GRADUATE STUDENT LEARNING GOALS FOR THE FIELD OF HORTICULTURE
Numbers correspond with assessment tools listed below

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The overall goal is to train future leaders in horticultural research, education and outreach in both industry and public landscape spheres.

- Students will develop a working knowledge of commercial horticultural plant management (i.e. crop production and/or landscape management) [3, 6].
- Students will develop proficiency in horticultural research systems using appropriate current technologies and methods. [4, 5, 6]
- Students will become effective horticulture teachers and extension educators by first-hand experience with teaching assistantships (TAs) and extension-outreach assistantships (EOAs) and through participation in departmental outreach efforts. [7, 9]

Foster scholarship, research and communication skills in horticultural science

- Students will master the application of the scientific method to experimental design and interpretation. [2, 5, 6]
- Students will have a contemporary knowledge of the biology underlying the horticultural processes they study beyond what is taught in graduate courses. [3, 4, 5, 6]
- Students will develop effective writing skills that communicate research results to appropriate audiences [9, 10]
- Students will be proficient at delivering presentations based on their research results to diverse audiences, as measured by audience evaluations. [1, 2, 7, 9, 12]

Engage in and conduct original research

- Students will advance knowledge in their discipline. [2, 5, 10, 12]
- Ph.D. graduates will have the knowledge and training to design and implement original research, and share research findings through written and oral communication. [2, 5, 6, 8]
- Students will, where appropriate, master and improve contemporary research techniques used in their discipline. [5, 6]
- Students will become a national authority in the subject area of their thesis research. [10, 11, 12]

Prepare to be professionals in their discipline

- Students will know, and be known to, leaders in their discipline. [11, 12]
- Students will be familiar with the expectations of professionals in their field. (For those pursuing faculty positions, these expectations include curriculum development, teaching, grant writing and administration, publishing, team management, collegiality, professionalism, and outreach.) [6, 8]
HOW DO WE ASSESS GRADUATE STUDENT PERFORMANCE? ASSESSMENT TOOLS

1. Grad Field Review (semi-annual student presentations to the entire Horticulture Grad faculty and graduate student body) (required for PhD and MS candidate; optional for MPS)
2. Full seminar (MS and PhD)
3. 'Q' conference (PhD)
4. 'A' Exam (PhD)
5. Final ('B') Exam (MS and PhD)
6. Graduate Committee meetings to evaluate student progress (all degrees)
7. Faculty evaluation of the quality of student TA work, publications and presentations (all degrees)
8. The department will track student employment for graduates from all degrees (under development)
9. Student publications and presentations in outreach (all degrees)
10. Peer-review journal articles (all degrees)
11. Honors and awards (all degrees)
12. Presentations at national and regional professional meetings (all degrees)

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND ASSESSMENT

- Begin tracking graduate student employment after completing their degrees.
- Encourage grads to participate in “Tools for Thought’ and ‘Leadership’ courses.
- Encourage cross-disciplinary special committees and graduate coursework in diverse knowledge areas.
- Encourage faculty and staff to participate in professional development programs on assessment and leadership, and become familiar with effective leadership and assessment principles and practices.
- We should use what we learn from the grad review and from student exit interviews and post-graduation surveys to improve learning outcomes for current and future students.