1. Thesis programs are research oriented and the student is required to conduct independent research and present the results as a thesis, which must be approved by the candidate’s supervisory committee.

2. Non-thesis programs are concentrated more heavily on course work. Though research may be conducted, the candidate is not required to present the results in a formal thesis. A final report, professional paper(s), or other terminal project agreed on in advance by the advisory committee is a normal requirement under this plan. This program lends itself to projects such as recreation master plans, regional plans, area management plans, historical reviews, and the development of professional interpretive media.

3. The course-based program is designed for practitioners with a focus on coursework that will prepare professionals for leadership careers in conservation.

For both the thesis and non-thesis options, after a research or other scholarly project is selected the student must prepare a formal work plan for his or her committee and make an oral public presentation of the proposed project. The purpose of this requirement is to:

1. help structure and sharpen the student’s thinking and approach to the project,
2. obtain the views of various knowledgeable persons that may lead to constructive modifications in the work plan,
3. gain experience in making professional presentations, and
4. increase communication within the academic community.

1. Demonstrate understanding of the scientific method and qualitative/quantitative analysis methods.

2. Critically synthesize existing knowledge in science and their natural resource discipline and describe how their research represents a step forward towards the generation of new knowledge.

3. Critically apply theories, methodologies, and knowledge to address important questions in natural resources.

4. Conduct research of significance in a natural resource discipline or as part of a disciplinary or an interdisciplinary or creative project.

5. Plan and conduct this research or implement this project under the guidance of an advisor and/or committee while developing intellectual independence.

6. Develop potential ability in disseminating oral communication to peers in disciplinary research areas.

7. Develop potential ability in disseminating written communication to peers in disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary research areas.

8. Develop potential ability in disseminating and presenting complex information to non-science groups.

9. Develop potential expertise in a specialized research area in natural resources.

10. Demonstrate self-defined pathway for career following defense.

11. Develop potential ability for leadership in natural resource discipline.

12. Interact productively with people from diverse backgrounds and team members with integrity and professionalism.

13. Develop potential ability, through service, for the value of their discipline to the academy and community at large.

14. Follow the principles of ethics in their field and in academia.