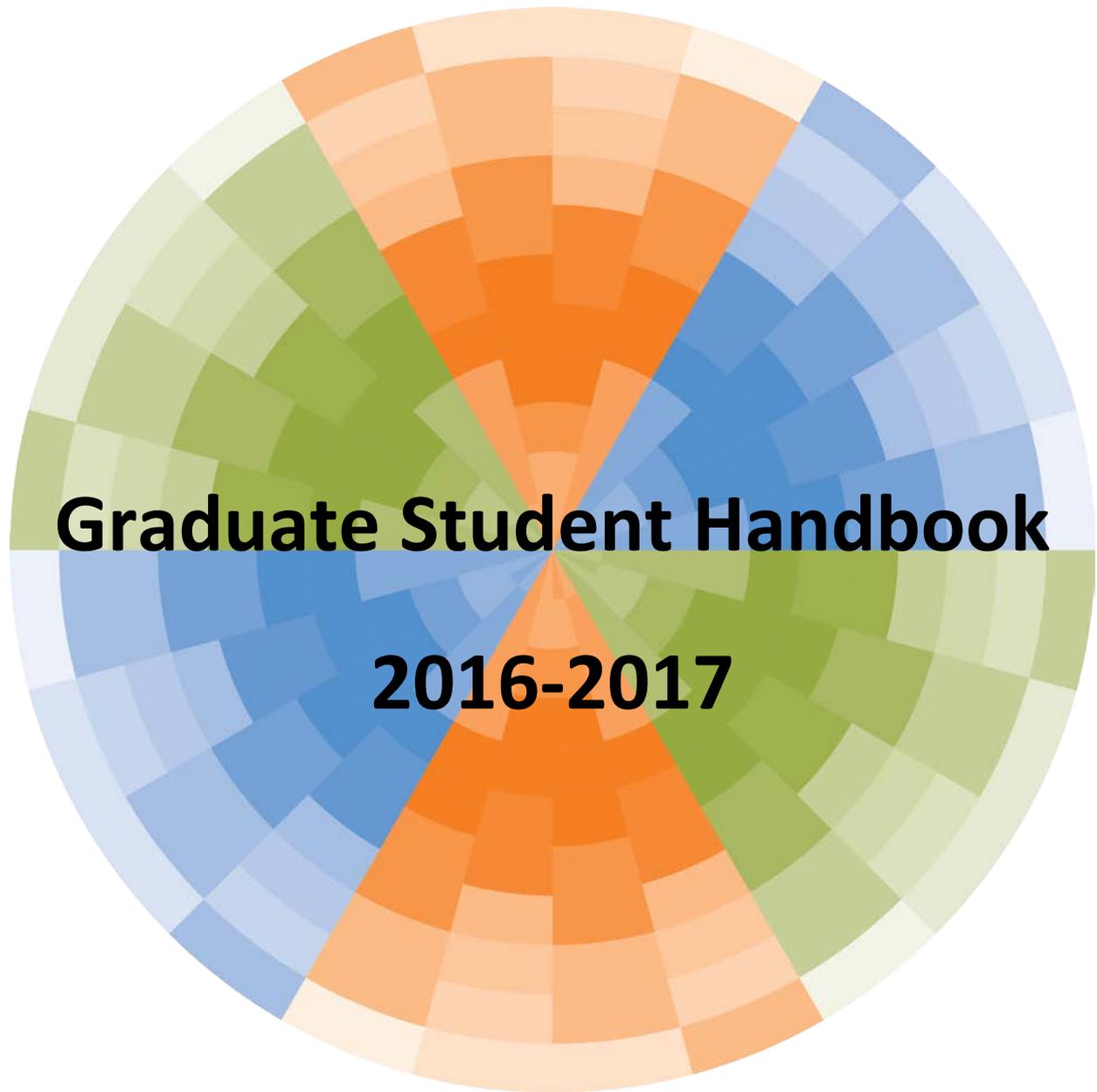# MechSE Graduate Programs Office

Graduate Student Handbook

2016-2017

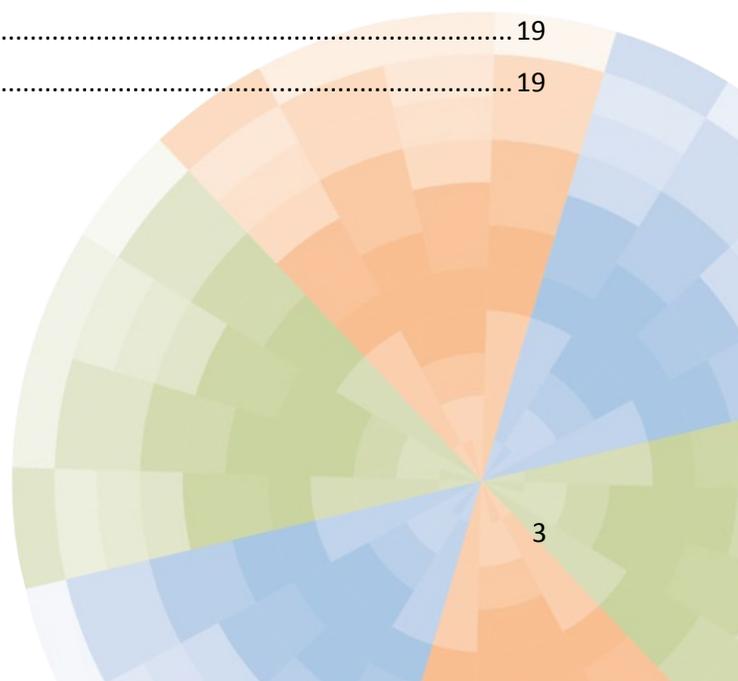**I** MECHANICAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

# Contents

MechSE Graduate Programs Office Administration

The MechSE Graduate Programs Office (GPO) is located in 164, 166, and 168 Mechanical Engineering Building. The Associate Head for Graduate Programs presides over the MechSE GPO. The MechSE Graduate Programs Committee (GPC) is an annually appointed committee of MechSE faculty that serves as governance with regard to graduate program policies and procedures. Day-to-day operations of the GPO are administered by Katrina Hagler, Kathryn Smith, and Stacy Walker.
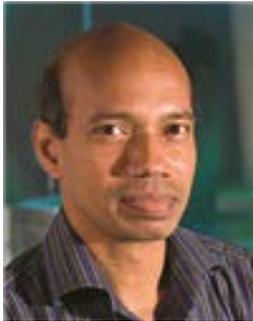
Dr. M. Taher Saif,
Associate Head   *Katrina Hagler*   *Kathryn Smith*   *Stacy Walker*

Students should contact the MechSE GPO for all academic matters, including but not limited to:

- Applying
- Admissions
- Finding a research advisor
- Teaching assistantships
- Fellowships
- Academic progress
- Registration
- Graduate Petitions
- Degree time extensions
- Degree audits
- Scheduling of PhD exams
- Thesis format checks
- I-20 issuance, extensions, or changes
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (for international students only)

MechSE GPO actively recruits prospective graduate students at national conferences and various academic institutions. Contact us to find out if we will be visiting an area near you!

Introduction, Admissions, and Orientation

Introduction
Graduate students at the University of Illinois are a member of a home Department (MechSE), College (Engineering), as well as the Graduate College at Illinois. In addition to degree requirements of the home department, graduate students are responsible for complying with the regulations of the College of Engineering and the Graduate College.

MechSE graduate students should receive guidance from their advisor, MechSE academic staff, the College of Engineering, and the Graduate College in order to reach their educational goals within a timely fashion. Students should refer to the College of Engineering Handbook as well as the Graduate College Handbook for additional policies. The purpose of the MechSE Graduate Student Handbook is to supplement these handbooks and indicate the MechSE policies, procedures, and additional requirements for MechSE graduate students.

We are excited that you are a student in MechSE, and we look forward to working with you to achieve your educational goals.

MechSE Admissions Policies

Applying
In order to be considered, students must apply to the department and the MechSE GPC must review the application. Applications must be submitted by the posted deadline of the MechSE department; late applications are not accepted. Application requirements are explained on the MechSE website. An application is complete when the department has received all parts of the application.

Application deadlines are posted on the MechSE website. The Hobsons Apply Yourself system closes at 11:00 p.m. CST on the day of the deadline. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply in advance of the deadline as GPC cannot make exceptions for any type of failure to submit by the deadline. GPC admission decisions are final, and GPC will not reconsider applications for a different program.

Once the application has been submitted, changes cannot be made to the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to upload correct and updated documents such as the personal statement and resume. Only official test scores and online letters of recommendation can be added to the application after submission.

Illinois Graduate Students Applying From Another Illinois Department
(aka transferring departments)
If the student has a research advisor who has agreed to provide a research assistantship to the student, the student may apply to transfer to MechSE via a Graduate College Petition. Submission of a petition is not an automatic acceptance into MechSE.

If the student does not have a research assistantship from a faculty member, he/she must apply as a new applicant to MechSE and follow all application instructions **including posted deadlines**. A student who fails to meet the application deadlines will have to wait until the next term to apply.

Deferring Admission

Admitted students can defer admission up to 1 calendar year from the initial proposed term of entry. MechSE Departmental funding or any College of Engineering fellowship offers cannot be deferred.

Orientation

MechSE hosts annual orientation sessions at the start of the fall semester. The MechSE Graduate Programs Office notifies students of these sessions. Depending on the number of students joining the department in the fall, there may be multiple sessions. There are separate orientations for MS/PhD and MEng students. The MS/PhD orientation is separated into two parts: administrative details (e.g., registering for classes, getting started on campus) and research.

Other units on campus also provide helpful orientation information through presentations and/or online resources. A few of these units are the College of Engineering Graduate and Professional Programs Office, the Graduate College, and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.

New Student Check-In Procedures

International Students

- Upon arrival, all international students should check in at the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) located in room 400 Student Services Building, 610 E. John St., Champaign. Additional information can be found at: http://isss.illinois.edu. FAQ for International Students can be found at http://isss.illinois.edu/students/student_faqs.html.
- If you have a departmental financial aid offer, apply for a social security number as quickly as you can. You will be given instructions for this when you check in with ISSS.

Research Assistants (RA), Teaching Assistants (TA), and Hourly Position Holders

- **Before you can begin working you must see the MechSE Payroll Office, room 142 Mechanical Engineering Building, to fill out the required I-9 Employment Eligibility Form.** International employees will need their passport, I-94 document, I-20 (for F1) or DS-2019 and Letter of Employment Authorization (for J1), and I-Card. All other employees should review the I-9 website: http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9.pdf, specifically page 9, for the list of acceptable documentation. Under federal law, you may not begin working until the I-9 form has been completed. This **must** be done on or before the start date of your appointment (August 16) if you wish to receive full pay. Failure to complete these steps may result in a reduction of salary and could possibly affect tuition waiver benefits you might receive from your appointment.
- Other required forms will be completed online in a program called NESSIE New Hire. Once your information has been entered into the payroll system you will receive an email with further instructions. Please make sure to submit all required forms as soon as possible so there is no delay in finalizing your appointment.
- TAs must adhere to MechSE policies outlined in TA policies section of the handbook.

Fellowship Award Holders

- You must sign your Notification of Appointment (NOA) form and return it to the Graduate College Fellowship Office in Coble Hall. If you have not received the NOA for your fellowship award, contact the MechSE GPO.

- Fellowship holders **must** contact the University Payroll Office, room 177 Henry Administration Building, to complete a Tax Status Review/ITIN appointment.
- Other required forms will be completed online in a program called NESSIE New Hire. Once your information has been entered into the payroll system you will receive an email with further instructions. Please make sure to submit all required forms as soon as possible so there is no delay in finalizing your appointment.
- If you are on a MechSE Departmental Fellowship, review the MechSE policies outlined in MechSE Departmental Fellowship Policies of the handbook.

Paydays for RAs, TAs, and Fellowship Recipients

If you are on an assistantship or fellowship, your payday is the 16th of each month. If the 16th falls on a weekend, you will receive payment the Friday before. If you are receiving a tuition waiver eligible assistantship or fellowship, you will receive a waiver of the University Service fee, Health Service fee, AFMFA fee, and Library Technology Fee. You will also be provided with vision insurance, dental insurance, and partial payment of the health insurance fee.

Other Procedures for All Graduate Students
- MS and PhD students without a permanent advisor should start contacting faculty to inquire about joining a research group. It is the student's responsibility to find a permanent advisor.
- Get your I-Card. Each student is issued a permanent photo identification card, which must be retained by the student while registered at the University. You can get this ID by going to the first floor of the Illini Union Bookstore, 809 S. Wright Street (corner of Wright and John Streets). More I-Card information can be found at: http://www.icard.uillinois.edu.
- Set up your email account. It is imperative that you check your email daily as it is the main form of communication for faculty, staff, and students. Students are responsible for all communications, policies, and deadlines that are sent to students via email. You can start this process through the Graduate College Quick Guide. It is not recommended that graduate students forward their emails to personal email address.
- Submit health forms (by mail or in person upon arrival) to the McKinley Health Center, 1109 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana.
- Register for classes through the Course Explorer. You will need your Net ID to register; follow the Graduate College Quick Guide for how to set up your Net ID and password. Students can register prior to arriving on campus. Additional information regarding registration can be found in Registration requirements of the handbook.
- Take note of academic deadlines for the semester. Students are responsible for all academic deadlines which are posted online at http://illinois.edu/calendar/list/557.
- Make sure to mail or hand deliver your final sealed credentials to the Graduate College upon arrival (outlined in your official admission letter from the Graduate College). They are located in room 204 Coble Hall, 801 S. Wright St., Champaign.
- A mailbox will be set up in the basement of MEB for you. You will receive information via email regarding this. Be sure to check your mailbox regularly for any important documents.

MechSE Graduate Degree Programs and Advising

MechSE Degree Programs

Degree requirements are posted both in the academic catalog and the departmental website. The graduate degrees offered include the following:

Master of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering (MEngME)[1]
Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering (MSME)[2]
Master of Science in Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (MSTAM)
Doctor of Philosophy in Mechanical Engineering (PHDME)
Doctor of Philosophy in Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (PHDTAM)

The PhD in Mechanical Engineering can be done in conjunction with the MS degree or alone (aka Direct PhD). Most students joining the department enter the PhD program in Stage 1, during which they complete their MS degree in Mechanical Engineering or Theoretical and Applied Mechanics. An outline of the steps toward completion of the PhD is explained on the MechSE website.

MechSE is also the home department for students enrolled in the Master of Engineering in Computational Engineering program. The MechSE Graduate Program Office and the Computational Science and Engineering Center jointly coordinates the program administration for this program. Please see The MEng in Computational Engineering website for degree requirements and additional information.

Advising

Graduate student/advisor relationship is considered a key element for students in the Department of Mechanical Science and Engineering. Academic advisors are chosen by a mutual agreement between the student and faculty member. Students can begin looking for an advisor as early as receiving an offer of admission from the department.

MechSE Graduate Advisors		
Program	**Advisor**	**Assignment Process**
MEngME – on campus or online	Associate Head (AH)	Default
MSME – online	If non-thesis – AH If thesis – Faculty Member	If non-thesis – Default If thesis – student sought
MSME – on campus	Faculty Member	Student sought
MSTAM	Faculty Member	Student sought
PHDME	Faculty Member	Student sought
PHD TAM	Faculty Member	Student sought
MEng Computational Engineering	Faculty Member	Assigned by Computational Science and Engineering (CSE)

MS and PhD students usually secure a research advisor during the first semester on campus; they must secure a thesis advisor by the end of the first academic year. Choosing a thesis advisor is one of the most critical decisions in a graduate program. The advisor-student relationship is fundamental to the success

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[1] Offered on campus and online.
[2] Offered on campus and online.

of both the student and advisor. The thesis advisor has great influence not only on the research direction, but also on promoting the career of the student. Most of the time, the student-thesis advisor relationship is one that will last a lifetime. It is important to find a thesis advisor that matches your research interests, work style, career goals, and even personality. Some students may find a thesis advisor within the first few weeks while other students may carefully explore and evaluate many options over the first year. Both scenarios are considered normal.

Temporary Advisors

If, at the start of the first semester, a student in the MS or PhD programs has not found a permanent advisor, the department will assign a temporary advisor for temporary assistance. A student may seek assistance from a temporary advisor for a maximum of 1 academic year.

Failure to Find an Advisor

If, at the end of the first academic year, a student does not have a permanent thesis advisor, he/she will be required to meet with the Associate Head for Graduate Programs for a progress review. Unsatisfactory progress toward finding an advisor may result in a mandatory transfer to a non-thesis program or dismissal from the program.

Advisors from outside of MechSE

MechSE graduate students can seek advisement from faculty in other departments. If a student reaches this mutual agreement with a faculty member in another department who is not a MechSE affiliate faculty member, a co-advisor is required. Note that MechSE Teaching Assistantship (TA) positions and MechSE Departmental Fellowships are reserved for MechSE students working with faculty whose primary appointments lie in the MechSE department.

Notifying MechSE of Advisor Status

When a mutual agreement has been made, students should notify the GPO by submitting an advising agreement in the My.MechSE system. To submit this, complete the following steps:
1. Log into My.MechSE
2. Select "Thesis Advising Agreement" under the "Academic Apps" menu.
3. Complete the form and submit

The advisor will be notified via email. The advising status is updated when the advisor has completed his/her portion.   It is critical that students file the advising agreement as many functions (e.g., annual reviews and teaching assistantships) are connected to the student-advisor relationship as noted in the database. Failure to do so may affect a student's annual review and/or eligibility for teaching assistantships.

Annual Review Process

Academic reviews are completed annually at the end of the spring semester through an online 3-step process.
1. Student self-evaluation.
2. Faculty advisor reviews student portion and submits a separate evaluation.
3. Students receive review result within a week of the closing of the review process.

When the portal is open, the GPO will notify the students and include the deadline for students to submit their portion. Failure to submit the student self-evaluation by the announced deadline forfeits a student's right to appeal the evaluation of the faculty member.

Students who wish to appeal an annual evaluation can submit the appeal in writing to the GPO. This appeal will be reviewed by the Associate Head for Graduate Programs and, if necessary, the GPC. The Associate Head and/or GPC will determine if further information is needed from the advisor. Once a decision has been reached, the Graduate Programs Office will send the student and advisor a written response to the appeal.

Graduate Student Funding

MS and PhD students may be funded via fellowships, RAs, TAs, or through a combination of these sources. Additional information can be found in the College of Engineering Graduate Student Handbook as well as in the Graduate College Handbook. Students enrolled in the Master of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering and Master of Engineering in Computational Engineering programs are not eligible for fellowships or assistantships as these programs are designated self-supporting programs.

Graduate students who are awarded a research or teaching assistantship must complete the required paperwork each semester to finalize their appointment prior to the appointment start date – August 16th for fall term and January 1st for spring term. To complete the appointment process, contact the MechSE Business Office at 142 MEB. Students who fail to complete this process by these dates each semester will delay their appointment start date as well as their paycheck.

The acceptance of an appointment requires students to be present and available to their supervisor during the appointment dates – August 16th to December 31st for fall term and January 1st to May 15th for spring term. If students must be away from their responsibilities, they must receive prior approval from their supervisor and the Academic Office. Failure to be present may result in the termination or non-reappointment of an assistantship. For any vacations, schedule them when the university is closed for a holiday or after the appointment dates. For more information regarding the Graduate College and University guidelines on graduate assistantships, visit the Graduate College Handbook and Academic Human Resources.

For International Students Only: Social Security numbers are only issued to students that are "employed" on the campus. This would include students that hold an assistantship or hourly appointment. Prior to securing a social security number *(SSN),* the university issues a Temporary Control Number *(TCN),* which will be needed to process the assistantship or graduate hourly appointment. Students on a fellowship will just need the TCN number to process their paperwork. The TCN number is available at the ID Production Office at the Illini Union Bookstore. If this number was not issued when receiving the *i*Card, please return to that office and request it.

MechSE Departmental Fellowship Policy
A student's fellowship offer letter explains the terms of an award. MechSE Departmental Fellowships cannot be deferred. To retain a MechSE fellowship, students must be making satisfactory academic progress under the supervision of a MechSE faculty advisor. A student who joins a faculty group outside of MechSE forfeits the MechSE Departmental Fellowship.[3]

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[3] A faculty member whose primary appointment is not in the MechSE Department is considered outside of MechSE.

An example of a MechSE department fellowship is explained below. Dollar amounts are removed from this example as they can vary as per the offer letter.

- 1st and/or 2nd semester: Fellowship funding, dispersed to student in monthly increments during the academic term specified.
- Subsequent semester(s) or year(s): RA (from a faculty member) or TA (from MechSE)

<u>**Critical Requirement**</u> for Subsequent Semester(s) or Year(s):

- Students who have a MechSE fellowship with a TA commitment **must** submit a teaching assistantship application if a TA slot is needed to fulfill a fellowship agreement. The application **must** be submitted by the announced deadline for **each** semester a TA slot is requested.
- More information about the TA application process can be found in the next section.
- Failure to comply with this policy will negate the fellowship agreement.

Teaching assistantship (TA) policies

The MechSE GPO accepts TA applications each semester, in October (for spring semester positions) and April (for fall semester positions). Students are emailed when the application system is available. Applications are not accepted after the deadline.

TA positions in MechSE are assigned on the following priority basis.[4]

1. To fulfill any funding obligations as per a student's admission letter.[5]
2. TAM PhD students who need to complete their teaching requirement
3. Remaining PhD students
4. Remaining MS students

Prior performance as a TA and ICES scores are considered. All applicants must also meet English requirements, explained in the requirements for non-native English-speaking TAs section.

TA Orientation Program

All new teaching assistants are required to attend the Graduate Academy for College Teaching pre-semester orientation program(s) given each semester. A copy of the agenda, including dates and times, and a brief description of the activities are provided to all teaching assistants when TA assignments are made. <u>Attendance at this orientation is required as a condition of the assistantship appointment.</u>

MechSE Departmental TA Training

Starting in Fall 2016, MechSE TAs will need to complete the TA training course. The Graduate Programs Office will send out this information via email when the details are available.

Requirements for Non-Native English-Speaking TAs

All non-native English speaking graduate students, regardless of US Citizenship, who wish to be employed as TAs at Illinois must first satisfy the English requirement for TAs set by the State of Illinois. This requirement is a minimum of 24 on the speaking portion of the TOEFL or a minimum of 8 on the speaking portion of the IELTS. Students can also fulfill this requirement with a passing score on the English Proficiency Interview (EPI), which is the on-campus assessment through the Center for Innovation in

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[4] A limited amount of flexibility is built into this process to allow for course instruction consistency and/or special requirements of a particular course.

[5] MechSE Departmental Fellowship Policies apply.

Teaching and Learning (CITL). Students can sign up for the EPI once they are enrolled as a graduate student and located on campus. Sign up information is emailed to students when exam dates have been posted by CITL. **No exceptions are made to the English requirements; this policy is required by the State of Illinois.** Please be aware that a passing score on an English exam is not an automatic award of a TA.

Degree Requirements, Registration, and Completing Your Degree

Degree requirements

Please see the MechSE website for the degree requirements in your program. Students who wish to check on degree requirements that have been completed thus far can request a degree audit appointment by contacting the MechSE Graduate Programs Supervisor in 166 MEB. Please allow for a minimum of 1 business day for an appointment to be scheduled.

Registration requirements

Students register for courses online and should do so prior to the first day of classes for the semester. The Office of the Registrar posts online the academic calendar and deadlines. Students are responsible for these academic deadlines. Students can register for courses through the Illinois Course Explorer.

All MechSE graduate students **MUST** be **REGISTERED** for fall and spring term **BY the 10th day of classes**. Failure to do so may result in late fees, loss of valid visa status for international students, loss of assistantship, and unapproved leave of absence. All MechSE students, except those on an approved leave of absence, must register for fall and spring term until they graduate. Students on an approved internship must register for 0 thesis hours.

All international students **must be** registered as a full-time student no later than 10 calendar days into the semester. At noon on the 11th day, ISSS is obligated by law to terminate the F-1 or J-1 immigration status for all students not registered. Students on an assistantship that provides a tuition waiver need to be registered by the 10th day of the term or they may lose their assistantship.

Late Registration

Late registration begins at 5pm of the first day of classes. Students who are not registered at that time have approximately 2 weeks to complete registration. After the late registration period, students lose the ability to register themselves and must use the **Late Registration form**. The student's advisor and the Academic Office must approve this form prior to final approval by the Graduate College. There is a penalty of $15.00 *(subject to change)* for late registration, which will be added to the student's bill.

Registration Credit Hour Requirements

Students are required to enroll in a minimum of 14 hours if they have an RA or TA appointment of 25% or greater. Students are required to enroll in a minimum of 16 hours if they are on a full fellowship or have an RA or TA appointment less than 25% (or have no RA or TA appointment). A typical semester registration of 14-16 hours for new MS/PHD student in MechSE consists of:
- 2 or 3 graduate level letter grade courses (8-12 credit hours)
- Seminar course ME 590 or TAM 500 (1 credit hour)
- Thesis Research (3-5 credit hours)[6]

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[6] Students should contact the Graduate Programs Supervisor for the correct course registration number (CRN) for thesis research.

Summer Registration

MechSE requires summer registration (minimum 4 hours of thesis credit) for MS and PhD students who:

- Work in a faculty lab during the summer.
- Are on a fellowship that is paid during the summer.
- Are international and summer is the last semester of their program.

Part-time registration is only granted for students in the following programs:

- Master of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering (on campus and online)
- Master of Engineering in Computational Engineering
- Online Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering

In rare circumstances, students who have completed all other degree requirements and are working on completion of a thesis/dissertation may be allowed to enroll part-time.

Adding/Dropping Courses

After the 10th day of classes, registration changes must be made by submitting a late program change form and requires approval from the instructor, advisor, and MechSE GPO prior to submitting the form to the Graduate College.

Seminar Requirement

Continuous enrollment in ME 590 (for ME students) or TAM 500 (for TAM students) is required for MS and PhD students. Students in the online MSME program are not required to register for ME 590. Students must attend a minimum of 4 approved seminars each semester.

Students must be enrolled in the MechSE seminar for **every** semester until all required coursework is completed, including sufficient hours of thesis research. For PhD students, the preliminary examination must also be completed. An exception can be made if the student is off campus for a semester.

Seminar Requirement Conflict

Students enrolled in a course that conflicts with ME 590 or TAM 500 still need to register for ME 590/TAM 500 and are required to attend alternate seminars. See below.

To complete seminar registration with a conflict:

1. Request a registration override by contacting the Undergraduate Programs Office at mechse-ug-advise@illinois.edu. Include your name, UIN, and the course you are enrolled in that is in conflict with the seminar.
2. You will receive an email when the override is entered.
3. You **must** register for ME 590/TAM 500 after the override is entered.

To receive credit for alternate seminars:

1. Alternate seminars include ME 591 MIG, ME 591 BIG, TAM 539, and other seminars in Engineering, Math, or Physics
2. Download the Attendance Verification Form and have it signed by the seminar host (not the speaker), and return it to the GPO no later than 5 business days after the date of the seminar.

Registration in MSE 492 (Lab Safety)

All MS and PhD students are required to enroll in MSE 492 Lab Safety no later than the second semester in the program. This is an 8-week course and will provide 1 credit hour for the semester you are enrolled, but does not count towards the hours needed for the degree.

Transfer credit policies

MechSE will allow master students (Stage 1) to transfer graduate level coursework as long as the transferred coursework is not used to fulfill the prerequisite for a qualifying exam.[7] Stage 1 students can transfer a total of 8 credits from an outside institution. If the student is transferring coursework from the University of Illinois at Chicago or the University of Illinois at Springfield, the maximum increases to 12 credit hours. Additional requirements apply.

- Student must have completed at least 8 hours of graduate credit at Illinois.
- Course must be taken within the past 5 years at an accredited institution.
- Course must be a graduate level course at that institution.
- Course cannot apply to another degree, and the petition must include verification from the other institution that the course(s) was (were) not used toward a degree.
- The student must have received a grade of B or higher.
- The petition must include an original, official transcript unless it is already on file.
- A copy of the course syllabus for each course being petitioned must be provided.
- The transfer petition must receive both departmental and Graduate College approval.
- Assignments, quizzes, and/or tests from the course may be requested.

In documenting the course requested, please be sure to list comparable courses at Illinois.

How to switch to non-thesis MSME

All MS students are admitted as thesis track students. If a ME student wishes to change to non-thesis, they need to consult the Graduate Programs Office Supervisor. A departmental "request to switch to non-thesis" form must be completed. All non-thesis students must complete 4 hours of ME 597 Independent Study. Before the request to switch to non-thesis can be submitted, the student must have secured the faculty advisor for the independent study.

Thesis preparation and submission

Students are required to submit an electronic copy of the thesis/dissertation to the MechSE Graduate Program Supervisor prior to the Graduate College deposit deadline. Graduate College deadlines can be found online. An email form the MechSE GPO is sent out every semester concerning the specific MechSE dates and deadlines for degree certification and thesis submission.

Doctoral Examinations

MechSE explains the qualifying, preliminary, and final exam processes on the MechSE website for both the Mechanical Engineering Doctoral Examination and the Theoretical and Applied Mechanics Doctoral Examination. The table below explains key milestones that students complete as they work toward the degree.

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[7] Master students are referred to as Stage 1 doctoral track students. A student who has earned a master degree is considered a Stage 2 doctoral student and is not eligible to transfer credit.

PHD Milestone Expectations and Time Limits

The time by which a graduate student is expected to complete all degree requirements varies depending on certain conditions. Please see this section of the Graduate College Handbook for additional information. The table below gives an expected timeline for students in MechSE.

Milestone	Expected Completion
Determine research interest and secure a thesis advisor	Typically secured during 1st semester, no later than the end of the 1st academic year.
MS Completion	Within 2 years of initial enrollment
Qualifying Exam	Varies, see MechSE website for additional details
Preliminary Exam (Thesis Proposal)	Within 3 years of PhD program
Final Exam (Thesis Defense)	Within 4-5 years of PhD program

Other MechSE Policies

Petitions (Graduate Student Requests)

The Graduate Student Petition is the vehicle by which any changes to a student record or program change is made. Examples of requests that would require a petition include curriculum changes, adding/dropping a minor or concentration, transferring credit, etc.

Transferring Academic Programs

The following are MechSE policies on transferring academic programs.

Transferring from another department to MechSE

If a graduate student is wishing to transfer to MechSE from another department, he/she may do so via a Graduate College Petition **if** a faculty member has agreed to provide a research assistantship to the student. If the student does not have a research assistantship from a faculty member, he/she must apply as a new applicant to MechSE and follow all application instructions including posted deadlines. A student who fails to meet the application deadlines will have to wait until the next term to apply.

Transferring programs within MechSE

Admission/enrollment in Master of Engineering programs is not transferrable to MechSE MS programs. Other program transfers within the MechSE department are possible, please contact the GPO in 166 MEB with any questions.

Transferring from MechSE to another department

Students can request to transfer to another department's program via a Graduate College Petition. Students are encouraged to talk to both his/her advisor and the proposed department prior to submitting the request to transfer. The proposed department may have additional procedures and requirements that need to be completed.

Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)

Credit-no credit is a permanent notation on the academic record that may be requested by a student with the advisor's approval. **Courses taken as CR/NC are not eligible to count towards the formal graded hours needed for the ME or TAM degrees. No more than one course per semester may be taken as CR/NC. Once a course is taken as CR/NC, it cannot be retaken at a later date for a grade.** Therefore, any course that could potentially be desired for a grade should not be taken as CR/NC. Students are advised not to select CR/NC for courses significant to their research/focus of study. Additional details can be found in the Graduate College Handbook. The timeline for changing a course to credit/no credit is set by the Graduate College and is listed on the Graduate College Calendar.

Auditing

An auditor is only a listener in the classes attended; he or she is not a participant in any part of the exercises. An audited course will appear on the student's transcript with a grade of AU and does not count toward the GPA or degree requirements. **Once a course is taken as an audit, it cannot be retaken at a later date for a grade**. Therefore, any course that could potentially be desired for a grade should not be taken as an audit. Students are advised not to audit courses significant to their research/focus of study. The deadline for submitting the Auditor's Permit to the Graduate College is the 10th day of instruction in the fall and spring terms. See the Graduate College Academic Calendar for summer deadlines. Students who are registered for less than 12 hours, not including the audited course, who do not have a tuition waiver will be charged a $15 audit fee.

***In absentia* registration**

In absentia is a registration type designed for students who wish or need to remain registered but plan to be studying or doing research for at least one semester at least 50 miles away from campus. Students may register *in absentia* for any number of credit hours. There is no decrease in tuition rates when a student is registered *in absentia*, and tuition assessment will be based on the student's college and curriculum of enrollment, their residency status, and the number of hours for which the student is registered.

In absentia registration recognizes that such students do not access the full range of campus services and resources while away. Therefore students registered *in absentia* are only assessed the general fee. Payment of the general fee provides students with access to their university e-mail and access to library services. Because students are not assessed other fees they are not eligible for services associated with those fees. For example, if students registered *in absentia* wish to have health insurance they must make alternative arrangements. For a list of what services each fee includes and for the amount of each fee, refer to the Office of the Registrar.

A student must submit a form to GSAS to request *in absentia* registration. An approved request allows a student to register *in absentia*, but the student must complete the registration using the UI-Integrate system.

In absentia registration is most typically used when a student has completed all requirements except for completion of the Final Exam and thesis deposit.

Withdrawing

Students should make sure they understand the consequences of withdrawing from the university prior to completing this process. The MechSE GPO, in cooperation with the student's advisor, must approve

withdrawal from the university. The Banner application system will not allow students to drop all courses, as this constitutes a withdrawal. Students must complete the withdrawal form. International students must have approval from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) to withdraw.

Academic Leave and Re-entry process
Students who wish to take a leave of absence from the program must submit a Request for Academic Leave of Absence Form. Additional information about taking an Academic Leave of Absence can be found here. A student who takes a leave of absence without MechSE approval will be required to reapply if he/she requests to return.

Exit Interview and Graduation
Exit Interview Process
PHD students should complete an Exit Interview with the MechSE Department Head once the final exam is completed. To schedule, please see contact the staff in room 144 MEB.

Graduation Process & Convocation
Students who are ready to confer the degree must place his/her name on the degree conferral list using the UI Integrate Self-Service before the deadline for that term. This alerts the MechSE GPO and the Graduate College that he/she plans to graduate within that semester. Students who do not complete this step will have to wait until the next semester to graduate.

All graduate students are invited to participate in the College of Engineering and the University convocations upon degree completion. It is important that students sign up before the deadlines. To learn more, please see the websites below.

College of Engineering Commencement Information

Campus-wide Commencement Information

Graduate Student Resources
College of Engineering Career Services
The College of Engineering Career Services (ECS) offers services to help prepare graduate students for the job market. They offer assistance with identifying internships, resume writing, mock interviews, employment searches and much more. To learn about all the services available, either visit this website or visit the ECS office at Suite 3270 in the Digital Computer Laboratory (DCL). In addition, the University Career Center also holds various events and workshops.

Graduate College Career Development Services
Another career development resource for graduate students is the Graduate College Career Development Services Office, which fosters personal growth and professional development for graduate students. This office assists students with exploring careers, applying for jobs, faculty hiring, interviewing, negotiating offers, and much more. To learn more about the services and the seminars that are held throughout the year, visit this site.

The Fellowship Office at the Graduate College

The Graduate College's Fellowship office establishes and implements policies governing the numerous fellowships and traineeships that students hold. In addition, the Office of External Fellowships provides services to help students locate external funding opportunities, learn the art of proposal writing, and submit competitive applications. Please see this website for more information.

Code of Conduct Policy

MechSE and the College of Engineering requires all students to act in a professional manner, which includes all written and verbal communications, with any faculty, staff, student, or any outside vendors or research partners. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preferences are permitted. In addition, students are held accountable to the University of Illinois' Code of Student Conduct. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the university. Students who are accused of a violation have 8 days to appeal MechSE's Grievance Committee. Failure to appeal within this time frame or if appeal is denied, charges will stand and disciplinary action will be enforced.

Technology Services

Mechanical Engineering Laboratory (MEL) 1005 is the Engineering IT Helpdesk, open 9-12 and 1-5 M-F for walk-in questions and assistance requests. You can also email engrit-help@illinois.edu. Computers must be brought to the desk for support.

Engineering IT **highly** discourages the use of personally-owned computers for performing university research and/or storing University data. You should talk with your advisor about computer access within your research group.

Wired network connections for personal computers are only provided where wireless is not available, and on a network that matches UIUCNet wireless. Network access can be requested by emailing engrit-help@illinois.edu. You MUST include the room, the otherwise unused network jack number, and your advisor's name. Approval of such a request is not guaranteed.

Additional IT information is provided to students as part of the new student orientation.

Printers

Graduate students can print within their department or research group. In addition to using departmental printers, graduate students are able to use the EDW lab printers at no charge, as this is a part of the student fees paid each semester. If engineering graduate students print at the Grainger Library using either the 4th floor's central computers or the lower level east side computers, they can print up to 300 pages with no charge. After this, there is a charge for each additional page. Students sign in with their NetID and password when using the library computers. The library automatically will charge a student's account for any pages after 300. It is important for students not to share their NetID and password with other students or their account can be charged.

Student Ethics

MechSE and the College of Engineering is strict about enforcing student ethics and will not tolerate cheating within a course or plagiarism on course related papers, published papers, or within their thesis. The college uses section 1-402 of the Student Code to define cheating/plagiarism. It is the student's

responsibility to read through this section carefully. Students who are accused of such a violation may face some or all of the consequences below:

1. Receive a grade of zero on the assignment or exam.
2. Receive a failing grade for the course.
3. Dismissal from their program.

All cases are documented within the student's departmental file as well as documented at the College of Engineering and the Graduate College. A student who is accused of such a violation has 8 days to respond to the professor in writing (usually via email). In the meantime, the professor will alert their department of the accused violation. If the violation still holds after discussing the accusation with the professor, the student has the right to appeal to the College of Engineering within 15 days of notification. To learn about and how to file an appeal, students should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Coordinator in their home department. If the student does not appeal, the matter shall be closed and one or all of the above consequences will be applied. Students who receive penalties 2 or 3 above will not be allowed to drop the course. Students with repeated violations may result in automatically dismissed from the program, depending on the department's policy.

Grievance and Policy Procedural Appeals
The faculty, staff, and students within the College of Engineering departments are a diverse group and from time to time conflicts or problems can arise. Most of these conflicts or problems that arise can be resolved informally between the two parties. However, there may be times that these conflicts cannot be resolved. In these cases, students can either elect to file a formal grievance with the department's Director of Graduate Studies or file one directly with the Graduate College. Consult the Graduate College's process for more information.

Disability Services
Students who have a medically documented disability may obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids through the Disability Resource and Educational Services (DRES). Students are responsible to contact their course instructors and provide them with their letter from DRES to receive academic adjustments. To contact DRES, visit their website, visit their office on 1207 S. Oak Street in Champaign, call them at 333-4603, or email them at disability@illinois.edu.

Counseling Services
All students at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign have access to the Counseling Center to assist them to reach a balanced Illinois experience. Their services range from various counseling services, educational programming initiatives, training programs, outreach and consultation activities, and self-help materials. The staff members have extensive training and experience with assisting graduate students. In addition, visits with a counselor are confidential and are not shared with student's home department or faculty advisor. To learn more about the services they offer, visit their website or call them at (217) 333-3704.