The Ph.D. in nutritional sciences trains students to gain advanced knowledge and develop research expertise in such areas as the nutritional physiology and biochemistry, cardiovascular disease, epidemiology, obesity and diabetes, human nutrition, and food systems. It prepares students for future careers in technical consulting, education, and research in academic, industrial, and government institutions.

Admission Requirements: Students applying for the program will be expected to present recent scores (within five years) from the general test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and possess a background in basic sciences appropriate for advanced study in the proposed area of specialization (for example, courses in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and physics). Although not required for candidacy in the Ph.D. program, an M.S. degree is suggested for most students.

Requirements

Students with appropriate academic training at the baccalaureate or master’s degree level will design a program of study in conjunction with a faculty guidance committee. The student will advance to candidacy after successful completion of all relevant graduate courses and passing a qualifying examination conducted by the guidance committee, which will contain oral and/or written components at the discretion of the committee members. The “guidance” committee for doctoral students will consist of a minimum of five members, three of whom must be from within the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Food Systems Program; at least one member must be from outside the program. After the student’s advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree, a doctoral committee (which can be different from the guidance committee) will be appointed to supervise and approve the dissertation.

The dissertation must be based on original hypothesis-driven research of publishable quality. A public presentation of the dissertation research findings will be followed by a final examination, which will be primarily an oral defense of the dissertation. The candidate will be required to serve as a teaching assistant for a minimum of two semesters or to teach a course for one semester. Skills in communicating scientific information will be fostered by presenting one seminar during each year of enrollment. This requirement could include the dissertation defense seminar.