Survival Guide for Graduate Students

Master of Advanced Study in Maternal and Child Nutrition

2015 - 2016
# Table of Contents:

- Disclaimer
- Offered by the UC Davis Department of Nutrition, in collaboration with UC Davis Extension
- Background
- Coursework
- Student Project
- UC Davis Graduate Degree Program
- Graduate Program Staff
- Faculty Contacts
- Graduate Program Details
- Normative Time
- Academic Advisor
- Your Academic Advisor is Responsible for the following
- Satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading option
- Recommended unit load
- Student progress
- Entrance requirements
- Requirements for the MAS degree program
- Minimum degree requirements
- Advancement to candidacy for the Master's Degree
- Information of interest to graduate students
- Campus Safety
- International students
- Filing fee status
- Planned educational leave program (PELP)
- What is the difference between PELP and Filing Fee?
- Your graduate student association
- Websites you should get to know
  - Office of Graduate Studies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional campus resources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Registrar</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Resource Site</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Recreation’s Activities &amp; Recreation Center</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Violence Prevention Program</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Cultural Center</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health and Counseling Services</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Disability Center</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment &amp; Discrimination Resources</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Educational Technology (IET) – Student Computing Services</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship and Career Center</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Academic Success Center</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Libraries</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Resources and Research Center</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Insurance and Financial Assistance</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Insurance</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Assistance</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring Guidelines</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction:

This package of material may help you with some of your questions about the Maternal and Child Nutrition Graduate Program at UC Davis. UC Davis is a large university with a student body size over 35,000 and it has approximately 20,000 staff members. The campus has a multimillion dollar operating budget. It consists of the UC Davis Campus in Davis and the outlying areas around Davis and the world renowned UC Davis Medical Center in downtown Sacramento. The UC Davis website (www.ucdavis.edu) should be considered the primary source for any general UC Davis issues. Once you are enrolled as a student, the web site, http://my.ucdavis.edu, will provide you additional information.

This is an informal guide, provided to help you transition to UC Davis. If you encounter any conflicts with published UC Davis policies, please communicate with Melissa Marbach (mmarbach@ucdavis.edu) to clarify.

Disclaimer:

The information in this publication is just a guide. Every effort has been made to accurately include and precisely interpret material found in the Maternal and Child Nutrition Program Bylaws and policies of the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of California, Davis. The Survival Guide is not the final authority in any matter. All changes to degree requirements and policies will be made available on the Maternal and Child Nutrition Website.
Maternal and Child Nutrition Graduate Program at UC Davis

Offered by the UC Davis Department of Nutrition, in collaboration with UC Davis Extension

Background:

During the last decade, the need for nutrition specialists in public health and maternal and child health programs has increased, along with the recognition that low birth weight, diabetes, and childhood overweight and obesity are important national health concerns. There is also an increasing demand for lactation consultants, as greater numbers of women choose to breastfeed their infants. In response, private and public health agencies have focused on improving the nutrition of mothers and children.

The UC Davis Master of Advanced Study in Maternal and Child Nutrition Program is designed to provide a strong scientific background in these topics, and to train professionals to design, implement, and evaluate nutrition intervention programs for mothers and children from a wide variety of cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds.

Coursework:

The program consists of three required six-unit core courses (Nutrition During Pregnancy, Lactation and Infant Nutrition, and Child and Adolescent Nutrition), six to eight units of special topics seminars, two to four units of electives, and a six-unit student project (produced in consultation with a faculty guidance committee) for a total of 36 units. Each of the core courses will comprise 10 weeks of in-class instruction twice per week for two-and-a-half hours per meeting. Classes will also include online discussion of related material and readings. Each student will be assigned a guidance committee consisting of two members of the teaching faculty and an additional qualified faculty member to advise the student in choosing electives and identifying a student project.

Student Project:

Students will carry out a research or evaluation project during their second year in the program. Working closely with his or her guidance committee, the student will choose the project before completion of the first year in the program. While the focus of the project will vary from student to student, the project is intended to allow students to use the knowledge and skills gained during the program in a manner that may best serve them in their professional positions. For example, students who work in government agencies may choose to develop and evaluate pilot interventions, or students with the appropriate background in economics may conduct cost-effective or cost-benefit analyses of workplace program activities.
Graduate Program Staff:

**Graduate Program Coordinator:**
Melissa Marbach  
UC Davis Extension  
530.757.8734  
mmarbach@ucdavis.edu

**Graduate Studies Office Contact:**
Shelly Archer  
Graduate Studies  
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**Faculty Contacts:**

**Program Chair:**
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Graduate Program Details:

Normative Time —
Students in the MAS program progress as a cohort and it is expected that you will finish the program within two years. Because the program is cohort-based, it is not possible to complete the program early.

Academic Advisor —
Academic (Faculty) Advisors are officially appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies to serve in matters affecting graduate students in their academic program. Your Academic Advisor's signature is the only signature officially recognized by Graduate Studies on a variety of forms and petitions used by graduate students.

In general, your Academic Advisor acts as your first source of academic information and provides assistance with the details of the program. You should meet with your Academic Advisor on a regular basis and keep him or her up to date on your progress. Most Academic Advisors are extremely busy and may not seek you out. **Remember, it is up to you to be proactive!**

Your Academic Advisor is Responsible for the following:

- Your Academic Advisor assists you in forming your Student Project Guidance Committee and reviews and approves your course of study.
● Your Academic Advisor reviews and acts on each petition you might have to drop or add courses, or to take courses on an S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) basis, and approves petitions for late adding and dropping of courses.

● Your Academic Advisor reviews and approves your petition for advancement to candidacy for the MAS degree.

● Your Academic Advisor periodically reviews your progress towards your degree objectives, and files an annual report with the dean of Graduate Studies concerning your progress toward the completion of your degree requirements. Your Academic Advisor is also responsible for the approval of any Planned Educational Leave (PELP) you might request.

Satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading option

The purpose of satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) grading option is to allow graduate students the opportunity to explore areas unrelated to the student’s academic discipline. No program core requirements may be taken S/U unless prior approval has been granted by the Graduate Council. Only one graded course per quarter may be taken S/U. In lower or upper division work (courses numbered 1-199) S means a grade of C- or better; in graduate work (courses numbered 200) an S means B- or better.

Recommended unit load

The Maternal and Child Nutrition Graduate Program is a part-time degree program and as such students typically enroll in no more than 6 units per quarter. However, international students in F-1 or J-1 status must carry a minimum of 12 units or the equivalent of a full course of study as certified by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Therefore, students in F-1 or J-1 status will be required to enroll in additional units to be in compliance with visa regulations.

Student progress

Student progress is reviewed annually by the student’s Academic Advisor. If progress is unsatisfactory, a written notice will be sent to the student and to the dean of Graduate Studies; receipt of such notice is regarded as being on academic probation. The dean of Graduate Studies will provide notification to the student, indicating time limit and work required for completion in order to attain a satisfactory evaluation. If the student fails to meet the requirements specified, the student will be subject to disqualification from further graduate study in the program.
Entrance requirements

Admission to the program requires a bachelor’s degree with prior course work that includes (or is comparable to): one year of general chemistry, two quarters of organic chemistry, a course in statistics, one course in general physiology, and two quarters of the biochemistry of nutrition. At least a B average or its equivalent is normally required for admission.

Requirements for the MAS degree program

The MAS in Maternal and Child Nutrition Graduate Program is considered Plan II and as such requires completion of 36 units of upper division and graduate courses and satisfactory performance on a comprehensive final exam (i.e. student project). At least 18 of the 36 units required must be strictly graduate courses in the major subject. No more than 9 units of research (299 courses or equivalent) may be used to satisfy the 18-unit graduate course requirement.

Students following Plan II must meet the above requirements, and in addition are required to submit a research paper based on the work completed for their NUT 230 units; this can include results of original research (summarizing the capstone project) and/or a critical review of the scientific research. Three faculty members must read and approve the paper.

Minimum degree requirements

1. All entrance requirements must be completed before graduation.

2. You are required to take Nutrition 260 – Nutrition During Pregnancy (6 Units)

3. You are required to take Nutrition 261 – Lactation and Infant Nutrition (6 Units)

4. You are required to take Nutrition 262 – Child and Adolescent Nutrition (6 Units).

5. You are required to complete two to four units of elective courses which will be selected from related courses as approved (prior to enrollment) by the student’s advisory committee.

6. You must complete a series of special two-unit seminars in the second year of the program. Topics may vary from year to year but will include: Topics in Epidemiology of Maternal and Child Nutrition; Public Policy in Maternal and Child Nutrition; Principles of Evidence-Based Practice; Applied Research Methods; Principles of Adult Education; and Lactation Specialist Standards of Practice.
7. You must complete all Academic Senate requirements for unit totals and residency.

8. The MAS in Maternal and Child Nutrition Graduate Program is considered Plan II and you are required to submit a research paper summarizing the capstone project and/or a critical review of the scientific research as a comprehensive assessment of your knowledge and work. Three faculty members must read and approve the paper. You may choose to request a comprehensive exam in lieu of the capstone report. Contact your Master Advisor for further information.

**Note:** You may elect to add courses necessary for qualification as a Registered Dietitian. Additional courses required are established to fulfill requirements of the American Dietetic Association and you will be required to pay additional tuition and fees. You can get information about this possibility from the Undergraduate Staff Advisor for Nutrition.

**Advancement to candidacy for the Master's Degree**

You must file an official application for Advancement to Candidacy after completion of at least one-half of the course requirements for the degree and at least one quarter before completion of all degree requirements. Graduate Studies recommends early advancement, so that actual or potential problems can be solved before they become serious. The form is available on the Office of Graduate Studies website or at the Office of Graduate Studies, 250 Mrak Hall.

After the form has been signed by your Academic Advisor, it is returned to Graduate Studies and a copy is provided to the Graduate Program Staff Coordinator. Once advancement is approved, formal notice of Advancement to Candidacy is sent by email to you and your Academic Advisor. If you are not eligible for advancement, you and the department will be informed that action on your application has been deferred and the reason why (e.g., grade point average below 3.0).

On the candidacy application, you and your Academic Advisor agree on and submit a statement of how you will complete the requirements for the degree. If you must make changes in your program after Advancing to Candidacy, recommendations for such changes must be made to Graduate Studies by your Academic Advisor.

Your Academic Advisor will report to the Dean that you have completed all requirements for your degree, with the date of the examination/paper approval, or that you have deferred or have failed. The reporting date usually coincides with the last day of the quarter. An affirmative response and the Academic Advisor’s signature certify that you have completed all program requirements for the degree. Your name will appear on the current degree list if you have satisfied the minimum Graduate Studies requirements. In order to submit your capstone project paper, you must either be enrolled or on filing fee.
Information of interest to graduate students

CAMPUS SAFETY:

UC Davis is not a crime-free zone. The Campus Police Department has many programs to help all members of the campus community be safe. Through the Police Department, the Aggie Hosts offer an Escort Service 530-752-COPS (2677) for anyone needing to walk to their bike, car, a bus, or to another building for FREE. The service is available 365 days of the year from 5:30 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. 7 days a week, excluding major holidays. For more information about the Campus Police Department visit http://police.ucdavis.edu

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

International students should contact Melissa Marbach at mmarbach@ucdavis.edu with any questions. It is important that you contact Melissa before Changing Major, Changing Degree Objective, going on PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program), and going on Filing Fee. Changes in your academic status could change your visa.

FILING FEE STATUS:

Filing fee was established to assist you when you have completed all requirements for your degree except to complete your capstone report or take the MAS comprehensive examination. Filing fee is a one-time fee of $162.00.

To be eligible for filing fee status:

- you must be advanced to candidacy
- you may not use university facilities including lab space. (You can buy library and ARC privileges, and the health insurance)
- you cannot use faculty time other than the time involved in the final reading of the capstone project paper or in holding the MAS comprehensive exam
- you cannot receive a fellowship or financial aid

Filing fee applications are available in the Graduate Studies office. There is more information on the form and online in the Graduate Studies Web site https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/. The form requires the signature of your Graduate Advisor. The fee must be paid before Graduate Studies will process the form.

You must either be registered or on filing fee when you submit your capstone paper or take your MAS comprehensive exam.

If for some reason you have to return to registered status after going on filing fee, you will have to complete the readmission application.
PLANNED EDUCATIONAL LEAVE PROGRAM (PELP):

The Planned Educational Leave Program is designed to allow you to suspend your program of study for good cause (illness, temporary departure from the University, financial problems, etc.). You can leave the campus and return at the end of your PELP to enroll and continue your study and research.

PELP is recommended if you are certain which quarter you will return and if you will be away a maximum of 3 quarters. (If you are not certain of your return date, it is suggested that you use the readmission application when you are ready to continue your study.) The form requires the approval of your academic advisor, graduate program staff coordinator, Student Accounting and a $60 non-refundable fee.

Your PELP can be lengthened or shortened with the approval of those listed above and the Dean of Graduate Studies. Extension of PELP is considered on the basis of extenuating circumstances. More information about PELP is available from your Academic Advisor and your Graduate Program Staff Coordinator.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PELP AND FILING FEE?

PELP is for those students who have not completed all their requirements, and will be away from campus up to 3 quarters. This is for students who intend to return to campus and enroll in classes.

Filing fee is for students who have advanced to candidacy, no longer need University facilities, and only need to complete their MAS comprehensive exam.

YOUR GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION:

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is the officially recognized student government for UC Davis graduate students. GSA is a vital communications network linking you and other graduate students from all corners of the campus to the UCD administration. GSA provides a place for discussion of any issue affecting graduate student academics and quality of life.

GSA General Assembly meetings are held once a month and are open to all. Graduate students are elected to the GSA Executive Council in a variety of positions, mandated to carry out the policies and/or functions of the organization. A small portion of your registration fees is used to support the activities of GSA. For more information call 752-5158, Room 253 South Silo, gsa@ucdavis.edu, http://gsa.ucdavis.edu.
Websites you should get to know:

Office of Graduate Studies:  
http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu

Office of the Registrar:  
http://registrar.ucdavis.edu

Graduate Student Resource Site:  
http://studentaffairs.ucdavis.edu/graduate_students.cfm

Additional campus resources:

The UC Davis campus has a wide range of organizations and activities to complement your academic work, to entertain you, and to give you support. Below is a small sample of campus resources that might interest you. All of these organizations and dozens more can be accessed through the UC Davis Web site at http://www.ucdavis.edu.

Campus Recreation’s Activities & Recreation Center  
http://cru.ucdavis.edu/

Campus Violence Prevention Program  
Fire/Police Building, Kleiber Drive, 752-3299, violenceprevention@ucdavis.edu  
http://care.ucdavis.edu/

Cross Cultural Center  
1st floor Student Community Center, 752-4287, http://ccc.ucdavis.edu/

Student Health and Counseling Services  
https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/

Student Disability Center  
54 Cowell Building, 752-3184, 752-6833 TTY, https://sdc.ucdavis.edu/

Harassment & Discrimination Resources  

Information Educational Technology (IET) – Student Computing Services  
Student Computing Services Help Desk 754-HELP, http://iet.ucdavis.edu/

Internship and Career Center  
2nd and 3rd floor, South Hall, 752-2855, http://icc.ucdavis.edu/  
icchelp@ucdavis.edu
Student Academic Success Center

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center
Student Community Center, Suite 1400, 752-2452, http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/

University Libraries
http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu
For instruction on using the library: http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu/dept/instruc/
To connect from off campus: http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu/ul/services/connect/vpn/
Request interlibrary loan for books and journal articles: http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu/dept/ill/

Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS)
http://taps.ucdavis.edu/, 752-8277
Parking permit information and sales, commuter services, bicycle registration program, university airport.

Women’s Resources and Research Center
First Floor, North Hall, 752-3372, http://wrrc.ucdavis.edu/
The WRRC offers discussion groups including a support group for women graduate students.

Student Health Insurance and Financial Assistance

Student Health Insurance
Health insurance is mandatory for any student at UC Davis. The Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP) is available to all students each quarter. Details about the coverage and payments are included in the Class Schedule and Registration Guide (CSRG) for each quarter. Please pay particular note to the requirements for opting out of coverage if you have your own insurance. If you do not opt out by the deadline date, you will have to pay for the insurance for that quarter. Students who choose the campus health insurance will pay for coverage each quarter (fall, winter and spring) and coverage for the summer is included at no additional charge.

Financial Assistance
Students enrolled in at least six units per quarter or more may be eligible for some financial aid programs. Application deadlines and requirements vary. For detailed information, contact the Financial Aid Office at 530-752-2390 or http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu. Students enrolled in less than six (6) units per quarter are not eligible for any campus financial aid. There is limited availability of financial aid for MAS students. Because this is a self-supporting program, state-funded aid sources are not available. There are some federally-funded sources and private lender sources available through the Financial Aid Office.
Student Services

Student Housing is available to any registered student and does not have a minimum unit requirement. If you are interested in Student Housing, contact their office at (530) 752-2033.

Parking Permits may be purchased through Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) or http://www.taps.ucdavis.edu/. The TAPS office is located North of the parking structure:

Recreation Hall Passes may be purchased at the Recreation Hall office during all open hours. You may purchase an annual pass or a monthly pass. Passes are good for all Recreation Hall services.

Email Accounts may be set up using your student login id and password. Once you have been accepted and enrolled you should have a student ID number. To obtain a UC Davis email account, go to the following address to obtain a Kerberos password and email account: http://scg.ucdavis.edu/accountsemail.cfm

Computer Labs on campus are available to all students and uses your student id and password.

Library Cards are available at Shields Library. The library will receive a list of active students at the beginning of each quarter and the quarterly fees will be charged back to the program.
**Student Employment** has limited availability for MAS students as the program is self-supporting and not eligible for services supported by state funds, as is the case with the Student Employment Department. Positions with campus departments as a Teaching Assistant, Graduate Research Assistant, or Reader are open to our students as long as the fund source is not state monies. You are also eligible to apply for and accept any campus positions that are open to the public. This includes both permanent/long-term positions through the Campus Employment Office and positions through the Temporary Employment Pool.

**Mentoring Guidelines**

Graduate Council recognizes that the mentoring of graduate students by faculty is an integral part of the graduate experience for both. Faculty mentoring is broader than advising a student as to the program of study to fulfill coursework requirements and is distinct from formal instruction in a given discipline. Mentoring encompasses more than serving as a role model. Because of the uncertainty as to the nature of mentoring, the UC Davis Graduate Council has outlined the following mentoring roles to guide the relationship between faculty and graduate students. Faculty and graduate students must realize that, while the major professor or master advisor will be the primary mentor during a student's career at UCD, many of the mentoring "functions" defined below may be performed by program faculty other than the major professor or master advisor. An important corollary to this recognition is that faculty members must realize that much of their interaction with all students has an important mentoring component to it. Graduate students also have responsibilities to insure successful mentoring and these are also indicated below.

Faculty members have a responsibility to mentor graduate students. Mentoring has been defined as....

I. Guiding students through degree requirements. This means:
   1. Providing a clear map of program requirements from the beginning, making clear the nature of the coursework requirements and examinations, and defining a timeline for their completion.
   2. Providing clear guidelines for starting and finishing capstone project work, including encouraging the timely initiation of the research.

II. Guiding students through capstone project. This means:
   1. Evaluating clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the student’s research.
   2. Encouraging an open exchange of ideas, including pursuit of the student’s ideas.
   3. Checking regularly on progress.
   4. Critiquing written work.
   5. Providing and discussing clear criteria for authorship of collaborative research.
   6. Assisting in finding sources to support research projects; such as fellowships, etc.
7. Being aware of student’s research needs and providing assistance in obtaining required resources. For example, serve as the student’s advocate for necessary desk and/or laboratory space.

III. Guiding students through professional development. This means:
   1. Providing guidance and serving as a role model for upholding the highest ethical standards.
   2. Treating students respectfully.
   3. Encouraging and critiquing oral and written presentations.
   4. Encouraging participation in professional meetings of regional groups as well as of learned societies.
   5. Facilitating interactions with other scholars, on campus and in the wider professional community.
   6. Assistance with applications for research funding, fellowship applications, and other applications as appropriate for the respective discipline.
   7. Being the student’s advocate in academic and professional communities.
   8. Providing career guidance, specifically assistance in preparation of CV and job interviews, and writing letters of recommendation in a timely manner.
   9. Recognizing and giving value to the idea that there are a variety of career options available to the student in her/his field of interest and accepting that the student’s choice of career options is worthy of support. For example, guiding the student to teaching opportunities when appropriate for the student’s goals.

As partners in the mentoring relationship, graduate students have responsibilities. As mentees, students should:

   1. Be aware of their own mentoring needs and how they change through their graduate tenure. Graduate students should discuss these changing needs with their mentors.
   2. Recognize that one faculty member may not be able to satisfy all of a student’s mentoring needs. Seek assistance from multiple individuals/organizations to fulfill the mentoring roles described above.
   3. Recognize that their mentoring needs must respect their mentor’s other responsibilities and time commitments.
   4. Maintain and seek regular communication with their mentors, especially their major professor/master advisor.