Graduate Research Assistantships

M.S. level graduate research assistantships (approximately twenty) are available at the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences within the College of Agriculture, Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN for the Fall Semester of 2020. Highly motivated students are encouraged to apply to work on a wide range of research projects with a research focus on Food and Animal Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Biotechnology, Applied Geospatial Information System, Agribusiness Management, or Agricultural Education, Leadership and Communication. Graduate research assistantship positions are awarded on a competitive basis. The successful candidate will have an opportunity to interact with scientists from academia, industry and government agencies. These are fully funded 12 month M.S. research assistantship positions in agricultural sciences that include a competitive monthly stipend for two years and health benefits. Interested students who have earned a bachelor degree in agricultural sciences, biological sciences, forestry, environmental science, geography or any other related fields should apply. Applicants may visit www.tnstate.edu/applynow and apply online for admission into the program by submitting: 1) CV/Resume, 2) statement of research interest and experience, 3) GRE scores, 4) university transcripts; and 5) three recommendation letters from professional referees. Standardized test scores and transcripts must be sent directly by the agency.

The graduate programs at the College of Agriculture provide ample opportunities to enhance professional development and also engage with researchers and extension educators working on various multidisciplinary projects http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture/. The graduate programs in agricultural sciences are designed to prepare graduates for the ever-demanding job market by developing the necessary set of skills and competency through interactions in a classroom setting, experiential hands-on learning, and network building opportunities. The college has three state-of-the-art experimental research facilities – the main campus research and education center and two off-campus facilities, and 35 research laboratories for advanced microbiological, biotechnology, environmental sciences, food science, and animal science research using the latest instruments and technology.

Review of applications will start immediately and will continue until suitable candidates are chosen. All applications that are received and completed by July 1, 2020, will receive full consideration for the Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA). Assistantship will be awarded on a space-available basis, therefore, we encourage submitting a complete Application Package as early as possible.

All inquiries should be directed to Dr. Bharat Pokharel, Graduate Coordinator by email at bpokhare@tnstate.edu or by telephone at 1-615-963-6054. Tennessee State University is a public university located in the heart of Nashville, Tennessee. Tennessee State University is an AA/EEO (affirmative action and equal employment opportunity) employer.
Dear prospective student,
Thank you for your interest in our graduate programs and Tennessee State University (TSU). Please find below the information you requested regarding our graduate program and application process.

The graduate programs in the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences include: (a) M.S. degree in Agricultural Sciences with concentrations in Agribusiness Management and Analysis, Agricultural Education, Food Supply Chain Management, and Biotechnology (Plant and Soil Sciences); (b) M.S. degree in Food and Animal Sciences; (c) graduate certificate (non-degree program) in Applied Geospatial Information Sciences; and (d) the Ph.D. degree in Biological Sciences. Ph.D. in Biological Sciences is an interdepartmental degree program offered by the Department of Biological Sciences and the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and is offered with a focus in: Environmental Sciences, Food and Animal Sciences, Biotechnology, and Cell and Molecular Biology.

Before applying, please visit the college websites [http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture](http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture) and [http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture/research_projects.aspx](http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculture/research_projects.aspx) and familiarize yourself with the research interests of our graduate faculty (faculty members with their research focus areas: [http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculturalprograms/focus_groups.aspx](http://www.tnstate.edu/agriculturalprograms/focus_groups.aspx)). I encourage you to identify faculty member(s) whose research aligns with your interest, academic background, and past work experience, and you may contact them directly. Please identify the concentration and potential faculty advisors (you may list all potential advisors if you like) in your personal statement when submitting the application.

The candidates for the M.S. degree in Agricultural Sciences or M.S. degree in Food and Animal Sciences must have the equivalent of the bachelor’s degree with a major in one of the Agricultural Sciences or related areas, a minimum quality grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 on a 4.00 point scale and a minimum score of 290 on the GRE (verbal and quantitative, or verbal, quantitative and subject), or 370 on the MAT (this option available only for US applicants).

To apply online, please visit [www.tnstate.edu/applynow](http://www.tnstate.edu/applynow) webpage. It will prompt a website, where you are required to fill your personal details. Please select college of agriculture using dropdown option in your area of interest. Then select a program including concentration that you are interested to apply (you can select the concentration, if you are not sure, just select the Agricultural Sciences (M.S.). If you wanted to learn more about the TSU, Nashville and other related information, please browse some of the tabs located at the top of the website. Once you are ready, please click Apply Now tab, this will lead to an application portal – GradCAS where you are about to begin your journey to the graduate school at TSU. For first time user, please create a unique username and password. Please note that you will be using this login credentials to complete the application (re-login) or check your status after application is successfully submitted.
There are four sections where you are required to upload Personal Information, Academic History, Supporting Information and Program Materials. Below is the brief description.

a) **Personal information** – please provide all necessary personal information (please fill them up)

b) **Academic history** – please provide information on previously attended colleges or universities, standardized tests, transcripts and GPA etc. All transcripts must be submitted to GradCAS directly by the agency (please download “transcript request form” and submit it to your previous attended college or university.

c) **Supporting information** – please upload any supporting documents such as CV/Resume, published papers, project report, writing sample, peer-reviewed manuscripts, recognitions/awards or any other documents or activities that show your scholarly activities or accomplishments in a single pdf file.

d) **Program Materials** – please click the program materials and then college of agriculture. Once the program material tab opens, check the home page (please note what are the application requirements for the agricultural sciences program?), then click the next tab “Documents”. You may upload your personal statement of purpose here. In your personal statement of purpose, please briefly describe especially how your academic background and past work experiences have shaped the research interest and motivation to earn a M.S. degree in agricultural sciences. The personal statement should also include the research problem or question or issue that interests you the most for your research work here at the Tennessee State University. You may upload your copy of standardized test scores and unofficial copy of transcripts. Please note that standardized test scores and transcripts must be send by the agency.

Please click the next tab “Reference Letters”. Here you need to submit the contact detail of three professional or academic referees who can speak about you, your professional growth, accomplishments and future career goals. Once you enter his/her name and email address, and click save this evaluation request, an automated email goes to the referee with a link to fill up and submit a reference letter on your behalf. You may add a personalized note to the referee.

Applicants with foreign university degree(s) need to evaluate their official transcripts or authorized school records with a listing of courses and grades by a foreign educational credential agency (such as World Education Service [https://www.wes.org/](https://www.wes.org/)) at applicant’s own expense. Evaluation reports of transcripts (Course-by-course evaluation) must be sent directly to the GradCAS by the agency. There is an option for requesting it directly from the agency to GradCAS (please download “evaluation request form” if you have not started the evaluation process; if you have already completed the evaluation, please click “order WES evaluation” on college attended tab within the academic history section). Non-English speaking applicants must submit TOEFL or IELTS test score as part of their application.
Once you complete uploading all documents and fill up necessary information, click “Submit Application” tab and pay a non-refundable application fee of $35. This fee is payable by credit card online or check/money order payable to “Tennessee State University”.

**Application deadline:** All applications that are received and completed by the deadlines will receive full consideration for the Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA). We will still review applications received before July 1, 2020; however, GRA will be awarded on a space-available basis. We encourage submitting a complete Application Package as early as possible.

The graduate admission committee at the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is looking forward to reviewing your application. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached by email at bpokhare@tnstate.edu or by phone at +1-615-963-6054. Thank you.

Bharat Pokharel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Applied Statistics | Graduate Coordinator
Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
College of Agriculture
Tennessee State University
Nashville, TN 37209
Tel: (615) 963-6054
Fax: (615) 963-5436
Email: bpokhare@TNState.edu