

To: Prospective Advisors  
Professional Science Masters in Fisheries and Wildlife Administration (PSMFWA)

From: Bruce Dugger, PSMFWA Program Director

Thank you for considering serving as advisor to one of our PSM applicants. We recognize the importance of your time and the commitment required to advise a graduate student. This document is designed to provide some basic background information on the program and outline the expectations for advisors, so you can evaluate the benefits of working with a PSMFWA student.

## **PSMFWA Program**

PSM in Fisheries and Wildlife Administration is a non-thesis master's degree designed for working professionals with at least 5 years of experience in natural resources past their bachelor's degree. PSM is a national program that was developed to foster links between the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and business by combining coursework in the sciences with professional development training and internship.

PSMFWA specifically targets students who need additional training to advance their careers in natural resource agencies and non-governmental organizations. It includes a selection of professional development and business courses in addition to FW and related science courses, human dimensions courses, and policy courses. The 45-credit curriculum is offered entirely on-line, but students can also take courses in Corvallis or at the Hatfield Marine Science Center.

In lieu of a thesis, PSM students are required to complete an internship and create a written report based on that experience. All PSM students have an advisor and a committee who review the student's internship plan, products, and Program of Study. PSM students do conduct a defense that includes a presentation and oral examination.

## **Expectations for PSMFWA Major Professors/Advisors**

Regular and Courtesy Faculty members can serve as advisors for PSMFWA students, pending approval by the Graduate School and Selina Heppell, FW Interim Department Head.

As an advisor for a PSMFWA student, you will provide mentorship and assist with program planning and product development review, as well as preparation for the defense. You will not be expected to provide financial support for the student.

Major Professor responsibilities are as follow:

- 1) Student advisor and mentor
  - a) Advise the student in the selection of courses in accordance with the stated program direction to make sure core courses are taken. This meeting should take place before a graduate committee has been formed and should establish a realistic timetable for the completion of the various requirements of the program of study.
  - b) Program of Study Form: Advise the student in preparing a draft of the [Program of Study](#) for discussion and approval of the graduate committee. After the Program of Study is approved by

the committee, the student is required to provide a copy signed by the major professor and academic unit chair (Bruce Dugger or Selina Heppell) to the Graduate School. This step must be completed before the student finishes 18 credits in their degree program.

- c) Make every effort to minimize the time to completion of degree.
  - d) Provide support and information to the student regarding Departmental, College, and University activities.
  - e) Inform the student early on if the student is not a match or capable of completing the degree and then assist the student in finding an alternative program.
- 2) Formation of Graduate Committee
    - a) Assist the student in the selection of the 2 graduate committee members and assume responsibility for clarifying their roles.
    - b) Chair the committee meetings and arbitrate decisions of the committee. Committee meetings include, but are not limited to
- 3) review of Program of Study, internship/career goals;
  - 4) final defense
  - 5) Internship
    - a) Helps student secure internship
    - b) Internship proposal. Provide guidance in developing the student's internship proposal and approve final proposal for distribution to graduate committee and PSM program director. Guidelines can be found on the PSM website.
    - c) Evaluates internship progress/completion
      - i) Review supervisor evaluation form – an online form that is emailed to the major professor upon internship completion.
    - d) Final Internship report. Thoroughly examine the final report submitted by the student, make timely and constructive written comments for improvement, and inform the student of the approximate time for the work to be returned. Guidelines for the report can be found on the PSM website
    - e) Determine when the final report is satisfactory for distribution to the graduate committee for review preceding the final defense.
  - 6) Final defense
    - a) Advise the student in completing proper forms required by the Graduate School.
      - b. Chair the final defense and arbitrate decisions of the committee.

In addition, we expect PSMFWA Advisors to:

- Conduct quarterly check-ins by email or skype to go over student's progress and plans
- Provide advice on networking, CV and job application development, and career paths
- Review internship project draft and final, and final seminar/presentation
- Conduct an oral defense and evaluation, with the student's committee

Note that all of these tasks can be accomplished via conference phone, internet, polycom video conferencing, or similar electronic means.

### **Compensation Policy for advisors**

Compensation of up to \$2500 is available for PSMFWA advisors, paid as a taxable honorarium or as overload if you are regular faculty. \$1000 will be made available at the beginning of the student's program, with the remainder paid when the student defends.

### **Resources for advisors**

PSMFWA advisors are strongly encouraged to attend faculty meetings and serve on the committees of other graduate students in the department. There are a number of personnel and resources to help you and your student through the program:

- [FW Online Graduate Programs Advisor](#), is your liaison to the Graduate School
- [Bruce Dugger](#), PSMFWA Director, sets policy for the program in consultation with Selina Heppell and an external Advisory Board
- [Alfonso Bradoch](#), Ecampus advising team