University of Georgia
Department of Statistics
Graduate Handbook

Spring 2026

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Associate Head: Dr. Pengsheng Ji
Director of Graduate Studies I: Dr. Ting Zhang
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The best thing about being a statistician is that you get to play in everyone's back yard. – John Tukey.

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1. Introduction

The discipline of statistics has undergone rapid and transformative changes in recent decades. It has expanded dramatically in scope and shifted its areas of emphasis. Its roots are in mathematics, and for many years the field was dominated by a focus on methods of inference based on parametric models and the theory under which those methods were derived and justified. In recent decades, however, many changes have occurred. With the widespread availability of massive data sets, an explosion of computing power, and an emphasis on interdisciplinary collaborations to solve the big problems of science and society, statistics has evolved.

Among the most striking changes are the explosive growth of machine learning methods, a stronger focus on prediction rather than solely estimation and inference, and the development of advanced computational tools and algorithms to analyze massive and high-dimensional data sets. Simultaneously, areas such as Bayesian methods, statistical techniques for causal inference, and simulation-based approaches for inference and model assessment have all grown in popularity and importance.

Alongside these methodological advances, a new language surrounding our field has emerged. The term data science is still evolving. At one level, it is an umbrella term encompassing all of statistics and areas of computer science focused on data processing, data curation, and algorithms. Increasingly, however, it now refers to the interface between statistics and computer science that is concerned with big data, learning algorithms, and the use of data to produce accurate predictions. In the latter sense of the term, data science forms the backbone of modern artificial intelligence. This is an exciting and promising time to pursue a graduate degree in the Department of Statistics at the University of Georgia. Our department is deeply engaged with these rapid developments, both through innovative research and forward-looking educational programs.

Our faculty have research interests across an incredibly wide array of methodological and theoretical topics and are engaged in interdisciplinary collaborations focused on diverse applications from climate science to infectious diseases. This activity not only enriches the classroom teaching of our instructors but provides opportunities for master's level and, especially, PhD level student research.

The department offers four graduate degree programs: master's and PhD programs in statistics, a master's degree in data science (offered jointly with the UGA School of Computing), and an online master's program in applied data science. Whichever path a student chooses, they will find graduate study in the Department of Statistics to be challenging, stimulating, and rewarding.

This document, in tandem with the University's Graduate School Bulletin, should provide students with the information they need as graduate students in Statistics. Other up-to-date information you need may be found on the Department's web site.

2. Department Overview

The Department of Statistics was originally formed in 1964, when it split from the Department of Mathematics and became the Department of Statistics and Computer Science. It remained such until 1984, when it became the Department of Statistics. Today, we maintain the three-fold mission of teaching, research, and service. Our teaching provides you with a broad foundation in statistical theory and applications. Such training has enabled our graduates to earn jobs in government, all branches of industry, and academia. We currently maintain a wide spectrum of research, with many of our faculty active in cross-disciplinary research projects. Listings of all faculty and staff in the Department can be found here.

2.1 General Advice

As students embark on graduate studies, it is important for them to understand that success in these programs demands dedication, perseverance, and a genuine commitment to hard work. Graduate-level training in statistics and data science is rigorous and challenging, but the intellectual and professional rewards are well worth the effort.

Beyond academic rigor, the department encourages all students to contribute to building and sustaining a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative community. Graduate school can be demanding, but no one should navigate it alone. Forming connections with peers, faculty, and staff creates a network of support that serves students well during their studies and throughout their careers.

The department also recognizes that the demands of graduate study can at times feel overwhelming. Students' mental health and well-being are essential. All students are encouraged to take care of themselves, look out for one another, and seek help when needed. Resources are available through the university and the department, which is committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and supported.

Students are encouraged to get to know their professors. They are urged to take advantage of office hours, ask questions, seek feedback, and engage with faculty both in and outside the classroom. These connections enrich the learning experience, open doors to research and professional opportunities, and help students make the most of their time at the University of Georgia.

2.2 Research

Faculty members at a research university such as the University of Georgia are expected to engage in an active program of research. An integral part of that research is the involvement of graduate students – the master's thesis or PhD dissertation is one of the main avenues by which you are trained to do research on your own, while aiding your advisor in his/her own research program.

The combined research interests in the department cover a broad range of modern statistics. A list of our Graduate Faculty (those who may direct graduate student research) can be found here. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to talk to faculty about their research interests. Master's students interested in writing a thesis should initiate such conversations at the earliest opportunity; PhD students are encouraged to talk to faculty about potential research topics as early as their first year in the program, and no later than after passing the PhD Qualifying Exam (QEP).

A departmental colloquium – a research talk aimed at faculty and students – is held each week, usually on Thursdays at 4:00pm, with refreshments offered beforehand so that attendees and the speaker may meet and socialize. The speaker is often a researcher from outside of the university, but occasionally we host speakers from our own department or other departments on campus. While not required, we encourage graduating PhD students to present their results in a departmental colloquium prior to their final defense.

Each Spring, typically on a Friday in April, the Stat Club works with the department to organize the Bradley Lectures, in honor of the late Professor Ralph Bradley. Festivities for the Bradley Lectures include:

- a research colloquium given by a distinguished statistician. This talk occurs in the late afternoon;
- a departmental banquet that evening, to which students, faculty, alumni, and significant others are invited to attend;
- an after-dinner talk by the invited speaker. This talk is often lighter or more accessible than the afternoon colloquium.

Past Bradley Lecturers include C. R. Rao (1993), Peter Bickel (1994), Jayaram Sethuraman (1995), H. A. David (1996), Brad Efron (1997), Ron Pyke (1998), Myles Hollander (1999), Ron Randles (2000), Dick Scheaffer (2001), Robert Hogg (2002), George Casella (2003), Jim Berger (2004), Bruce Lindsay (2005), Ray Carroll (2006), Xiao-Li Meng (2007), Jayanta Ghosh (2008), Nancy Reid (2009), Steve Marron (2010), Peter McCullagh (2011), R. Dennis Cook (2012), Peter Hall (2013), C. F. Jeff Wu (2014), Susan Murphy (2015), Jun Liu (2016), David Dunson (2017), Larry Wasserman (2018), Art Owen (2019), Jianqing Fan (2022), Dylan Small (2023), Dipak Kumar Dey (2024), Daniela Witten (2025). There were no Bradley Lectures in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19.

In addition, typically at least two Industry Day talks are held each year. These events feature statisticians and data scientists working outside of academia who visit to talk about their professional activities and, in some cases, recruit job applicants. These visits are good opportunities for students to learn about professional opportunities and practice in government and industry.

2.3 Statistical Consulting

The Statistical Consulting Center (SCC) exists to provide statistical advice to students and researchers within the university community, and occasionally to entities beyond

the university. It is a unit of the Department of Statistics but is also a core unit of the Office of Research. It is supported by the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, the UGA Graduate School, and the Office of Research. Its mission is to support and enhance research at the University of Georgia and to provide training to graduate students in applied statistics and the techniques of statistical consulting and collaboration.

The SCC regularly employs several graduate students to work as consultants. These roles are paid via graduate assistantships (known internally as consulting assistantships, or CAs). Students may also work at the SCC on a volunteer basis.

Working at the SCC is a great way to complement the education that you receive from your coursework. Consultants get experience and training in many statistical methods that they have not encountered in courses, they develop better communication skills, improve their statistical programming skills, enhance their people skills and organizational abilities, and get the opportunity to work on diverse problems from all corners of academia. Many consultants get the opportunity to collaborate on grants or publications, in short, working at the SCC provides ample opportunity to enhance your skills and strengthen your resume.

The SCC regularly invites applicants for paid positions funded by CAs. These opportunities are typically announced in the Spring, but opportunities may arise at other times of the year. Information about volunteer opportunities is typically disseminated at the beginning of each Fall and Spring semester. To be considered for positions at the SCC, students should have a minimum of one year of training in statistics or data science at the master's level and, preferably, they should have taken a course on statistical consulting/collaboration such as STAT 8000 or STAT 8001.

Students with questions about opportunities at the SCC may contact SCC Associate Director Dr. Jinae Lee or SCC Director, Dr. Dan Hall.

2.4 Important Places and People

To succeed in the department, you must take advantage of the many resources that are available to you.

The department is in Brooks Hall. The main office for the department is Room 401. It houses departmental mailboxes. Each faculty member, staff member, graduate student, and departmental visitor has a mailbox. All are expected to check their physical mailboxes and UGA email regularly.

The Cohen Conference Room is room 434. Research meetings, faculty meetings, and oral examinations are often held in this room. There are two smaller meeting rooms (rooms 424 and 532) that are meant for meetings of 5 people or less. Please contact Ryan Robinson to book any of these rooms.

Most of our courses will be held in Caldwell Hall or Brooks Hall, although some courses may be in other nearby buildings.

The copy room is Room 419. This room contains not only the department copy machine, but also a limited amount of office supplies. Graduate students have access to a printer in Room 501.

The department has a common social area, located adjacent to the Cohen Room, as well as limited kitchen facilities in the Cohen Room. Faculty and students often have their lunch in the Cohen Room and in the small meeting room. The kitchen facilities are available to all departmental citizens. Please make sure you clean up after yourself and do not leave your food in the refrigerator for an extended period!

The departmental website has a directory with contact information and office locations for all faculty and staff. Some of the important people you should know are listed below.

- Administrative Associate (Ryan Robinson)
    - Contact Administrative Associate to make general inquiries, to report problems within the building, to pose questions about the departmental website, to request office supplies, and with questions about who to contact about other issues.
- Graduate Program Administrator (Madison McCormick)
    - Contact Graduate Program Administrator with inquiries about building access, office space, course approvals (e.g., late add forms, section change forms), registration errors, section requests, and graduation
- Associate Head (Dr. Pengsheng Ji)
    - Associate Head assigns duties to teaching assistants, recruits graduate teaching assistants to serve as instructor of record, and deals with a wide variety of instructional matters in the department. Contact him regarding TA assignments and duties and miscellaneous instructional matters.
- Director of Graduate Studies I (Dr. Ting Zhang)
    - Contact DGS I with questions regarding admissions, offers of support, and prerequisites for the program.
- Director of Graduate Studies II (Dr. Liang Liu)
    - Contact DGS II about academic advisement, departmental exams, program requirements, and support for graduate travel.
- Director of Graduate Studies III (Dr. Man Basnet)
    - Students interested in or enrolled in the online MS program in Applied Data Science should contact DGS III with questions about admissions or advising.
- Department Head (Dr. Dan Hall)
    - Contact Department Head with questions or concerns of a sensitive nature and general inquiries.

2.4.1 Libraries

The university has several libraries. A complete list of locations in the University Libraries system can be found online, The libraries of greatest importance to statistics and data

science students are the Main Library on north campus, the Science Library in Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center on south campus, and the Miller Learning Center (MLC), which is located just northeast of Sanford Stadium, Another library to be aware of is the Law Library maintained separately by the School of Law. Most statistics publications are in the Science Library. Most journals subscribed to by the university may be accessed online from the university libraries' main web page. The university libraries offer a rich array of resources including laptop and audio-visual equipment lending, a digital media lab, a writing center, and great study spaces. Students are strongly encouraged to investigate these resources and take advantage of them,

2.4.2 Computing

The department has long placed a strong emphasis on computing, which stems from its early days as the Department of Statistics and Computer Science. All departmental computing is networked so that you can access these resources from many different locations and provided that you have a UGA MyID.

There is a central printer in the graduate student office area that can be accessed from networked personal computers. The copy machines can also serve as a network printer.

Contributions from the former students of Professor Rolf Bargmann enabled the department to establish the Rolf Bargmann Computing Lab in room 205 in Caldwell Hall. All departmental office keys open the Bargmann Lab. This lab houses several Windows desktops and a printer.

Each student also has access to the computer classroom, room 202 in Caldwell Hall. There are 52 Windows computers in this room, and many of our courses regularly hold computing labs in this classroom.

If you notice any problems with any of the departmental computing equipment, please alert our IT staff by submitting a ticket to the Franklin College Office of Information Technology Helpdesk. You will need to log in with your UGA MyID to report the problem.

The department's computing needs are served by both the Franklin Office of Information Technology (FOIT) and UGA Enterprise Information Technology Services (EITS). FOIT provides IT services for Franklin College, including the Department of Statistics. Their services include hardware and software support for personal computers purchased with departmental funds, server and backup support for Franklin hosted servers, and website maintenance for webpages serving units within Franklin College. EITS provides support for other IT resources that span the university including eLearning Commons (*eLC*), the online learning management system for the University of Georgia, UGAMail, MyID support, campus-wide wired and wireless networks, and many other systems. Students can find out more about the services of FOIT and EITS by visiting their websites. Both units offer help desks. Help requests are usually handled promptly, and you can trust that if you submit a request to the wrong helpdesk, you will be redirected to the appropriate resource.

The Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center (GACRC) provides an advanced computing environment, currently in the form of Linux clusters, to support UGA's research and education community. All faculty can have accounts with the GACRC, and as a student, you may use the resources of the GACRC by establishing an account under your advisor's "lab". These are specially networked computing clusters specifically for high-performance computing. You are strongly encouraged to do any heavy-duty computing through this resource, but before you gain access, you will need to attend a training session.

2.5 Colloquia

Graduate students are expected to attend – and attempt to pay attention in – colloquia regularly. Colloquia consist of research presentations primarily intended for faculty and senior graduate students; however, all graduate students are expected to benefit from participation, whether by gaining exposure to current research or by observing effective (and ineffective) presentation practices.

Graduate students who receive financial support from any university source are required to register for STAT 8910 as a condition for continued funding during semesters 2–6 of the program. Students who do not receive university support are strongly encouraged to enroll in STAT 8910. These courses are intended to promote professional development through colloquium participation and to provide opportunities for consideration of the broader competencies that characterize effective statisticians, which are not ordinarily addressed in standard coursework.

The hiring of new faculty in the department takes place regularly — usually during Spring Semester. When candidate interviews occur, graduate students are encouraged to meet and interact with the candidate, and they are expected to attend the candidate's job talk, which functions as an event in our departmental colloquium series. There are several reasons that graduate student involvement is important: the new faculty member may impact on your graduate experience in a variety of ways from teaching courses that you will take, serving as an advisor or advisory committee member, bringing in grant funds for research assistantships, and (hopefully) by raising the reputation of the department. So, the faculty are very interested in your input on those we interview. Moreover, interview talks — whether they are focused on teaching or research — are edifying. The talks of research-oriented faculty candidates are very similar to departmental colloquia and confer the same benefits to attendees. But job talks focused on teaching are also informative; they provide students with insights about teaching and presenting ideas, which are useful for those currently involved in instructional roles, those who aspire to careers in academia where teaching is required, and to all others who aspire to be better communicators.

2.6 Other Resources

A non-exhaustive list of the many resources available is described in this section.

2.6.1 The Directors of Graduate Studies

The Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS) serve as primary sources of guidance on matters pertaining to graduate students within the department. DGS I oversees admissions and offers of support, while DGS III manages admissions and advising for the online MS in Applied Data Science program. DGS II serves as the primary source of support for enrolled graduate students. DGS II also acts as the advisor for MS-STAT, MS-DSCI, and PhD students until a research advisor has been formally selected.

2.6.2 The Stat Club

The Stat Club is an organization that has both social and administrative functions within the department. Membership is open to all undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a degree in statistics or data science and others who are interested in these fields. The officers of the club organize social outings, such as bowling or mini-golf, about once a month. They also organize the international potluck dinner in the fall, the Bradley Lecture, and the departmental picnic which typically occurs on the Bradley weekend in the spring. Other activities include helping with events like the statistics commencement ceremony, Industry Days, student recruiting events, special lectures and the Georgia Statistics Day conference.

The officers of the Stat Club also serve very important functions in keeping up the mission of the club. The President is the chief organizer for activities; the President is also your representative to the faculty and attends regular faculty meetings to give voice to matters that concern you; the Secretary keeps track of membership and helps the department to fill out paperwork to obtain funds for the Bradley Lecture from the Franklin College Student Fee Allocation Committee; and the Treasurer collects dues and event registration fees, and manages Stat Club funds.

2.6.3 Graduate-Professional Student Association

The university's Graduate-Professional Student Association (GPSA) exists to represent your interests as a graduate student to the university, and to advocate on your behalf as part of the body of over 8500 graduate and professional students at UGA. They work to advance your rights and to keep you informed about university issues relevant to you. The GSA also holds social activities and community service events.

2.6.4 The Graduate School

The Graduate School is responsible for the oversight of nearly everything that affects your academic life UGA. They admit you, control your tuition waivers, and verify that you meet all of your degree expectations. They have many resources available to you, and you should spend a little time exploring their website. Among the resources and services, you may wish to take advantage of are travel funds, a mentoring program, research and teaching award programs, and thesis and dissertation writing support.

2.6.5 UGA Career Center

The university's Career Center exists to help you as you search for a job or an internship. It is their job to make sure you look good, so that UGA also looks good. They hold career fairs, host recruiters, help you design your resume and cover letters, have mock interviews, etc. In fact, they strongly encourage even beginning students to contact them to get started early on preparing for the inevitable job search.

2.6.6 Professional Societies

Each of the professional societies has student memberships that offer many membership privileges for a low membership fee.

The American Statistical Association (ASA) is the world's largest community of statisticians, and supports excellence in the development, application, and dissemination of statistical science through meetings, publications, membership services, education, accreditation, and advocacy. Members serve in industry, government, and academia in more than 90 countries, advancing research and promoting sound statistical practice to inform public policy and improve human welfare. There is also an Atlanta Chapter of ASA.

Student memberships are available to students seeking a degree in statistics. Benefits include all regular membership benefits (subscriptions to ASA magazines, discounts on ASA journal subscriptions, online access to ASA journal articles, discounts on conference registrations) plus a subscription to *Chance* magazine and even deeper discounts on ASA conference registration fees.

The Institute for Mathematical Statistics (IMS) exists to foster the development and dissemination of the theory and applications of statistics and probability. Student membership is FREE and includes all benefits of regular membership, including online access to all IMS journal articles and reduced rates for IMS conference registration fees.

The Eastern North American Region of the International Biometrics Society (ENAR) exists to advance biological and life science through the development of quantitative theories and the application, development and dissemination of effective mathematical and statistical techniques.

The Southern Regional Council on Statistics (SRCOS) exists to promote the improvement of postsecondary education in statistical science, assist in the development of high-quality statistics instruction in elementary and high schools, and promulgate educational activities which improve the quality of statistical practices. SRCOS sponsors a small Summer Research Conference (SRC) each year which features student posters (including a poster competition) as well as presentations by senior researchers. If you are presenting, then you may apply for travel funds from SRCOS to attend the SRC. The SRC is an excellent opportunity for young statisticians to mix with famous statisticians at a small meeting. SRCOS membership is limited to institutions.

The Caucus for Women in Statistics and Data Science (CWS) exists to support the education, employment, and advancement of women in statistics and data science. CWS promotes the careers of women statisticians and data scientists through advocacy, the provision of resources and learning opportunities, enhanced professional participation and visibility, and the promotion and assessment of research affecting women in these fields.

We should include a description about the Caucus for Women in Statistics

2.6.7 Departmental Email Aliases

These email addresses are useful for contacting subsets of department citizens. Note that all graduate students are automatically part of the "grad" alias.

faculty@stat.uga.edu ; staff@stat.uga.edu ; grad@stat.uga.edu ; all@stat.uga.edu

2.6.8 Graduate Faculty

Members of the Graduate Program Faculty are those who may direct graduate research at UGA.

3. Admission

For all in-person degree programs, a basic background in statistics and computer programming, three semesters of calculus, and a course in linear algebra are all required. The department also requires GRE scores for all applicants except for Double Dawgs. International applicants are required to submit TOEFL or IELTS scores, unless they have completed a prior degree in the United States or in another country where English is the primary language of instruction.

For more information about general UGA graduate admissions, see the Graduate School's website. All applicants will need to include a CV/resume, three letters of recommendation, and a statement of purpose along with all unofficial transcripts. For students seeking financial support, the deadline to apply is January 1. For all other deadlines and more detailed program specific admission information, see here. The link to apply can be found here.

The Double Dawgs program allows students to earn both a bachelor's and a master's degree in five years or less, saving time and cost while preparing for future success. Contact the Undergraduate Advisor (Dr. Lynne Seymour) for entry details. Information on nine pathways is provided here. The procedure and application time that a Double Dawg student should go about applying to our MS-STAT or MS-DSCI programs vary across nine pathways.

4. Master of Science Degree in Statistics

There are two options for earning the Master of Science (MS) degree in Statistics. The degree features core training, an array of elective courses, and a demonstration of mastery of statistical concepts.

A full-time student who is receiving financial assistance from the University must take a total of at least 12 credit hours. Other full-time students must take a total of at least 9 credit hours.

No credit from a previous degree program or institution may be transferred toward your degree program at UGA unless that course did not count toward any previous degree. You may transfer at most 6 credit hours which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies II.

Note that the Director of Graduate Studies II is your coursework advisor, unless you are taking the thesis option. Even under the thesis option, the Director of Graduate Studies II is still your coursework advisor until you choose a research advisor.

4.1 Core Requirements

The core of the MS degree consists of training in linear models, mathematical statistics, probability & inference, and statistical consulting/collaboration. The five courses required to develop this mastery are:

Linear Models:
STAT 6420 and STAT 6430

Mathematical Statistics/Probability & Inference:
STAT 6510 and 6520

Statistical Consulting:
STAT 8000

4.2 Elective Requirements

You may choose either an examination option or a thesis option, which are described in more detail in the next section titled: Demonstration of Mastery. These choices have a direct effect on how many elective courses you must choose:

Thesis Option: Choose 4 electives beyond the 5 required core courses and write MS thesis.

Examination Option: Choose 6 electives beyond the 5 required core courses and pass the qualifying exam for the master's degree (QEM).

At most two of the elective courses may be approved graduate courses from some discipline other than statistics. At least one elective must be graduate-only.

Elective courses for the MS degree include all 6000- and 8000-level courses *except* STAT 6210, 6220, 6230, 6315, 8040, 8050, 8200, 8910, 8920, and any other 6000- or 8000-level course aimed primarily at students who are not in Statistics.

4.3 Demonstration of Mastery

4.3.1 Thesis Option

Under this option, you will choose a research advisor (also called your major professor) and write a thesis under that person's direction. You are expected to choose your research advisor during the first semester of your second year.

The relationship between you and your advisor is one that both of you must agree to. It is, however, not set in stone, and either you or your advisor can terminate this relationship when it is not working out.

Once the thesis is written, your advisory committee will read your thesis, and you will present and defend your results to them.

The Graduate Bulletin contains more on the Graduate School's requirements for a Master's thesis. Of specific interest to you, and with some modifications for the department's purposes, are the following items.

4.3.1.1 Program of Study

You must complete a program of study that constitutes a logical whole. The MS degree in statistics requires a minimum of 33 semester hours. Under the thesis option, this means 27 hours of qualifying course work plus 3 hours of STAT 7000 Thesis Research and 3 hours of STAT 7300 Thesis Writing. At least 12 credit hours of this course work must be open only to graduate students (exclusive of 7000 and 7300). No grade below C will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible for graduation, a student must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

The program of study must be submitted on the proper form, with approval by your major professor, the Director of Graduate Studies II, and the Dean of the Graduate School. This step should be completed by Friday of the second full week of classes of the semester in which degree requirements are completed. Exception: If degree requirements are completed during summer term, the program of study will be due by Friday of the first full week of classes in that semester. For the deadlines for the given academic year, see here.

4.3.1.2 Advisory Committee

The advisory committee, in consultation with you, is charged with approving your program of study, reading and approving your thesis, and administering your final examination.

Before the end of your third semester of residence and upon the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies II, the Dean of the Graduate School appoints an advisory committee for you. The master's advisory committee must consist of a minimum of three members, at least half of which must be from statistics. The chair (who is your advisor) and at least one other member must be members of the Graduate Program Faculty of the University of Georgia. Rules governing the appointment of a third advisory committee member who is not a Graduate Program Faculty member can be found here.

When nominating a non-UGA committee member, the Director of Graduate Studies must submit the nominee's current CV with the appropriate forms, along with a letter addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School explaining why the services of the non-UGA person are requested. The non-affiliated members must attend meetings associated with the appointment.

4.3.1.3 Thesis

Please refer to the Graduate School's Thesis Guidelines for more details than given here.

You must submit a thesis that shows independent judgment in developing a problem from primary sources. Your thesis shall be written under the direction of your major professor(s), but preparation of the thesis is your responsibility. Your thesis must be approved by the major professor, who will distribute copies to the remaining members of the advisory committee and schedule a final examination. The committee members must have two weeks to read and evaluate the completed thesis. Written assent of two of the three committee members is required to approve that a thesis is ready for a final defense.

One complete formatted copy of your thesis must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School no later than four weeks prior to graduation for a format check. All requirements for the thesis must be completed no later than two full weeks prior to graduation.

4.3.1.4 Final Examination

You must submit to a final examination on the contents of your thesis, and this must be an oral examination. The final examination will be administered by your advisory committee, with your major professor serving as chair. All members of the advisory committee must be present either in person or remotely for the entire examination period. Abstention is not an appropriate vote for the defense of the thesis or the final exam. Thesis approval can have no more than one dissenting vote.

4.3.1.5 Submitting the Thesis and Final Clearance

The Graduate School must receive the final defense approval form and an electronic submission of the corrected thesis no later than two weeks prior to graduation.

You must enroll for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during the semester in which you complete your degree requirements unless additional stipulations are required by other units of the university.

4.3.1.6 Time Limit

All requirements for the MS degree must be completed within six years beginning with the first registration for graduate courses on the program of study. An extension of time may be granted only for conditions beyond the control of the individual.

4.3.1.7 Timeline for Defense

The defense date must be at least 1 week before the final copy of your thesis is due to the Graduate School.

Items to address will almost surely come up during the reading of the thesis, the final defense, and/or the final examination. You will be required to make the requested changes during the week before the final copy must be submitted to the Graduate School.

4.3.1.8 Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School via Athena no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The application must be submitted online. The graduation application link can be found here.

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

4.3.2 Examination Option

The qualifying exam for the master's degree (QEM) is given twice every year, during January and May. The January exam is given prior to the beginning of Spring semester, and the May exam is given immediately after spring semester final exam period ends. The January and May exams are equivalent exams; that is, the January exam is not a "make-up" exam, and the two exams have a similar level of difficulty.

You must complete at least four of the five core courses (STAT 6510, STAT 6520, STAT 6420, STAT 6430, and STAT 8000) before attempting the QEM.

You must achieve at least a B average (3.0 GPA) in the First-Year Theory core courses (STAT 6510, 6520). This is not a requirement for attempting the QEM but a requirement for graduation with the examination option.

4.3.2.1 Parts, Scope and Time Allowed

The QEM tests students' data analysis skills based on the material covered in the core courses. It is a "take-home" exam with a 2-day (48 hours) time limit for completion. The exam typically includes a problem based on a data set. The questions are open-ended, requiring the examinees to analyze the data in an appropriate way and draw conclusions about scientific questions of interest. Each examinee will submit a written report describing the analysis, why it was chosen for the problem, results, conclusions, etc. Exams will be evaluated on the quality of the analyses and the written report. English language usage is not a grading criterion *per se*, but effective communication is essential.

4.3.2.2 Grading

Each QEM exam is graded by at least two faculty members. Grading will be done blind to the identity of the examinee. The resulting scores will be averaged to determine the final exam score, and a pass/fail recommendation will then be made by the examination committee. The entire Graduate Program Faculty will then vote upon the recommendation, and a majority of at least 50% is required to determine a pass.

4.3.2.3 Rules for Taking and Re-Taking

If a student does not pass the QEM on his/her initial attempt, he or she may retake the exam. More than two attempts of the exam are not allowed.

4.3.2.4 Faculty Responsibilities

The QEM Committee has responsibility for setting the exam and administering it. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the exam is appropriate and reasonably consistent from year to year. They also have the responsibility for grading the exam and making pass/fail recommendations to the entire Graduate Program Faculty of the department.

4.3.2.5 Program of Study

You must complete a program of study that constitutes a logical whole. MS degrees in Statistics under the examination option require a minimum of 33 credit hours). At least 12 credit hours of this course work must be open only to graduate students. No grade below C will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on your graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on your program of study.

The program of study must be submitted on the proper form with approval by the Director of Graduate Studies II and the dean of the Graduate School. This step should

be completed by Friday of the second full week of classes of the semester in which degree requirements are completed. Exception: If degree requirements are completed during summer term, the program of study will be due by Friday of the first full week of classes in that semester.

4.3.2.6 Advisory Committee

For the examination option, the advisory committee is not required.

4.3.2.7 Time Limit

All requirements for the MS degree must be completed within six years beginning with the first registration for graduate courses on the program of study. An extension of time may be granted only for conditions beyond the control of the individual.

4.3.2.8 Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The application must be submitted online. The link is available from the Graduate School's web page for forms.

All requirements for the degree must be completed and reported to the Graduate School no later than one week prior to graduation. You must enroll for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during the semester in which graduation requirements are completed.

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

5. Master of Science Degree in Data Science

The master's degree in data science is an interdisciplinary program that is jointly offered by the Department of Statistics and the School of Computing. It is designed for individuals aiming to become data scientists, analysts, or leaders in data-driven decision-making. Graduates will be equipped to develop software, design and maintain databases, process data in distributed environments, apply statistical, machine learning, and data mining techniques, visualize data and analytical results, and support informed decision-making. The curriculum also emphasizes practical experience through a Master's Project course.

A full-time student who is receiving financial assistance from the University must take a total of at least 12 credit hours. Other full-time students must take a total of at least 9 credit hours.

No credit from a previous degree program or institution may be transferred toward your degree program at UGA unless that course did not count toward any previous degree.

You may transfer at most 6 credit hours which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies II.

5.1 Core Requirements

- CSCI core courses: CSCI (STAT) 6375 and CSCI 6360
- STAT core courses: STAT 6420 or STAT6530, STAT8330
- Non-thesis option: CSCI 7200 or STAT7200 (Master's project)
- Thesis option: CSCI 7300 or STAT7300 (Master's Thesis)

5.2 Elective Requirements

Students must complete four electives totaling 14 credit hours beyond the required core courses. These include two STAT courses (3 credits each) and two CSCI courses (4 credits each). A list of approved elective courses is available here.

5.3 Demonstration of Mastery

5.3.1 Thesis Option

Under this option, you will choose a research advisor (also called your major professor) and write a thesis under that person's direction. You are expected to choose your research advisor during the first semester of your second year.

The relationship between you and your advisor is one that both of you must agree to. It is, however, not set in stone, and either you or your advisor can terminate this relationship when it is not working out.

Once the thesis is written, your advisory committee will read your thesis, and you will present and defend your results to them.

The Graduate Bulletin contains more on the Graduate School's requirements for a Master's thesis. Of specific interest to you, and with some modifications for the department's purposes, are the following items.

5.3.1.1 Program of Study

You must complete a program of study that constitutes a logical whole. The MS degree in statistics requires a minimum of 33 semester hours. No grade below C will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible for graduation, a student must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study. Sample program of study is available here.

The program of study must be submitted on the proper form, with approval by your major professor, the Director of Graduate Studies II, and the Dean of the Graduate

School. This step should be completed by Friday of the second full week of classes of the semester in which degree requirements are completed. Exception: If degree requirements are completed during summer term, the program of study will be due by Friday of the first full week of classes in that semester. For the deadlines for the given academic year, see here.

5.3.1.2 Advisory Committee

The advisory committee, in consultation with you, is charged with approving your program of study, reading and approving your thesis, and administering your final examination.

Before the end of your third semester of residence and upon the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies II, the Dean of the Graduate School appoints an advisory committee for you. The master's advisory committee must consist of a minimum of three members, at least half of which must be from statistics. The chair (who is your advisor) and at least one other member must be members of the Graduate Program Faculty of the University of Georgia. Rules governing the appointment of a third advisory committee member who is not a Graduate Program Faculty member can be found here.

When nominating a non-UGA committee member, the Director of Graduate Studies must submit the nominee's current CV with the appropriate forms, along with a letter addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School explaining why the services of the non-UGA person are requested. The non-affiliated members must attend meetings associated with the appointment.

5.3.1.3 Thesis

Please refer to the Graduate School's Thesis Guidelines for more details than given here.

You must submit a thesis that shows independent judgment in developing a problem from primary sources. Your thesis shall be written under the direction of your major professor(s), but preparation of the thesis is your responsibility. Your thesis must be approved by the major professor, who will distribute copies to the remaining members of the advisory committee and schedule a final examination. The committee members must have two weeks to read and evaluate the completed thesis. Written assent of two of the three committee members is required to approve that a thesis is ready for a final defense.

One complete formatted copy of your thesis must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School no later than four weeks prior to graduation for a format check. All requirements for the thesis must be completed no later than two full weeks prior to graduation.

5.3.1.4 Final Examination

You must submit to a final examination on the contents of your thesis, and this must be an oral examination. The final examination will be administered by your advisory committee, with your major professor serving as chair. All members of the advisory committee must be present either in person or remotely for the entire examination period. Abstention is not an appropriate vote for the defense of the thesis or the final exam. Thesis approval can have no more than one dissenting vote.

5.3.1.5 Submitting the Thesis and Final Clearance

The Graduate School must receive the final defense approval form and an electronic submission of the corrected thesis no later than two weeks prior to graduation.

You must enroll for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during the semester in which you complete your degree requirements unless additional stipulations are required by other units of the university.

5.3.1.6 Time Limit

All requirements for the MS degree must be completed within six years beginning with the first registration for graduate courses on the program of study. An extension of time may be granted only for conditions beyond the control of the individual.

5.3.1.7 Timeline for Defense

The defense date must be at least 1 week before the final copy of your thesis is due to the Graduate School.

Items to address will almost surely come up during the reading of the thesis, the final defense, and/or the final examination. You will be required to make the requested changes during the week before the final copy must be submitted to the Graduate School.

5.3.1.8 Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School via Athena no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The application must be submitted online. The graduation application link can be found here.

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

5.3.2 Project Option

Under the project option, you will choose a project advisor and write a report under that person's direction. You are expected to choose your project advisor during the first semester of your second year.

5.3.2.5 Program of Study

You must complete a program of study that constitutes a logical whole. MS degrees in Statistics under the examination option require a minimum of 33 credit hours). At least 12 credit hours of this course work must be open only to graduate students. No grade below C will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on your graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on your program of study.

The program of study must be submitted on the proper form with approval by the Director of Graduate Studies II and the dean of the Graduate School. This step should be completed by Friday of the second full week of classes of the semester in which degree requirements are completed. Exception: If degree requirements are completed during summer term, the program of study will be due by Friday of the first full week of classes in that semester.

5.3.2.6 Advisory Committee

For the examination option, the advisory committee is not required.

5.3.2.7 Time Limit

All requirements for the MS degree must be completed within six years beginning with the first registration for graduate courses on the program of study. An extension of time may be granted only for conditions beyond the control of the individual.

5.3.2.8 Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The application must be submitted online. The link is available from the Graduate School's web page for forms.

All requirements for the degree must be completed and reported to the Graduate School no later than one week prior to graduation. You must enroll for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during the semester in which graduation requirements are completed.

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

6. Master of Science in Applied Data Science (Online)

Overview

The Master of Science in Applied Data Science (MS-ADS) is a fully online graduate program offered by the Department of Statistics in collaboration with the Office of Online Learning at the University of Georgia. The curriculum includes select courses from the Terry College of Business and the Department of Linguistics.

The program is designed for working professionals and aspiring data scientists who want a structured, practical, and academically grounded path into advanced data science and analytics. Students build strength in Python, R, SQL, statistical modeling, machine learning, and Artificial Intelligence while developing the analytical, critical-thinking, and communication skills needed for data-driven decision-making.

The degree consists of 30 credit hours taken in a structured sequence of two courses per semester across five consecutive semesters. All courses are offered asynchronously, with optional synchronous support.

6.1 Admission Requirements

Admission to the MS-ADS program is administered by the UGA Graduate School. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and meet the minimum requirements established by the Graduate School.

Competitive applicants typically demonstrate:

- Experience or prior coursework in programming, calculus, and introductory statistics.
- Strong analytical reasoning and comfort with quantitative material.
- The discipline and time management needed for online graduate study.

Application materials include:

- A minimum undergraduate GPA of **3.0** on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with significant professional experience may receive consideration with a lower GPA.
- **Three** letters of recommendation.
- A statement of purpose describing academic preparation, professional experience, and goals.
- Proof of English-language proficiency for international applicants, as required by the Graduate School.
- GRE/GMAT scores are optional.

For Fall admission, the priority deadline is March 15. For domestic applicants, the final deadline is July 1. International applicants must submit by March 15. Applications are

reviewed on a rolling basis until these deadlines. The MS-ADS program enrolls in a single cohort each Fall.

Applicants from non-technical backgrounds are encouraged to apply. They may be advised to complete preparatory coursework or self-study modules prior to beginning the program.

6.2 Program Requirements

The MS-ADS degree requires 30 credit hours, consisting of 15 hours of core coursework and 15 hours of advanced coursework.

Core Courses (15 hours)

- **STAT 6381E** – Introduction to Python and Data Science
- **STAT 6382E** – Statistics for Data Science with R Programming
- **STAT 6383E** – Advanced Python and Data Structures
- **STAT 6384E** – Statistical Modeling in Data Science
- **STAT 6385E** – Statistical Foundations of Clustering and Classification Methods

Core coursework builds proficiency in Python and R, strengthens foundational statistical reasoning, and introduces essential concepts in statistical modeling and machine learning.

Advanced Courses (15 hours)

- **LING 6751E** – Natural Language Processing for Data Science
- **MSIT 7510E** – Database Management and SQL
- **STAT 6386E** – Advanced R Programming for Data Science
- **STAT 6387E** – Advanced Statistical Machine Learning in Data Science
- **STAT 6388E** – Advanced Statistical Modeling for Data Science

Advanced coursework strengthens competency in machine learning, predictive modeling, scalable analytical workflows, and specialized tools used in applied data science.

6.2.1 Demonstration of Applied Mastery

Students demonstrate applied mastery through cumulative, project-based assessments embedded across core and advanced coursework. These assessments emphasize end-to-end problem formulation, data preparation, modeling, validation, and communication of results in real-world contexts.

Assessment is grounded in individual technical work, written analysis, and applied projects evaluated at graduate-level standards consistent with on-campus coursework.

6.3 Academic Standards

- Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA to remain in good standing.
- No grade below a C may count toward the degree.
- Continuous enrollment is expected. Students who need to pause their studies must request an approved leave of absence through Graduate School.
- All requirements must be completed within five years of initial enrollment.

6.4 Advising and Program Administration

The MS-ADS Program Director oversees academic quality and program operations in the Department of Statistics. Academic standards, curriculum oversight, and assessment are managed by the Department of Statistics in accordance with Graduate School policies. The program is supported by an Admissions and Advising Committee that manages application review and monitors student progress. Students receive virtual advising on course planning, academic expectations, Graduate School policies, and professional development.

Students also have access to university support services, including:

- Office of Online Learning (technical support and course access)
- UGA Career Center (career advising, resume review, job search support)
- Disability Resource Center
- UGA Libraries (research assistance and online resources)

The program follows a structured and predictable course sequence designed to support working professionals while maintaining academic rigor. The program is intentionally structured and cohort-based, emphasizing progressive depth and applied rigor rather than self-paced or modular completion.

7. Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Statistics

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in Statistics is designed to prepare you to work on the frontiers of statistics, whether your career choice leads you into research and teaching or into leadership roles in business, industry and government.

The program is very flexible, particularly in the choice of electives and of research topics. You may even choose to do research on the interface of statistics and some other discipline, such as computer science, genetics, forestry, bioinformatics, economics, etc. The course requirements are designed to ensure that you have sufficient training in probability, statistical inference, computing, and applications to prepare you for research on the cutting edge of statistics.

The MS degree is not a prerequisite for the PhD program, but training equivalent to that specified in the MS program is necessary preparation for the PhD core courses.

Proficiency in mathematics, particularly in real analysis, and in computing is indispensable for successful completion of the PhD program.

Many items in this section, with some modifications for the department's purposes, are taken from the Graduate Bulletin.

A full-time student who is receiving financial assistance from the university must take a total of at least 12 credit hours.

Beginning in Fall 2026, full-time PhD students who are receiving financial assistance from the University must take a total of at least 15 credit hours per term prior to passing the Qualifying Exam for PhD (QEP) and 18 credit hours per term after passing the QEP. Supported students who cannot attain the required credit hour limit through required and elective courses may earn additional credit hours by registering for STAT 8910 and/or STAT 9000. Other full-time students must take a total of at least 9 credit hours per semester.

No credit from a previous degree program or institution may be transferred toward your degree program at UGA if that credit counted toward any previous degree. You may transfer at most 9 credit hours, which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies I.

7.1 Selection of Research Advisor

If you are earning your PhD degree, then you are expected to choose your research advisor while you are taking your PhD core, typically by the end of your second year in the program.

The relationship between you and your advisor is one which both of you must agree to. It is, however, not set in stone, and either you or your advisor can terminate this relationship when it is not working out.

The Director of Graduate Studies II is your coursework advisor, until you choose a research advisor.

7.2 Residence

The Graduate School requires that a minimum of 30 hours of consecutive course work included in your program of study must be spent in resident study on this campus. Undergraduate courses taken either to fulfill research skills requirements or to remove deficiencies may not be calculated in the 30 consecutive hours of resident credit.

7.3 Core Requirements

The core of the PhD degree consists of two parts: A First-Year core, for students who have not had previous equivalent training elsewhere, and a Second-Year core.

7.3.1 Requirements for students entering prior to Fall 2025

The First-Year core provides training in

- Linear Models and Statistical Learning: STAT 6430 and STAT 8260
- Probability and Inference: STAT 6810 and 6820.

The Second-Year core covers

- STAT 8060 Computing Techniques in Statistics I
- STAT 8170 Probability Theory
- STAT 8350 Bayesian Data Analysis
- STAT 8530 Advanced Inference

7.3.2 Requirements for students entering in Fall 2025 or Later

The First-Year core provides training in

- Linear Models and Statistical Learning: STAT 6420, STAT 8260, and STAT 8330. Concurrent registration in STAT 6421 and STAT 8331 are required for PhD students registered for STAT 6420 and STAT 8330, respectively.
- Probability and Inference: STAT 6810 and 6820.

The Second-Year core covers

- STAT 8060 Computing Techniques in Statistics I
- STAT 8170 Probability Theory
- STAT 8530 Advanced Inference
- STAT 8620 Advanced Statistical Models

7.4 Elective Requirements

Entering prior to Fall 2025: 6 electives
Entering in Fall 2025 or later: 5 electives

You may choose electives from among all 8000-level courses, *except* 8040, 8200, 8250, 8910, 8920, and any 8000-level course cross-listed with Biostatistics and Bioinformatics. With the approval of DGS II, up to two graduate courses (typically at the 8000 level) from disciplines outside of statistics may be counted as electives.

7.5 Research Skills Requirements

To pursue research effectively, you must develop a facility with certain research skills and tools such as reading research papers and effectively communicating results to an audience. Toward this goal, the Department encourages all PhD students to enroll in STAT 8910 (1 credit) from second to sixth semester. The course is designed to help you develop the habit of attending research talks, understand the research that is on

the cutting edge of statistics, learn about professional development as a research scientist, and get a head-start on your dissertation research.

7.6 PhD Qualifying Examination

The PhD Qualifying Examination (QEP) is given every year during August, approximately one week prior to the start of Fall semester. This exam is given only once per year.

A student taking the QEP for the first time must attempt both parts of the exam: Theory and Data Analysis. A student is allowed up to two attempts to pass both parts of the QEP. A student whose QEP score is recognized as a QEM pass is eligible for an MS degree in Statistics, pending the completion of the appropriate coursework. See the previous chapter for more details.

An incoming PhD student with credentials supporting mastery of the First-Year PhD core course materials may request permission from the Director of Graduate Studies to take the PhD Qualifying Examination (QEP) before beginning his/her first year in the PhD program. The Director of Graduate Studies will review the student's credentials before granting permission to take the QEP. This attempt will be considered as the student's first attempt, and the student must take both parts of the QEP. If the student passes the QEP, then he/she skips the first-year core coursework.

7.6.1 Parts, Scope and Time Allowed

The QEP tests material covered during the first-year core of the PhD program. However, the exam does not have separate sections for each course's material, but rather it tests this core material in a comprehensive way that will require students to synthesize material from all first-year core courses. Students taking the QEP at the end of their first year must complete all first-year core courses before attempting the QEP. A student who is on academic probation cannot take the QEP until s/he removes herself/himself from academic probation.

The exam will have two separate parts:

- Statistical Theory. This is an "in-class" exam which the students have 4.5 hours to complete. During that time, examinees may refer to books and notes but will not have access to a computer or the Internet.
- Data Analysis. This is a "take-home" format assessment requiring a written report focusing on the analysis of a data set or another applied statistical problem. Typically, students are given 4 days to complete this component of the QEP. Questions will be open-ended, requiring the examinee to analyze the data in an appropriate way and draw conclusions about the scientific questions of interest. Each examinee will hand in a written report describing the analysis, results, conclusions, etc. Exams will be evaluated on the quality of the analyses and the written report. English language usage is not a grading criterion *per se*, but effective communication is essential.

7.6.2 Grading

The QEP consists of two parts: a Theory portion and a Data Analysis portion; the grading for these two parts is handled separately by two distinct faculty committees. A composite score (which is the average of the two separate scores) is then calculated, and a pass/fail recommendation based on this score is presented to the Graduate Program Faculty of the Department, who vote to determine the results. Students who pass the QEP are also considered to have passed the QEM. Although the exam grading is done blindly to the examinees' identities, the exam committees and Graduate Program Faculty will consider each student's academic record in the PhD program in formulating and voting on a pass/fail recommendation at the PhD or MS level.

7.6.3 Rules for Taking and Re-Taking

For your initial attempt, you must take both parts of the QEP. If you do not pass both parts on your initial attempt, you may retake either the entire exam or only the part of the exam most in need of improvement the following August. In the case when only one exam component is retaken on the second attempt, then its score will be used together with that of the other component from the first attempt to calculate the composite score. More than two attempts at the exam will not be allowed.

7.6.4 Rules Appeal Dismissal from PhD Program After Second Unsuccessful Attempt at QEP

A graduate student may appeal dismissal from the PhD program after an unsuccessful second attempt at QEP exam if he or she is not under departmental or Graduate School academic warning status or probation at the time of taking the exam.

To appeal dismissal, the student must submit a letter within two weeks of the announced initial pass/fail decision to the department's Graduate Program Faculty, by care of the Director of Graduate Studies II, expressing compelling reasons for allowing him/her to continue in the program. At that time, the student may present any evidence which s/he thinks may be relevant, including, but not limited to: performance in classes, performance on parts of the exam, other teaching or research accomplishments. The appeal to continue in the program must be accompanied by a letter of support from at least one member of the Graduate Program Faculty. The appeal will be considered and voted upon by the Graduate Program Faculty. An appeal receiving less than two-thirds of support from the Graduate Faculty will be considered unsuccessful. A successful appeal will require the student to address his/her weakness revealed in the qualifying exam by suitable remediation. Such remediation will be chosen and supervised by the advisor who plans to supervise the PhD research of the student in consultation with the student's advisory committee.

7.6.5 Faculty Responsibilities

Two faculty committees, one for each part of the exam (stat theory and applied stats/data analysis), have responsibility for setting the exam and administering it. The

committees are responsible for ensuring that the exam is appropriate and reasonably consistent from year to year. They also have the responsibility for grading the exams and making pass/fail recommendations to the entire Graduate Program Faculty of the Department, who then vote on the results.

7.7 Advisory Committee

You are encouraged to seek a major professor at the earliest opportunity. Within a semester of successful completion of the QEP, you should, in consultation with your major professor, select faculty to form your PhD advisory committee. The form for declaring your advisory committee is available on the Graduate School's web site, grad.uga.edu, on their forms page.

The advisory committee must consist of the major professor as chair, and three additional Graduate Faculty members. At least half of the advisory committee must come from the Department of Statistics. Additional voting members may be appointed to the committee, including no more than one non-UGA faculty, who must hold a PhD in his/her field. The advisory committee will be recommended to the Dean of the Graduate School by the Director of Graduate Studies after consultation with you and the faculty members involved.

The advisory committee is charged with approving your program of study, arranging and executing the written and oral comprehensive examinations, approving a subject for the dissertation, approving the completed dissertation, and approving your defense of your research.

Changes in membership of the advisory committee require approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School.

7.8 Program of Study

A preliminary program of study, developed by you, the Director of Graduate Studies II, and your major professor and approved by a majority of your advisory committee, may be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies II by the end of the Second-Year core. Filing a preliminary program of study is not necessary; however, you must file a final program of study before you complete your comprehensive examination.

Programs of Study are not intended to be standardized. If you are interested in special applications of statistics, you may include classes in the relevant discipline.

The program of study should consist of 18 or more semester hours of approved 8000-level courses in addition to research, dissertation writing, and directed study. No grade below C will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

You must submit a final program of study to the Graduate School prior to notification of the Comprehensive examination. This program of study must be submitted on the proper form for approval by the advisory committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of the Graduate School. The final program of study must show all graduate courses relevant to the doctoral program and not just courses satisfying the minimum degree requirement. Courses from the MS degree and courses taken at other universities may be listed in the "Relevant Master's or Other Graduate Degree Courses" section of the program of study form. The program of study must carry a minimum of 30 hours of course work, three hours of which must be dissertation writing (9300).

The Graduate Committee or your advisory committee will carefully evaluate your progress and qualifications at the end of each year of study to advise you whether to continue in the program.

7.9 Comprehensive Examination

You must pass a formal comprehensive examination before being admitted to candidacy for the PhD. This examination, which consists of both a written and oral component, is administered by your advisory committee according to the procedures and policies given in this section.

7.9.1 Grade Requirement

You are required to achieve at least a B+ average grade (3.3 GPA) in the Second-Year core courses. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a remedial measure to be imposed by your advisory committee. The choice of remedial measure is at the discretion of the advisory committee but could involve retaking a course, completing an independent study or assignment in the area of deficiency.

Any remediation must be completed before you begin the comprehensive examination.

7.9.2 Timing

You are expected to complete the written comprehensive examination ("Writtens") at the beginning of your third year or as soon as possible following completion of the second-year core courses. Your advisor is responsible for reporting the examination results to both the examinee and the committee members. Following successful completion of the Writtens, you must schedule the oral comprehensive examination ("Orals").

If you are required to remediate, then you must complete the prescribed remedial measures before taking your comprehensive examination.

You are expected to have made substantial progress on the relevant literature review, although it is not necessary for you to have any novel results nor even a specific

research proposal. The comprehensive examination is separate from the dissertation proposal and must be completed prior to the presentation of the proposal.

7.9.3 Parts, Scope and Time Allowed

To begin the comprehensive examinations, you and your major professor notify the Director of Graduate Studies that you are ready, and you call a meeting of your advisory committee for the purpose of planning the comprehensive exam. At that meeting, you will give a short presentation (15 minutes) and/or write-up (1 or 2 pages) on your area of research. Also at that meeting, the advisory committee will discuss your record, whether any remediation is warranted, and the scheduling of the comprehensive exam.

The comprehensive examination is an inclusive examination within your field of study. It must consist of two parts: one written, and one oral. Both parts of the exam are formulated and administered by your dissertation advisory committee.

The major professor coordinates the administration of the written portion of the exam by soliciting questions from each committee member. Each committee member submits a separate part of this exam component consisting of one or more questions to be taken under requirements (e.g., time limit, open book/closed book, etc.) specified by the committee member. The entire written portion of the exam must be completed over a period of time no longer than two weeks. Questions may be related to the examinee's intended research topic or may be general questions related to the second year PhD core. Each committee member is responsible for grading his/her own part of the exam.

The student's advisor will collect pass/fail votes on the written section of the exam and report the result to the examinee to the committee members. Upon passing the written exam, the student will schedule the date of the oral component of the exam.

In general, feedback on the written section of the exam should not be given to the examinee before the oral component. However, a committee member may choose to give him/her the option to brush up on weak areas exposed in the written component and then re-test them during the oral component.

During the oral component of the exam, committee members may ask questions rooted in the written component of the exam, but it is not meant to be an extension of the written component. All committee members are encouraged to ask questions on additional topics. Two hours should be scheduled for the oral component of the exam, and all committee members must be present.

An examination of your dissertation prospectus (proposal) takes place on a date after the oral comprehensive examination and may not take the place of the oral comprehensive examination. All members of your advisory committee must be present simultaneously for the oral examination and prospectus (proposal) presentation.

The oral comprehensive examination is open to all members of the faculty and shall be announced by the Graduate School. The Director of Graduate Studies must notify the Graduate School of the time and place of the examination at least two weeks before the date of the examination.

7.9.4 Grading

Your PhD advisory committee has responsibility for evaluating your performance on the Comprehensive Exam. In accordance with Graduate School rules, each committee member assigns pass/fail grades separately for the written and oral portions of the exam. You must pass both the oral and written portions with no more than one "fail" vote in each case. An abstention is not an appropriate vote, The results of both examinations will be reported to the Graduate School within two weeks following the oral examination.

Subject to the committee's discretion, passing grades may be assigned conditional on remedial measures to address a particular area of weakness. For example, you may be required to complete additional coursework and/or directed reading. In the case that you fail either the oral or written components, you may re-attempt either component(s) one time. Failure of either component more than once will result in your being dismissed from the PhD program.

7.10 Dissertation

All PhD students at UGA must present a dissertation on some subject connected with his/her major field of study. The dissertation must represent originality in research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery of a field of study. The conclusions must be logical, the literary form acceptable, and the contribution to knowledge meriting publication.

Persons who serve on your advisory committee at the time the dissertation research is undertaken must be faculty members knowledgeable in the areas of your research. The major professor has the primary responsibility for guiding your research, but you should consult all members of the advisory committee to draw upon their expertise in relevant areas.

7.10.1 Dissertation Prospectus and Proposal

The major professor and advisory committee shall guide you in planning your dissertation. To inform your advisory committee of your research, you will write a dissertation prospectus and then give a presentation to your advisory committee in which you propose your planned research.

The dissertation prospectus is an essay on your proposed dissertation research. This essay should review the pertinent literature, present any new preliminary results you have obtained, and give a clear indication of the direction of proposed research for

your dissertation. The essay should demonstrate concise professional writing and should not exceed 30 standard pages of typescript (single-spaced, and in 12-point font).

When your major professor certifies that your dissertation prospectus is satisfactory, it must be formally considered by the advisory committee in a meeting with you. This meeting is an oral examination during which you present to your advisory committee your literature review and preliminary research results and describe how you intend to complete your dissertation. Your advisory committee examines you on the proposed research, considers its feasibility, and advises you accordingly. In rare situations, it is possible that you will be advised to seek another, hopefully related, research topic.

Note that this formal consideration may not take the place of the oral comprehensive examination, by specific directive of the Graduate School.

Approval of the dissertation prospectus, and of your presentation of its content, signifies that members of the advisory committee believe that you have proposed a satisfactory plan for your research study. Approval of the prospectus requires the agreement of the advisory committee with no more than one dissenting vote as evidenced by their signing an appropriate form.

7.10.2 Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy for the PhD degree is a formal designation by the Graduate School which indicates that you have passed your comprehensive examination and have successfully proposed your dissertation research direction. Prior to admission to candidacy, a PhD student should register for STAT 9000, Dissertation Research; after, the student should register for STAT 9300, Dissertation Writing.

You are responsible for applying for admission to candidacy on the proper form at least one full semester before the semester of graduation. This Application is a certification by the Department of Statistics that you have demonstrated ability to do acceptable graduate work in your chosen area of research and that:

a. all prerequisites set as a condition to Admission have been satisfactorily completed;
b. research skills requirements have been met;
c. the final program of study has been approved by the advisory committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the dean of the Graduate School;
d. an average of 3.0 (B) has been maintained on all graduate courses taken and on all completed courses on the program of study;
e. written and oral comprehensive examinations have been passed and reported to the Graduate School;
f. the advisory committee, including any necessary changes in the membership, is confirmed and all its members have been notified of their appointment;
g. a dissertation prospectus has been approved;
h. the Graduate School's residence requirements have been met.

Once a student has been Admitted to Candidacy, the Department has an ethical responsibility to ensure that appropriate faculty mentorship is provided to the Candidate for completion of the degree.

For more information on dissertation writing, please see the Graduate School's Dissertation Guidelines.

7.10.3 Dissertation Approval and Defense

The dissertation must constitute an achievement in research and advance in knowledge in Statistics or on the interface of Statistics and an area of its application. Dissertation topics take on a wide range from development of new theory to innovative application in substantially new ways. Because of the great diversity of topics in Statistics, standards of length and style cannot be prescribed. The basic criterion for approval shall be the excellence of the research conducted to meet the objectives of the approved dissertation prospectus. As a minimum guide, any dissertation should be of such quality as yielding at least two papers in referred journals.

The dissertation is written by you, in consultation with your major professor. Your major professor advises you on the technical aspects of the dissertation topic, the presentation of results, and the organization of your presentations and manuscripts. The advisory committee is advised of progress on the dissertation, with members participating in those aspects of your research where they can offer guidance. Members of the advisory committee will assist you and your major professor to ensure integrity, correctness and completeness of your research.

Preparation of the dissertation is your responsibility. The writing style in your dissertation must be of professional quality.

When your major professor is satisfied with the completed dissertation, s/he will certify that it has his/her approval and is ready to be read. The major professor will then distribute copies of the dissertation to the remaining members of the advisory committee and schedule a final oral defense. The dissertation must be given to the advisory committee at least 5 weeks prior to the last day to turn in the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School. The date for the final oral defense of the dissertation must be at least 1 week prior to the last day to turn in the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

The Director of Graduate Studies must notify the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the defense. Subsequently, the Graduate School will announce the time and place of the defense of the dissertation to the University community.

Written assents of the committee members (other than the major professor) will be required before a dissertation is approved as ready for a final defense. No more than one dissenting vote may be allowed for the approval of the dissertation. If the advisory committee declines to approve the dissertation as ready for the final defense, the major professor will notify the student and the Graduate School.

The defense of the dissertation will be chaired by your major professor and attended by all members of the advisory committee simultaneously for the entire examination

period. It is open to all members of the University community, and as such, is given as a Departmental Colloquium. The advisory committee must approve your dissertation and defense with no more than one dissenting vote and must certify their approval in writing. An abstention is not an appropriate vote for the final defense. The results of the defense of the dissertation must be reported to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to graduation for the current semester.

Once the dissertation has been approved by the advisory committee and the final oral examination has been passed, the dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School for final approval no later than two weeks prior to graduation. Dissertations which are not submitted by this deadline must be defended again and approved by the advisory committee before they will be considered by the Graduate School for final approval.

7.10.3.1 Timeline for Defense

Let T be your defense date, which must be at least 1 week before the final copy of your dissertation is due to the Graduate School.

At T – 4 weeks you must give the next-to-final draft of your dissertation to your advisory committee, allowing them sufficient time to read it.

Items to address will almost surely come up during the reading of the dissertation, the final defense and final Examination, so you will be able to make the requested changes during the week before the final copy must be turned in to the Graduate School.

7.10.3.2 Submitting the Dissertation

One complete formatted copy of the dissertation must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School for a format check no later than four weeks prior to graduation. The Graduate School must receive the final defense approval form and an electronic submission of the corrected dissertation no later than two weeks prior to graduation. This official copy of the dissertation will be electronically submitted by the Graduate School to the main library for archiving.

You may not submit a dissertation to the Graduate School for format checking or the dean's approval between the last day of classes and late registration of the following term.

7.11 Time Limit

All requirements for the PhD degree, except the dissertation and final oral examination, must be completed within a period of six years. This time requirement dates from the first registration for graduate courses on your program of study. A candidate for the PhD who fails to complete all degree requirements within five years after passing the comprehensive examination, or being Admitted to Candidacy, will

be required to take the comprehensive examinations again, or be Admitted to Candidacy a second time.

7.12 Graduation

An application for graduation must be filed with the Graduate School no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The application must be submitted online. The link is available from the Graduate School's web page for forms.

All requirements for the degree must be completed and reported to the Graduate School no later than one week prior to graduation. You must enroll for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during the semester in which graduation requirements are completed.

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

8. Enrollment Requirements and Time Limits

8.1 Minimum Enrollment

All enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Georgia must register for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during any semester in which they use University facilities and/or faculty/staff time. This includes semesters in which they are completing comprehensive examinations and defending their thesis or dissertation.

8.2 Continuous Enrollment Policy

All enrolled graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of three (3) credits in at least two semesters per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking graduate student is terminated.

Doctoral students must maintain enrollment during fall and spring semesters (breaking only for summer semesters) until the residency requirement has been met.

All students must be enrolled for at least three graduate credits in the semester in which degree requirements are completed.

8.3 Residence Credit Requirement

The residency requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree is interpreted as 30 hours of consecutive graduate course work that is included in the approved program of study.

There is no residency requirement for master's degree programs.

8.4 Leave of Absence

A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the graduate program coordinator and the dean of Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good causes such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, childcare, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence does not stop the clock unless the leave is granted for pregnancy, childbirth or adoption (see below): time on leave counts toward any University, Graduate School, or program time limits pertaining to the degree being sought.

8.5 Time Limits

Master's degree students must complete all degree requirements, including all coursework on their approved program of study and defend their thesis (if applicable) within six years of matriculation.

Doctoral students must complete all course work on their approved program of study and be admitted to candidacy within six years of matriculation.

For all degrees the six-year limit begins with the semester the student matriculated into the program and ends with the last semester before the beginning of the sixth year.

For doctoral students, the time limit to complete the dissertation and qualify for graduation is five years following admission to candidacy. After this time, the student's candidacy will be considered expired, and the student must retake the comprehensive exams and be re-admitted to candidacy to defend the dissertation and qualify for graduation. If a doctoral student's candidacy expires after the first week of classes in the final semester of the fifth year, the student is granted the remainder of the semester to complete degree requirements without special permission of the dean of the Graduate School.

8.6 Extension of Time

A special request for an extension of time on the six-year expiration of coursework or the five-year expiration of candidacy may be made to the dean of the Graduate School. This request must include specific reasons that the student did not complete requirements in the time allotted by Graduate School policy. A petition of this type must include 1) a specific timeline for the completion of requirements, 2) an approved advisory committee form, if required for the degree,

3) an approved program of study and a letter of support from both the p director of graduate studies II and the major professor.

9. Financial Assistance

Many of the graduate students in the Department of Statistics receive some form of financial support. Typically, 35-40 students per semester receive financial support, but this number fluctuates from one semester to the next. The majority of students are supported by Teaching Assistantships (TAs). A few students receive Research Assistantships (RAs), Consulting Assistantships (CAs), or Graduate School Research Assistantships (GSRAs). A few other students have Graduate Out-of-State Tuition Waivers (GOOSTWs) or Regent's Out-of-State Tuition Waivers (ROOSTWs).

The Franklin College of Arts and Science provides the TA funds for the Department to use for instructional support. These appointments are typically at 4/9 of full-time, so duties should require an average of 18 hours per week. Duties vary from course to course, and from instructor to instructor, but may include conducting lab/tutorial sessions, computing sessions, and/or grading of assignments. There are certain special TA, RA, or GTA assignments that may allow a student to be paid at 50%-time (20 hrs/week). The higher pay rates for these positions are generally justified because of extra duties that are required. Students supported for the academic year are paid August through May. Summer support is available, and first priority is given to 1st-year PhD students who are studying for the QEP.

The students in the courses for which you are a TA are always given a chance at the end of the semester to evaluate your performance. These evaluations are read by the Associate Head and become a part of your permanent file in the department. If you are a TA for STAT 2000, the STAT 2000 Coordinator also reads your evaluations.

All TAs must abide by the University's policy on being a TA. This policy covers teacher training requirements such as GRSC 7770, as well as English language training and proficiency requirements.

9.1 Essential Skills

As a TA, you are expected to attend every meeting scheduled for your duties, especially for the large-lecture courses. On occasion, such as for writing-intensive courses, you may also be expected to attend the course.

You must be on time for your duties, including all labs. Often the student who is in lab before you are waiting for you before s/he leaves the lab.

You must respect the time and the effort of the instructor(s) you assist, your fellow students, and the students you are responsible for.

If any situation arises which you do not know how to handle, be sure to seek advice from the instructor you assist, the Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the Head.

RAs are usually supported with funds from research contracts or grants from outside the Department. Duties involve assisting one or more faculty or scientists in their research. Often such a student combines these duties with dissertation research.

Each year, the Graduate School awards several assistantships (GSRAs). These awards are made competitively to new students and to finishing doctoral students. These are highly competitive awards! Nominations are made each year by the Director of Graduate Studies, and the number of awards made depends on the funding available that year. Winners of these awards receive a slightly higher monthly stipend and have a greatly reduced workload.

The Graduate School provides a very limited number of Out-of-State Tuition Waivers (OOSTWs) for students who are not on Assistantships. The DGSI nominates students each year in the Spring. Students who receive an OOSTW must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.3, and a minimum graduate GPA of 3.5. These are awarded by the Regents of the University System of Georgia through the Graduate School for domestic students, and through the Office of International Education for international students.

If you are an unsupported MS student who is writing a thesis, and have completed all of your coursework, then you are eligible for a Graduate OOSTW. Please see the forms page on the Graduate School web site for an application for this tuition waiver.

If you are an unsupported PhD student who has been Admitted to Candidacy, then you are automatically granted a Graduate OOSTW.

9.2 Policy on Continuation of Assistance

Financial support tends to be awarded competitively, especially for new students. It is the Department's policy to continue your financial support once you have received it, provided that funds are available, that you are making satisfactory progress towards your degree, and that you are performing your duties in a satisfactory manner.

MS students are typically supported for 2 years; PhD students are typically supported for 5 years. If you require more time to complete your degree, and you have been making satisfactory progress towards your degree, then you and your research advisor together may request that the Director of Graduate Studies extend the duration of your support beyond this period. If you do not have a research advisor, then there should be no reason for your support to be extended (barring some unforeseen circumstance).

If you receive financial assistance through the University, then you must obtain permission from the Department to take on additional employment. International students are restricted in their employment options by their visa requirements. No full-time student may work for UGA for more than 50% time (20 hours a week). Additional restrictions will apply when the assistance originates from outside the University. Some major professors will also have their own sets of restrictions.

9.3 State Farm Insurance Company's Modeling and Analytics Graduate Network Program

Since 2016, the UGA Statistics Department has partnered with State Farm Insurance Company to offer the Modeling and Analytics Graduate Network (MAGNet) program. Admitted MS students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and who are interested in careers in the financial or insurance industries will have the opportunity to apply for this program. The MAGNet program will hire students primarily in the Master's program in Statistics to work for 20 hours a week on their data problems. During the Summer, this will be a full-time internship.

State Farm takes applications from students who have been accepted into the MS program in Statistics. State Farm pays tuition and an hourly salary to students who are chosen for the MAGNet program, and students will spend 20 hours a week in State Farm's MAGNet lab downtown, working under the supervision of a State Farm analyst on problems of specific interest to State Farm. Once students satisfactorily complete the program, they will be expected to work for State Farm for at least two years.

This program is open only to students who are already citizens or permanent residents of the US, since other students are prohibited from such a working arrangement by their F1 visas.

9.4 Tutoring Opportunities

Many of our graduate students offer private tutoring services for extra money. The amount charged per hour varies according to English capabilities.

Note that you may NOT charge for helping students who are in courses for which you are a TA! Doing so is a serious breach of ethics and will result in you losing your assistantship.

If you do not have visa restrictions, you may look for a job with the several tutoring businesses in Athens. Search on the terms "tutoring athens ga" to get a list of current tutoring businesses which might be hiring.

There are also organizations on campus which hire tutors. Two of these are the Division of Academic Enhancement and the University of Georgia Athletic Foundation. You must apply to become a tutor with either of these entities, and you must also be careful that you are not being paid to work more than 20 hours per week if you are also on any Assistantship support.

9.5 Teaching and English Language Training Requirements

All students who receive a Teaching Assistantship (TA) are required by the Graduate School to register for some kind of teacher training course. For the University at large, that course is GSRC 7770.

The University's TA Policy contains these expectations as well as the expectations for anyone who was required to submit a TOEFL or IELTS score. Because your TA duties are so closely tied to this policy, retention of your assistantship depends upon your taking the appropriate courses and re-taking the TOEFL or IELTS for a score that meets the University's policy. After completing your LLED sequence, you must submit a new TOEFL or IELTS score every 6 months until you have met the University's minimum criteria. The Department will reimburse you for the cost of the exam only when your score meets the University's minimum criteria.

10. Research Skills

To give our MS students some grounding in what Statistics research is all about, to encourage our PhD students to get an early start on becoming interested and involved in research, and to get both sets of students developing the "soft skills" needed in professional practice, the Department strongly encourages that all students take the course STAT8910.

10.1 STAT 8910 Statistical Seminar

If you are financially supported, then you supplement your coursework with the courses covering aspects of Professional Practice. Supported students will typically take the following courses in addition to core/elective courses and/or research hours:

- Year 1, Fall: You take GRSC7001 (1 credit) and GRSC7770 (3 credits).
- Year 1, Spring: You take STAT 8910 for 1 credit hour.
- Year 2, Fall: You take 1 credit hour of STAT 8910.
- Year 2, Spring and Year 3: You will be taking 1 credit hour of STAT 8910.
- Subsequent Years: If you are a PhD student still taking courses, then you are strongly encouraged to take 1 hour of STAT 8910 each semester, in which doing so will not affect your ability to waive your fees.

11. Academic Issues

Although some of this information is specific to the Department, much of it (especially the sections on Probation and Dismissal, and Appeals) is on the Graduate School's web site, under Academic Regulations and Procedures.

11.1 General Expectations

As a student in the Department, you are expected to do several things which will enhance you academically and professionally.

You are expected to hone your writing and presentation skills. As part of your job, no matter where you end up and no matter which degree you pursue, you must also write

and present your work. Towards that end, your coursework will also have components in which you must write a report on the results of your class project, and/or give a short presentation of your results or of results you have read in an assigned journal article. You are expected to work on your English language skills – even if you are a native English speaker – so that your writing and your presentations are clear and accessible.

Both the Department and the University take academic honesty **very** seriously. The University's document A Culture of Honesty states clearly the University's position on the matter, as well as the strong consequences of violating this policy. In particular, the Department strongly encourages you to do all your work within the context of how your instructor defines acceptable resources. If you are told to work on your own, then do so.

And never, ever, just copy another person's work!! You hurt yourself when you do this, since it does not help you to understand and be able to think with the material at all. And, you are risking harming the other person, since helping someone cheat is also cheating.

As a practicing Statistician, you must also be aware of your ethical obligations to your clients and/or to science. The American Statistical Association takes this seriously, and has provided Ethical Guidelines for Statistical Practice, which every Statistician should read.

11.2 Annual Updates

Each year in the spring, you will receive an Annual Update letter. This letter details what you have accomplished in the past year, and what you are expected to accomplish in the coming year. If you are not making satisfactory progress in the program, this letter clarifies what you need to do to be making satisfactory progress and informs you of what you can expect if you continue to lack satisfactory progress.

If you are an international student who is on an assistantship, a separate letter will inform you of your standing in clearing your English language training requirements. Note that you must also make satisfactory progress towards clearing the speaking portion of the TOEFL so that you can retain your assistantship.

This letter is signed by the Director of Graduate Studies II, the Head and your chosen research advisor(s).

11.3 Probation and Dismissal

You may be dismissed by the Department at the end of any semester if you have not made sufficient academic progress to warrant continuing your studies. You will be warned in your Annual Update letter if you are in danger of termination due to insufficient academic progress. The Department must immediately notify the Graduate School if you are dismissed, and you will be prevented from enrolling in future terms. You may appeal your dismissal by the Department to the Dean of the Graduate School after all avenues of appeal have been exhausted at the

Departmental level (see the next section). You must complete your appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 calendar days of the decision resulting from an appeal to the Department. If you are terminated by the Department, but not simultaneously by the Graduate School, then you may apply for admission to another graduate program; however, you may not apply for admission to the Department of Statistics.

If your cumulative graduate GPA drops below 3.0 for two consecutive terms, you will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. Then, you must make a 3.0 or higher semester graduate GPA each succeeding semester that your overall cumulative graduate average is still below 3.0. You will come off probation once your cumulative graduate average is 3.0 or above. If you make below a 3.0 semester graduate GPA while on probation, you will be dismissed.

If your GPA over courses which may be counted toward your degree drops below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, you will be placed on Departmental academic probation (that is, you will be subject to the Graduate School's policies on academic probation but enforced at the Department level).

When you repeat a graduate course, the last grade will be used to calculate the cumulative graduate GPA that is used for probation, dismissal, admission to candidacy and graduation. Grades of S, U, I, and V are not used in calculating the cumulative graduate GPA. However, when a grade of I converts to F, this may result in an action of probation or dismissal for the semester in which the conversion takes place, even if the student is not registered for the semester in which the grade converted. When you are dismissed under the terms of this policy, you may not apply for admission to another graduate program offered by the University.

If you are dismissed by the Graduate School for academic reasons, you may appeal the dismissal to the dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must be submitted to the dean within 30 calendar days following receipt of notice of dismissal. Information concerning the appeal process may be obtained in the Graduate School.

11.4 Appeals

University of Georgia students have the right to appeal academic decisions. Usually, the appeal goes first to the unit responsible for the decision (for example, grades or departmental requirements to the Department; college or school requirements to the Franklin College or the Graduate School; university requirements to the Educational Affairs Committee). An unfavorable ruling at one level can be appealed to the successive levels (for example, a department ruling can be appealed to the Franklin College; a college-level ruling can be appealed to the University Council Educational Affairs Committee; the Educational Affairs Committee ruling can be appealed to the President of the University; and the President's ruling can be appealed to the Board of Regents).

Appeals of academic matters should be referred to the

Office of Instruction,
308 New College
(706) 583-0690

Policies regarding appeals in the Graduate School may be obtained from the
The Graduate School,
210 S. Jackson St.
or by phoning (706) 542-1739

In the Department, you may appeal by writing a letter to the faculty expressing the reasons for the appeal. If you are appealing the result of the Qualifying or comprehensive examination, then your appeal must be accompanied by a letter of support from at least one member of the Graduate Faculty. The appeal will be considered and voted upon by the voting faculty.

11.5 Awards

Each year, several kinds of awards are given to students in the Department.

11.5.1 Travel Awards

All students who are involved in research are encouraged to attend conferences and make presentations of the results. If your research advisor has travel funds from a grant source, then those funds may be used to reimburse your travel and local expenses. Beyond that, there are several sources of travel funding for you to use to attend these conferences.

11.5.1.1 Department

You may apply to the Department for partial support for your travel if you are giving a presentation. You should apply well ahead of time by writing to the DGS II with your request and a budget reflecting the expenses you expect to incur.

11.5.1.2 Graduate School

The Graduate School provides funds to reimburse travel within the continental US. These funds are awarded competitively, and there are several minimum criteria that you must meet to be eligible for the Graduate School's travel award. Please see the information on their web site for all the details.

11.5.1.3 Office of the Vice President for Research

The University's OVPR provides funds to reimburse international travel. Again, these awards are competitive, and there are minimum criteria for eligibility. See the information on the OVPR's web site for the details.

11.5.2 Departmental Best Student Awards

The Department makes cash awards each year to three students deemed to be the best in their respective groups. The names of these Best Students are engraved on the awards plaque in front of the main office.

For these awards, the Director of Graduate Studies will send a list of eligible students to the faculty and solicit feedback on these students. Then, the Student Award Committee decides the nominees.

Students nominated for these awards must meet the criteria listed below. Nomination material must include a nomination letter, as well as the nominee's UGA graduate transcript and resume.

The winner in each category will be determined by a vote of the graduate faculty.

11.5.2.1 Best Master's Student

- Must be within two years of officially entering the master's program.
- Exclude those who will be in the Statistics PhD program.
- Award: certificate & $150.

11.5.2.2 Best Beginning PhD Student

- Must be within three years of entering a program in Statistics.
- Must have just completed the PhD core in the previous year.
- Award: certificate & $150.

11.5.2.3 Best Senior PhD Student

- Must have completed the dissertation proposal and therefore be admitted to candidacy for the PhD.
- Must be nominated by the student's major professor(s).
- Award: certificate & $250.

11.5.2.4 Best Consultant Student

- Must have worked as a paid CA for SCC at least two semesters.
- Selected by Director and Associate Director based on career performance for SCC.
- Award: certificate & $250; subsidized by corporate sponsor Unclaimed Property Credit Recovery, Inc.

11.5.2.5 Best Volunteer Consultant Student

- Must have worked as a volunteer CA for SCC at least two semesters.
- Selected by Director and Associate Director based on career performance for SCC.

- Award: certificate & $150; subsidized by corporate sponsor Unclaimed Property Credit Recovery, Inc.

11.5.3 University Awards

The University holds competitions each year for several different awards for both teaching and research.

11.5.3.1 Outstanding TA Awards

Outstanding TA Awards are made to only 10% of the University's TA population. Eligible students must have met all of the criteria in the University's TA Policy in addition to other criteria outlined by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

11.5.3.2 Graduate School Dissertation Completion Awards

These are graduate school assistantships which support the awardee for up to a year while s/he finishes the dissertation. These are extremely competitive, and the Department may nominate only one student for the competition each year. See the Graduate School's information for more details.

11.5.3.3 James L. Carmon Scholarship Award

This scholarship is awarded to a university graduate student who has used computers in an innovative way.

11.5.3.4 Richard C. Anderson Memorial Award

This award is made to a recent PhD student for outstanding research while at the university or immediately after graduating.

11.5.3.5 Graduate Student Excellence-in-Research Award

This award is made to recognize the quality and significance of graduate student research at the University.

11.5.3.6 Graduate School Fellowships

The list of fellowships that are managed through the Graduate School can be found here.

11.5.4 National Awards

Finally, there are several awards made at the national level.

11.5.4.1 Mu Sigma Rho, the National Statistics Honor Society

The Department established a chapter of Mu Sigma Rho, the national Statistics Honor Society, in 2009. To be inducted into Mu Sigma Rho, a graduate student must hold a GPA of 3.85 or higher over at least 18 hours of coursework in Statistics. Inductions are held each Spring.

11.5.4.2 CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award

This award is made by the Council of Graduate Schools to individuals who, in the opinion of the award committee, have completed dissertations representing original work that makes an unusually significant contribution to the discipline. For this award, the University may put forth only one nominee, so it is an honor to be nominated by the university for it.

11.5.4.3 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program

These NSF fellowships are granted for three years to US citizens or permanent residents who are within the first 12 months of beginning their graduate studies. These awards are extremely competitive and very prestigious.