



**PLANT
BREEDING**

Plant Breeding Graduate Program Orientation

2025 – 2026 Academic Year

Eliana Kampf
Program Coordinator

2025 PBGP Cohort

Welcome to UF and PBGP!



Welcome Ph.D. Plant Breeding 2025 class!

 Estefania Tavares Campus - Blueberry	 Samuel Ipinyomi GCREC - Tomatoes	 Mark Porter GCREC - Strawberry
 Pablo Sipowicz Campus - Forages	 Sudip Kunwar Campus - Small Grains	 Jesse Murray EREC - Lettuce
 Manuel Gastelbondo TREC - Tropical species		














Welcome to our Fall 2023 Plant Breeding Ph.D. Students!

 Dylan Clark Gainesville - Blueberries Dr. Munoz lab	 Taylor Sawyer Gainesville - Strawberry Drs. Messina/Whitaker lab	 Melanie Cabrera Gainesville - Broccoli Dr. Messina lab
 Rafaela Graciano Gainesville - Sweet corn Dr. M. Resende lab	 Wisnu Handoyo Ardi Mid FL REC - Begonia Dr. Z. Deng lab	 Anisa Khalid Gainesville - Blueberries Dr. P. Munoz lab
		

**Welcome to our Future Plant Breeders!
Fall 2022 Cohort**

 Samuel Adewale Gainesville - Small Grains	 Rakshya Dhakal Gainesville - Potatoes	 Jairo Arcos J. TREC - Lettuce	 Makayla Rutski Gainesville - SE Pines
 Sisi Chen TREC - Ornamentals	 Habib Akinmade Gainesville - Forages	 Anandi Karn Gainesville - Blueberry	 Kaitlyn Vondracek Gainesville - Strawberry
			

WE ARE PROUD TO WELCOME OUR PLANT BREEDING FALL 2024 COHORT!

 Hani Hassan Citrus	 Kelvin D. Aloryl Lettuce	 Komlan Batchey Tomato	 Ankit Pokhrel Blackberry
 Raveendra Chandavarapu Turfgrass	 Hamza Ashfaq Citrus	 Madhu Jetti Broccoli	 Will Dobson Blueberry
 Darlon Lantican Sweet Corn	 Hung-Yu Dai Peanut	 Xavier Tacker Strawberry	 Sudeep Adhikari Pumpkin
			

Eliana's journey

1991: B.Sc. Agronomy Engineer, ESALQ/USP

1992: Arrived in the U.S.

1998: M.Sc. Urban Forestry, SFFGS, UF

1999: OPT at UF

2000: Worked in Brazil

2004: UF/IFAS Urban Trees & Hurricanes Research & Extension

2009: UF/IFAS PMCB Program

2018-21: UF/IFAS PMCB and Plant Breeding Programs

2021: UF/IFAS Plant Breeding Graduate Program



A little bit of what I do:

- Academic matters
 - Registration
 - Deadlines
 - Evaluations
 - Courses
 - Professional development
 - Policies and regulations
- Liaison between faculty and students
- Your advocate
 - Well-being
 - Advisor-advisee issues
- Financial issues
 - Tuition
 - Student fees
 - Petitions



How to contact me:

1505 Fifield Hall

elianak@ufl.edu

352-392-8285 office

352-514-5626 cellular

- ✓ Open door policy
- ✓ Call, text, Zoom, TEAMS, etc.
- ✓ Confidential



What I will talk about today:

- Graduate Assistantship appointment
- Health insurance
- Registration
- Tuition and Student Fees
- PBGP policies
 - Transfer credits
 - Course substitutions
- UF Resources
- Student Health and Wellbeing



Graduate Assistantship Research (GA-R) Appointment

- Letter of Appointment/Employment creates an employer-employee relationship between you & UF
- GAs have part-time duties, other than working on their own research, including but not limited to:
 - Working 20 hours/week in advisor's lab
 - Maintaining a GPA of at least 3.0
 - Meeting all expectations as noted in the Graduate Assistantship Letter of Appointment (employment)
 - Fulfilling other specific research duties assigned by your advisor

GA-R Appointments

Your appointment is renewed every year, ***depending on:***

- Maintenance of an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Maintenance of required registration:
9 credits fall, 9 credits spring, 6 credits summer
- Satisfactory research progress toward your degree, as determined by advisor and PBGP director
- Satisfactory performance of your GA-R duties & responsibilities
- Availability of funds
- Compliance with UF rules, regulations, policies and procedures

GA-R Appointments

- Appointment starts 8/16/2025 to 8/15/2026
 - Bi-weekly payments
 - 26.1 paydays during the year
 - [Paydays schedule](#)
- Benefits: [GA HR](#)
 - Health Insurance
 - ✓ All students are mandated by law to have health coverage during the entire year, including annual breaks.
 - ✓ GAs on a 0.25 FTE appointment or higher are eligible for GatorGradCare health insurance plan.
 - [Retirement](#)
 - Time Away – Article 8 of the GAU contract

GA-R Appointments

- GAs are represented by [Graduate Assistants United](#) which bargains collectively with the university on behalf of all graduate assistants on campus.
- Consult the most recent [GAU contract](#) (2021-2023):
 - Employee rights
 - Minimum salaries
 - Workload
 - Leaves of absence
 - Paid personal time is up to 5 days per semester
 - Health Insurance
 - Conflict of interest
 - Changes in appointment
 - Terminations

GA-R Enrollment Requirements

- Need to maintain full-time enrollment:
 - 9 credits in Fall, 9 credits in Spring, 6 credits in Summer
 - If over- or under-registered, the tuition won't be paid, and you will be out of compliance

International students:

- Full-time enrollment is required to maintain F-1 status
- I-20 Program Start & End Dates (page one) must be valid at all times
- To travel and re-enter the U.S.: must have a valid passport, F-1 visa, and a signed Continued Attendance I-20
 - Plan ahead: submit a request for an updated travel signature on I-20 from the UFIC advisor **at least** 2-4 weeks before travel
- Also need to follow the physical presence requirement:
 - Only **one online course** (up to 3 credits) can count toward full-time enrollment each term

Course Registration

[ONE.UF](#): registration, schedule of courses, transcripts, grades, holds, critical dates, deadlines, and more.

- **Registration holds need to be cleared EVERY semester.**
- Two ways of registering:
 - Self-register (*using the Class Number provided*)
 - Departmentally controlled
 - Contact Department offering it
 - Email instructor(s)
- How to find courses of interest:
 - ONE.UF
 - Department website (*look for Graduate Course syllabi*)
 - Attached list of core and elective courses compiled by Eliana
 - Your advisor and other students who have taken the course

REC students: you **must** register in the correct off-campus session!

Course Registration

- Fall 2025 Registration Deadlines
 - Advance Registration: until August 19
 - Regular Registration: August 20
 - Classes start: August 21
 - Drop/Add & Late Registration: Aug 21-22 and 25-27

[OUR](#) Office of the University Registrar

[Graduate School](#)

- Students are **responsible** for being **correctly** registered by the official deadline
- So, can you switch classes after Drop/Add deadline?
NO!!! You will have to pay tuition back to UF for all credits dropped and/or added)

By August 27 you must be correctly registered for all 9 credits.

GatorGradCare

- Enrollment, policies, coverage, benefits, effective dates, network providers, ID Cards, etc. at <https://benefits.hr.ufl.edu/health/gatorgradcare/>
- Cost of individual (employee only) coverage is \$12 monthly
 - [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#): UF, Board of Trustees, GAU
 - Premium collected through bi-weekly payroll deduction
- Enrollment is **not** automatic - newly hired graduate assistants have 60 days from their date of hire to enroll
- All (incoming and current) students need to [complete an insurance waiver](#) once a year to opt out of the United Healthcare policy.
- Waiver is different from GatorGradCare enrollment
- GatorGradCare assistance:
 - gabenefits@admin.ufl.edu
 - 352-392-0003

Transfer of Credits

Master's Degree Acknowledgment (MDA)

- Up to 30 credits of Master's coursework can be transferred from:
 - **non-UF institution** or
 - **another field of study within UF.**
- The advisor and supervisory committee will review transcript and decide
- It is either 30 or 0 credits.
- If transferring > 30 credits: Course-by-course request and petition (old way)
- Master's degrees outside of the US need a course credit evaluation from any member of the Nat'l Association of Credential Evaluation Services.
- Final credentials approved by UF Admissions

*Minimum of 90 credits beyond the bachelor's degree OR
Minimum of 60 credits beyond an accredited and conferred master's degree,
validated via the **MDA**.*

PBGP Core Courses Substitution Policy

- If similar level course(s) were taken before admission to PBGP, the student's advisor must submit a petition to exclude specific core courses.
- The petition needs to be approved by Dr. Esteban Rios and should include:
 - Brief rationale,
 - Course syllabus of the equivalent course,
 - Course grade, and
 - Any other relevant information.
- Send petitions to estebanrios@ufl.edu and elianak@ufl.edu

Tuition

- Tuition (*in-state* and *out-of-state*) *different from* Student Fees
- Since you work 20 hours/week (hired as GA-R), your tuition is waived
 - Tuition is paid by PI, scholarship, etc.
 - Your hiring unit enters your tuition waiver and until then the full amount will show on your UF account
- FL residents have tuition charged as in-state tuition: \$10,770
- Out-of-state student tuition has increased steadily
 - Fall 2021: \$14,336 (10% increase)
 - Fall 2022: \$15,769 (10% increase)
 - Fall 2023: \$17,346 (10% increase)
 - Fall 2024: \$18,213 (5% increase)
- Residency Reclassification for Tuition Purposes?
 - convincingly demonstrate permanent legal residence in FL for a reason other than attending an institution of higher learning

Student Fees

- Student fees are not included in the tuition waiver
- Your UF account shows the sum of tuition and student fees
- Student fees must be paid by students every semester *but* GAs have a deferred deadline
 - Fall'25 deadline for all UF students: ~ September 6
 - Fall'25 deadline for GAs: **Deferred to mid-November**
- Bursar Office
 - Critical Dates
 - OneStop: financial aid, scholarships, registration, fees/payments, transcripts
 - Calculate student fees
 - Student fees ~\$82/credit for Gainesville students
 - Student fees ~ 57/credit for off-campus students

Annual Graduate Student Evaluation

- Needs to be completed every year
- Due in August and refers to the previous academic year
 - Evaluation period: Aug. 16, 2025 to Aug. 15, 2026
 - Evaluation deadline: July 2026
- Divided between academic progress and GA-R responsibilities
- Requires completion by student and advisor

IDP - Individual Development Plan

- Mandated by the UF Graduate School for all Ph.D. students
- Road map for monitoring goals and progress
- Required meeting between student and mentor/advisor

PBGP Milestones Checklist

PLANT BREEDING GRADUATE PROGRAM (PBGP) CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS ADMITTED IN THE SPRING



FIRST YEAR		NOTES
FALL 202_	Take AGR 5266C, HOS 6932 (Prof. Devel. Plant Breeders), STA 6093, PCB 6555 & Journal Colloquium	
	Submit official credentials to UF Admissions Office ◦ <i>Final official transcripts & diplomas or certificates of conclusion</i>	
	Start MDA or Transfer of Credits ◦ <i>Must be finalized before the candidacy exams</i>	
	Start forming Supervisory Committee	
SPRING 202_	Take AGR 5321C, AGR 6325L, HOS 6932 (Survey Breed. Tools & Methods) & Journal Colloquium	
	Supervisory Committee members list is shared with Eliana and PBGP Director	
SUMMER 202_	Complete <i>Program of Study</i>	
	Complete <i>Research Prospectus</i> (or proposal)	
	Schedule meeting with Supervisory Committee to present the Research Prospectus & Program of Study and obtain signatures	
	Submit Annual Evaluation and IDP ◦ <i>Meet with chair and obtain signature</i>	
SECOND YEAR		
FALL 202_	Take elective courses	
SPRING 202_	Start preparing for the candidacy (qualifying) exams – Ask us questions!	
	Finalize MDA and/or Transfer of Credits	
SUMMER 202_	Written Candidacy Exams ◦ <i>Schedule 6 weeks in advance of oral exam</i>	
	Candidacy Public Seminar and Oral Exam ◦ <i>Submit full research proposal to committee 2 weeks in advance of exam</i> ◦ <i>Arrange room reservation for seminar and defense (3 hours normally)</i> ◦ <i>Request seminar announcement 2 weeks in advance: title, date, time, location (room), mode of delivery, zoom link, and portrait.</i>	
	Submit Annual Evaluation and IDP ◦ <i>Meet with chair and obtain signature</i>	
THIRD YEAR		
ALL SEMESTERS	Research	
	Prepare journal articles – Please consider submitting to Q1 journals to receive funding for Open Access from IFAS Dean for Research	
FOURTH YEAR		
FINAL SEMESTER	◦ Submit at least 1 manuscript as first author in a scientific peer-reviewed journal before final defense ◦ Follow Final Semester Dissertation Checklist on the next page	

PLANT BREEDING GRADUATE PROGRAM (PBGP) CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS ADMITTED IN THE FALL





FIRST YEAR		NOTES
SPRING 202_	Take AGR 5321C, AGR 6325L, HOS 6932 (Survey Breed. Tools & Methods) & Journal Colloquium	
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	Complete <i>Research Prospectus</i> (or proposal)	
	Schedule meeting with Supervisory Committee to present the Research Prospectus & Program of Study and obtain signatures	
SECOND YEAR in PBGP		
SPRING 202_	Take elective courses	
SUMMER 202_	Start preparing for the candidacy (qualifying) exams – Ask us questions!	
	Finalize MDA and/or Transfer of Credits	
	Submit Annual Evaluation and IDP ◦ <i>Meet with chair and obtain signature</i>	
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FOURTH YEAR		
FINAL SEMESTER	◦ Submit at least 1 manuscript as first author in a scientific peer-reviewed journal before final defense ◦ Follow Final Semester Dissertation Checklist on the next page	

Plant Breeding Website

<https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-breeding/students/>

- Portrait pictures
- Complete the Photo & Email Release form
- Handbook
- Annual Evaluation
- Orientation slides

Social Media

- UF-IFAS-Plant-Breeding 
- @UFPlantbreeding 
- Instagram

Plant Breeding Awards and Opportunities

- Encourage and support our students to apply for prestigious plant breeding awards.
- Represent UF/IFAS Plant Breeding by presenting posters and oral talks at prominent national or international conferences.
- List of *External Awards and Funding Opportunities for PBGP Students*
 - UF/IFAS PBWG Travel Awards
 - NAPB Carver
 - NAPB Borlaug
 - CSSA Gerald Mott Award
 - Professional Society awards (e.g. ASA, CSSA, SSSA, FNGLA, etc.)
 - FFAR Fellow Program
 - USDA SARE
 - NSF GRFP (Graduate Research Fellowship Program)

Important UF Resources

[ONE.UF](#)

- Access transcripts and final grades
- View financial aid awards and disbursements
- Register for classes
- View schedule of courses
- Check for current holds

[myUFL](#)

- Update your addresses and contact information
- Monitor/View payroll records

[GIMS](#) Graduate School's portal

- Manage degree segments of your graduate career
- Add members of your faculty supervisory committee
- Update completion of final exam/project
- Professional development events registration

Important UF Resources

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences - [CALS](#)

- [Professional Development](#): grantsmanship, courses, classes, workshops...
- [CALS Scholarships](#)

Graduate School - [GS](#)

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Student Life](#)
- [Professional Development](#)
- [Three-Minute Thesis Competition](#)

Graduate Student Council - [GSC](#)

- Travel grants available for participating departments/units
- Need to have an officer and sub that attend monthly meetings
- PBGP representative: Juan Jimenez

Important UF Resources

UF Plant Science Council ufplants.org

Career Connections Center [CCC](#)

- Career Planning
- Resource Library: resume, cover letters, job interview, etc.

Office of the Ombudsman ombuds.ufl.edu

FL Residency: admissions.ufl.edu/residency

Taxes:

- Citizens & Residents: irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf
- Nonresident Taxes: fa.ufl.edu/tax/nonresident-alien.asp

Parking & Transportation parking.ufl.edu

Health and Wellness

- Good mental health and personal well-being are essential to a prosperous, productive, and healthy life.
- Graduate school can be one of the most challenging (and rewarding!) periods of an academic career and life.
- We strive to improve the quality of our students' experience at UF and PBGP by:
 - Making information about the mental health resources available to graduate students easily accessible.
 - Breaking down the stigma associated with mental health issues.
 - Being open and supportive of your needs.
 - Encouraging self-care, building your community and network, talking about concerns, utilizing campus resources, and seeking care when needed.

Health and Wellness Resources at UF

Gatorwell

gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu - (352) 273-4450

Relevant concerns

- Sexual Health
- Sleep
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Interpersonal Violence
- Time Management
- Stress Management
- Mindfulness
- Studying & Test Taking Skills



Scan to visit
Gatorwell
referral form

- Subscribe to the UF Wellness list-serv
 - Email **listserv@lists.ufl.edu** with the following message:
Subscribe WELLNESS-L yourfirstname yourlastname
- Greater Good in Action
 - Science-based practices for a meaningful life, curated by the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley.
 - <https://ggia.berkeley.edu/>

Health and Wellness Resources at UF

Counseling & Wellness Center

counseling.ufl.edu - (352) 392-1575

Relevant concerns

- Counseling
- Mental Health Workshops
- Emotional Support
- Consultation
- Crisis Consultation

Scan to visit
counseling.ufl.edu



- Short-term counseling (one-on-one counseling)
- Most students will be seen for one to six sessions
 - Must attend a “triage” appointment before beginning individual therapy
- Ever-growing list of mental health resources, workshops, group sessions, podcasts, etc.

Health and Wellness Resources at UF

Student Health Care Center

shcc.ufl.edu - (352) 392-1161

Relevant concerns

- Primary Clinical Care
- Immunizations
- Prescriptions
- Physical Therapy
- Women's Health
- LBGTQ+ Health
- Sports Medicine



Scan to visit
shcc.ufl.edu

SHCC Psychiatry

shcc.ufl.edu/shcc-psychiatry

Relevant concerns

- Psychiatric Evaluations
- Clinical Psychiatric Care
- Medication Management

**To reach SHCC Psych please
contact the Counseling &
Wellness Center at 352-392-1575
as they are the point-of-entry
for psychiatric service.**

Health and Wellness Resources at UF

Dean of Students Office

www.dso.ufl.edu

U Matter, We Care

<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>

CARE Area

care.dso.ufl.edu - (352) 392-1261

Relevant concerns

- Case Management
- Medical Petitions
- Food Security



Scan to visit
CARE Area
referral form

UF U MATTER, WE CARE

DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

🏠 Cultural

❤️ Emotional

🌍 Environmental

💰 Financial

🧠 Intellectual

📅 Occupational

🍏 Physical

💬 Social

✨ Spiritual

BROWSE

All Concerns Alphabetically

All Offices Alphabetically

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance please reach out to the Campus Assistance and Resources for Empowerment (CARE).

REFER OR REPORT

SPEAK WITH CARE STAFF DURING
 BUSINESS HOURS: CALL (352) 294-2273



'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

Maya Angelou

Thanks for listening!

Questions?