be purchased via the departmental credit card (p-card) held by the financial manager (usually the student's advisor) and the administrative coordinator. E-mail a web link to the coordinator, who will work on purchasing the item. Be aware that shipping to Alpine takes some time; even Amazon Prime 2-day shipping takes four days to get here. Special permission from the Purchasing Department is required to buy items costing over \$999.00.

Specific Purchase Order

Most goods and especially services will be purchased and paid for via purchase order (PO) generated by the Purchasing Department. Obtain a quote from the vendor listing the items or services, prices, and shipping costs, if any, and e-mail this information to the coordinator, who

will request a PO. After 2-3 business days, a PO number will be generated for the purchase. A PO number must be generated **before** the goods and services are received and used.

If the items and services are under \$5000, no additional backup information other than the vendor quote is required. If the order is over \$5000, obtain quotes from two additional vendors for price comparison, or complete a Proprietary Purchase Form (found at, <http://www.sulross.edu/page/1431/purchasing-forms>) stating why the items/services must be purchased from a specific vendor. Forwarded the additional quotes or the form to the coordinator, who will handle the remainder of the process.

Open Purchase Order

An open PO can be generated for local vendors (e.g. Morrison TrueValue Store, McCoy's Lumber). Discuss with your advisor to estimate how much should be set aside for general supply purchases, and then e-mail the coordinator with the amount and vendor. An open PO will be set up for use throughout the fiscal year (September 1 through August 31). To make a purchase under the open PO, get the PO number from the coordinator, show it to the vendor when purchasing, and bring any receipts to the coordinator. The receipt(s) must bear your name and the PO number.

Reimbursement

A student who is traveling or in urgent need to purchase something immediately, and in either case is out of communication with his or her advisor, may make the purchase with his or her own money and bring the receipt(s) to the coordinator, who will work on getting reimbursement via the Cashier's Office. This process is to be used only as a last resort. Such transactions still require that budgeted money exists for the purchase, and the student should reasonably judge that the advisor would likely approve the purchase.

State Taxes

SRSU is a state school, and is thus exempt from paying Texas state sales taxes. (Sales taxes collected in other states will still apply.) Please be sure that any quotes from vendors contain no Texas state sales tax charges. If you buy an item yourself and are charged Texas state sales taxes, you will not be reimbursed for the tax charges. Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification forms are available from the NRM administrative secretary. These may be presented to vendors, along with your SRSU student ID card, in order to avoid Texas state sales tax charges.

Travel

All travel must be approved by your advisor. The University's travel policy and associated forms are found at: <http://www.sulross.edu/page/911/accounting-services>. Other guidelines specific to NRM graduate students are as follows.

If the nature of research or other factors prevent the use of a BRI vehicle, apply for a mileage travel application with the BRI administrative coordinator. Do this at the beginning of each semester or as soon as you know you will be using your personal vehicle for regular University-related travel. The coordinator will help you complete a form that Accounting will use to set aside a certain amount of research funds to reimburse you for mileage. (Current rate is 48 cents per mile.) Keep a log of your mileage on an Excel spreadsheet, listing the dates of your travel as well as the odometer readings from the beginning and end of each trip. (Do NOT use tripometer readings—only odometer readings will do.) Submit this log to the coordinator at least once per month.

For any other travel expenses, such as for conferences, animal capture/relocation events, workshops etc., check with your advisor first to see if research funds can be used for your travel. Gather backup materials—hotel reservation costs, registration fees, etc—and submit them to the coordinator as early as you can, and in no case later than two weeks before travel. The coordinator will complete your travel application so that enough money can be set aside for your reimbursement. The coordinator will also provide the forms you need to be exempted from Texas state hotel/motel taxes.

DO keep all receipts. Always let the coordinator know in advance when and where you will be traveling.

DO NOT pay for anyone else's travel save for your own, except in an emergency. SRSU Accounting will only reimburse you for your own expenses, not anyone else's.

If you need to fly to a destination, see your advisor for approval and then the coordinator. With enough notice, flights can be billed directly to the University. All other expenses must be paid by you. You will not be reimbursed for any travel expenses until after the trip has been completed. Your reimbursement will be made via check at the Cashier's Office. If you would like your reimbursement to be made via direct deposit, contact Accounting in advance in the Briscoe Administration Building (BAB 204) to complete a direct deposit form.

Additional Policies

EEO Training

Completion of online Equal Employment Opportunity Training is mandatory for all full and part-time employees of SRSU with 30 days of employment. Training is available at <http://hrtraining.sulross.edu/content/mainpage.html>.

“Securing the Human” (Computer/Electronic Device Security) Training

Online training regarding computer and other electronic device security (entitled “Securing the Human”) is periodically put forth by SRSU Office of Information Technology. Completion of said training by all full and part-time employees of SRSU is mandatory in accordance with the deadlines specified by the OIT at the time the training is issued.

Copy Machine Codes

Graduate students engaged in funded research or employed as teaching assistants are issued codes by the ANRS administrative secretary which enable them to make copies using the ANRS copy machine. Use of that machine by graduate students is for academic and other official business only. Abuse of this privilege may result in revocation of the code. (Reminder – all currently enrolled students are eligible to make unlimited black & white computer print-outs at the University library.)

“Check Out” Upon Separation from Employment, Commencement, or Permanent Departure from the Area

Upon separation from part-time employment, there are no procedures that the graduate student is obligated to undertake at the Human Resources office, however the student must contact the office of the University Department of Public Safety to turn in any door keys that were issued to the student.

Additionally, prior to commencement or permanent departure from the area, whichever is sooner, the student must turn in any University-owned property, including any books or materials purchased with grant funds. The NRM administrative secretary will remove all swipe card access.

Timeline/Checklist Note: These schedules are firm. Students are encouraged to complete the aforementioned actions prior to the deadlines indicated. Missed deadlines may result in delayed graduation, at the discretion of the committee, department chair, and dean of the college.

All NRM graduate students:

- _____ Committee formed (by the end of the first long semester)
- _____ Degree plan signed and on file (by the end of the first long semester)
- _____ ATV training complete and certificate on file (by the end of the first long semester or prior to ATV use)
- _____ Application for candidacy (by the end of the second long semester or at the end of the semester during which 12 sch are completed, whichever is later)
- _____ Application for graduation (by the end of the long semester just prior to the semester of commencement)

NRM M.S. thesis students:

- _____ Research proposal presented to/approved by committee (by the end of the first summer of enrollment)
- _____ If research involves the handling of vertebrate animals, Animal Care and Use Committee Procedures satisfied (before said handling commences)
- _____ Draft of thesis to committee chair (16 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Thesis defense scheduled with committee (10 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Draft of thesis to committee (10 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Thesis defense (8 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Final draft of thesis signed by committee and to dean (4 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Final draft of thesis to ProQuest and Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs (2 weeks prior to commencement)

NRM M.S. non-thesis students:

- _____ Oral exam scheduled with committee (10 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Draft of record of study to committee (10 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Oral exam (8 weeks prior to commencement)

NRM M.Ag. students (online only):

- _____ Oral or comprehensive written exam (as determined by advisor) scheduled with committee (10 weeks prior to commencement)
- _____ Oral or comprehensive written or exam (8 weeks prior to commencement)

Signature Acknowledgement Page

In the presence of your advisor, initial by each paragraph, then sign and date.

_____ Compliance with Directives of this manual: I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the directives set out within this SRSU NRM Graduate Student Manual.

_____ Mandatory Use of SRSU E-mail Account: I understand that it is MANDATORY to use the SRSU provided e-mail account for ALL e-mail communications related to any matter in my capacity as a student, faculty, or staff member.

_____ Duty to Keep Advisor Informed: I understand that while engaged in research for the purpose of thesis, record of study, or otherwise, I must keep my advisor informed of progress and other details on a schedule as dictated by the advisor (twice-weekly, weekly, twice-monthly, etc.). Such reporting must include information with regard to the number, identity, status (undergraduate student, interested citizen, etc.), and duties of any volunteers assisting the project. Should there be any change regarding volunteer assistance, or for any significant incident associated with the conduct of the research, I must seek out and report same to my advisor and not wait for the next regularly scheduled briefing.

_____ Data/Publication: I have read, signed, and agree to the attached "Data Publication Agreement."

_____ Books & Other Materials Purchased by Grant: I understand that all books, software, equipment, and other materials purchased by University funds, including, but not limited to, normal budget funds and grants, are the property of SRSU and are to be returned upon commencement or prior to permanent departure from the area, whichever is sooner.

_____ Satisfactory Academic Progress: I understand that failure to make academic progress toward my completion of the program and graduation may result in negative consequences including, but not limited to stipend loss, probation, or expulsion.

_____ Timelines: I understand "academic progress" as referenced immediately above includes completion of all projects and requirements within the timelines indicated herein.

Student Signature

Printed name

Date

Advisor Signature

Printed name

Date

Appendix 1: Selected Web Links

SRSU home page: <http://www.sulross.edu/>

SRSU student catalog & handbook: <http://www.sulross.edu/page/905/srsu-college-catalog-student-handbook>

SRSU academic calendar: <http://www.sulross.edu/page/2247/srsu-alpine-academic-calendars>

SRSU NRM web page: <http://www.sulross.edu/section/35/natural-resource-management>

BRI web page: <http://bri.sulross.edu/>

Facebook, SRSU: <https://www.facebook.com/SulRossState>

Facebook, SRSU NRM: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sul-Ross-State-University-Natural-Resource-Management/107707495962368>

Facebook, BRI: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Borderlands-Research-Institute-for-Natural-Resource-Management/214036155290269>