



GRADUATE DEGREE PLAN – PhD Program

First Semester

- Meet with your research advisor to define coursework plan and research project
 - Start research in coordination with your research advisor
 - Register for and complete appropriate coursework; email Graduate Admin Asst for permission courses
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Second Semester

- Continue research in coordination with your research advisor
 - Register for and complete appropriate coursework
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Third Semester

- Continue research in coordination with your research advisor
 - Register for and complete appropriate coursework
 - Begin preparing research proposal
 - Form doctoral committee, complete [Dissertation Committee Approval](#) form, obtain signatures, forward to Grad Admin Asst
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Fourth Semester

- Continue research in coordination with your research advisor
 - Register for and complete appropriate coursework
 - Complete [Request for Appointment of Committee to Conduct a Doctoral Candidacy Examination](#), forward to Grad Admin Asst
 - Complete candidacy exam, complete [Assessment of Annual Progress](#), send to Grad Admin Asst
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Fifth Semester

- Continue research in coordination with your research advisor
 - Register for and complete appropriate coursework
 - Begin writing of dissertation
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Sixth Semester –

Ninth Semester

- Continue research in coordination with your research advisor
- Register for and complete appropriate coursework
- Continue writing of dissertation
- In 6th and 8th semesters, complete [Assessment of Annual Progress](#) form and send to Grad Admin Asst



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Department of Biological Sciences

Tenth Semester

- Complete the graduation application form [Apply to Graduate](#)
- Finish research and writing of dissertation in coordination with research advisor
- Schedule dissertation defense seminar and exam at least 3 weeks prior to exam; complete [Request for Oral Defense of Dissertation](#) form, forward to Grad Admin Asst
- Send dissertation to committee members 2 weeks prior to defense date
- Defend dissertation and complete [Results of Oral Defense](#) form, send to Grad Admin Asst
- Submit final dissertation via [ProQuest](#) (see IMPORTANT DEADLINES below)

IMPORTANT GRADUATE SCHOOL DEADLINES:

[Graduation Deadlines; Graduate School](#)