BU BME Department

Graduate Handbook for Masters Students

Fall 2022

College of Engineering Graduate Policy

Academic Standards

The academic progress of every graduate student is reviewed at the end of each semester. Failure to make satisfactory progress and remain in **Good Standing** can result in **Academic Probation**, **Suspension** for a stated time or until stated conditions are met, or **Dismissal**, as detailed below.

Grades of C– or lower are not acceptable for Masters students.

Good Standing

Students maintain good academic standing when they: (1) earn a semester GPA of at least 3.0 (students enrolled only in Pass/Fail courses are exempt from the semester GPA standard); and (2) maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

Academic Probation

A student is put on **Academic Probation** when student earns a semester or cumulative GPA below 3.0. Students on Academic Probation may have their financial aid discontinued. In the event that the semester or cumulative GPA is below a 2.0, a student may be dismissed from the program.

Students are reviewed after one semester on Academic Probation. Those who earn a semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above will return to **Good Standing**. Those students who do not achieve Good Standing (as defined above) after the probationary semester will be subject to **Academic Suspension**, **Dismissal**, or an additional semester of Academic Probation as determined by the College on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Suspension

A student on Academic Probation faces Academic Suspension or Dismissal when s/he has not achieved **Good Standing** (as defined above) after the most recent semester of Academic Probation. Specifics regarding **Dismissal** or the duration and terms of the **Academic Suspension** will be determined by the College on a case-by-case basis. Dismissal results in permanent separation from the University. Appeals of Dismissal or Suspension are directed to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.

Reinstatement after Academic Suspension

Students who have fulfilled their period of **Academic Suspension** must meet with their academic advisor and must also reestablish their standing in the College by contacting the College of Engineering Graduate Programs Office (enggrad@bu.edu or 617-353-9760).

College of Engineering GPA Requirement for Awarding Graduate Degrees

Masters students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.0 in the set of courses used to satisfy the program requirements for the degree.

Technical Elective Exceptions

Note: The following courses, although offered by the College of Engineering, do **not** meet the requirement of a technical elective: BE 795, BF 510, ME 502, ME 517, ME 518, ME 525, ME 550, ME 583, ME 584, ME 703 and EK 731. SI 839, SI 852, SI 855, SI 871 and PH 825 also do not qualify as a technical elective. Technical electives do not need to be taken within the College of Engineering; appropriately quantitative and rigorous courses offered through other BU Colleges may be approved using the BME Petition Form.

Auditing Courses

An auditor is a student who attends a class to acquire knowledge but not to earn credits or a grade. Audited courses do not count toward completing degree requirements. An auditor may not change his or her status after the fifth week of classes for standard courses. Auditors must attend classes regularly, complete assigned reading and participate in discussions but they are excused from examinations.

Auditors are admitted to a course on a space-available basis and with the approval of the instructor. Auditors are subject to the full tuition and fees of the course. Students may not audit ENG 900-level, language, physical education, studio or laboratory courses.

University Policies and Resources

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination

Complaint Procedures in Cases of Alleged Unlawful Discrimination or Harassment
Disability Accommodation
Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy
Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Policy
Student Grievance Procedure in Cases of Alleged Disability Discrimination

If you have questions about the policies above, please contact:

Stacey Herman, Director of Graduate Programs Office at smherman@bu.edu or 617-353-9763.

Mental Health Resources

Graduate students have access to mental health resources through the Student Health Services Behavioral Medicine Office. These services are open to all full-time students. To contact the office, call 617-353-3569. They offer help for issues related to stress, anxiety, depression, sleep concerns, attentional issues, and many other topics. They can also refer you to appropriate specialized providers, if necessary. In addition to individual assistance, they offer programming specific to graduate students, such as a weekly graduate student discussion groups.

Clinicians are available 24/7, for daytime emergency triage and phone consultations, as well as mental health emergencies that occur after the clinic is closed. Call 617-353-3569 anytime, 24/7.

Master of Science and Master of Engineering Degrees "with Engineering Practice"

The College of Engineering offers an Engineering Practice degree option to students in all of its Masters programs. Engineering Practice is a valuable opportunity for a student at the Masters level to complete an approved internship integral to their program of study, thereby allowing them to develop additional technical and professional skills. Students interested in the Engineering Practice degree option must apply and meet the requirements outlined below. Students successfully completing the Engineering Practice degree option of their program will earn the accompanying degree designation (e.g., Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering with Engineering Practice).

Internships used to complete the degree requirements must be relevant to the student's program of study and must go through a program-level approval process. Satisfactory completion of the requirement is determined by the program and then formally recorded by the Graduate Programs Office (enggrad@bu.edu; 617-353-9760).

Requirements and Grading

- An internship site and project must be approved by the student's Academic Advisor.
- A mid-point review between the student and the Internship Supervisor must be conducted and submitted.
- Before the end of the semester in which the internship takes place, a final report must be submitted and reviewed by the Academic Advisor.
- Students receive a grade of Pass or Fail. The final grade is based on satisfactory completion of all requirements and is determined by the Academic Advisor in consultation with the Internship Supervisor.

For International Students

- International students must have completed two semesters in full-time status to be eligible to begin an internship in the United States, and they must complete additional paperwork with the BU International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) after registration.
- International Students with an off-campus internship must complete the **Curricular Practical Training (CPT) form**, and bring the approved **Engineering Practice Approval form** and the CPT form to the ISSO for review and approval for off-campus Curricular Practical Training.

Summary of Course Requirements for BME Masters Students

Note for all BME Masters Programs: The courses listed under the Technology Leadership electives section below do not meet the requirement of a technical elective.

MEng Students

BE 694 *Biomedical and Clinical Needs Finding*
BE 695 *Advanced Biomedical Design and Development*
Three Graduate-Level Biomedical Engineering Electives (BE 695 satisfies one, these courses must be taken within BME department)
Two Graduate-Level Technical Electives (may include additional BE coursework)
Math Requirement selected from approved list (located in the handbook and online)
Two Technology Leadership Electives from the list below (BE 695 satisfies one)

ENG ME 502 Invention: Technology Creation, Protection, and Commercialization
ENG ME 510 Production Systems Analysis
ENG ME 517 Product Development
ENG ME 525 Technology Ventures
ENG ME 537 Product Realization
ENG ME 550 Product Supply Chain Design
ENG ME 583 Product Management
ENG ME 584 Manufacturing Strategy ENG ME 703 Managerial Cost Accounting
ENG EK 731/QST HM 801 Bench to Bedside – Translating Biomedical Innovation from the Lab to the Marketplace
QST HM 703 Health Sector Issues and Opportunities
QST HM 710 Health Service Delivery: Strategies, Solutions and Execution
QST HM 817 Advances in Digital Health
QST HM 848 Driving Health Sector Innovation
QST SI 839 Design Thinking and Innovation
QST SI 750 Competition, Innovation, and Strategy
QST SI 845 Technology Strategy
QST SI 852 Starting New Ventures

QST SI 855 Entrepreneurship
QST SI 871 Strategies for Bringing Technology to Market

MEng students must complete a minimum total of **32 credits** of approved coursework. No thesis is required. The practicum requirement is satisfied through BE 695. A finalized Program Planning Sheet should be submitted for approval by the Director of BME Masters Programs when applying for graduation, indicating the courses taken to fulfill the curriculum requirements. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained. Grades of C- or lower are not acceptable. Technical electives are highly quantitative courses in engineering, computer science, math, physics, etc. They do not have to been taken within ENG; hard science courses offered through other BU Colleges may be approved using the BME Petition Form. Technical Leadership electives outside of the provided list must be approved by the Director of BME Masters Programs.

MEng Program Completion Time Schedule

Each student has a maximum of five (5) years from the time of matriculation to complete the requirements for the MEng degree. If a student has still not finished the required courses in this time, the student must reapply and be accepted again to the department in order to continue.

MS with Thesis Students

Math Requirement selected from approved list (located in the handbook and online)
BE 605 *Molecular Bioengineering* or **BE 606** *Quantitative Physiology for Engineers*
BE 790 *Biomedical Engineering Seminar*
Three Graduate-Level Biomedical Engineering Electives (these courses must be taken within BME department)
Two Graduate-Level Technical Electives (may include additional BE coursework)
BE 954 Thesis Research (8 credits)

MS with Thesis students are required to complete a minimum total of **36 credits** and successfully propose and defend an original MS thesis. A finalized Program Planning Sheet should be submitted for approval to both Research Advisor (Academic Advisor if the research advisor is off-campus) and the Director of BME Masters Programs when applying for graduation, indicating the courses taken to fulfill the curriculum requirements. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained. Grades of C- or lower are not acceptable. Technical electives are highly quantitative courses in engineering, computer science, math, physics, etc. They do not have to been taken within ENG; hard science courses offered through other BU Colleges may be approved using the BME Petition Form.

MS with Project Students

Math Requirement selected from approved list (located in the handbook and online)
BE 605 *Molecular Bioengineering* or **BE 606** *Quantitative Physiology for Engineers*
BE 790 *Biomedical Engineering Seminar*
Three Graduate-Level Biomedical Engineering Electives (these courses must be taken within BME department)
Three Graduate-Level Technical Electives (may include additional BE coursework)
BE 952 Mentored Project (4 credits)

MS with Project students are required to complete a minimum total of **36 credits** and complete the required 4 credit Mentored Project. A suitable project must be identified and approved by the Director of BME Masters Programs. The mentored project must be supervised by a primary BME faculty member or an approved outside advisor. A finalized Program Planning Sheet should be submitted for approval by the Director of BME Masters Programs (and Academic Advisor if it's not Mario Cabodi) when applying for graduation, indicating the courses

taken to fulfill the curriculum requirements. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained. Grades of C- or lower are not acceptable. Technical electives are highly quantitative courses in engineering, computer science, math, physics, etc. They do not have to been taken within ENG; hard science courses offered through other BU Colleges may be approved using the BME Petition Form.

Credit for Courses Taken Elsewhere

Students may "place out of" required courses (but not electives, BE 952 or BE 954), if they have taken equivalent courses elsewhere at the graduate level, *as long as those courses were not used to meet the requirements of an undergraduate or previous degree*. For example, students who have taken a graduate-level physiology course may receive permission not to take BE 606. Students with extensive experience in quantitative molecular biology may receive permission not to take BE 605. This permission must be granted by submitting a BME Petition Form BEFORE the end of the Add/Drop period.

Though students may place out of specific course requirements, this does not alter the total number of credits a student must earn at Boston University (32 for MEng students and 36 for MS students) to meet the degree requirements.

Courses that Fulfill the BME Math Requirement

Students must complete one 4-credit or two 2-credit math courses (BE 601-604) from the list below and pass with a B+ or higher. Students may petition for a different course (500-level or higher) to satisfy the math requirement.

ENG EC 505 Stochastic Processes An introduction to discrete and continuous-time random processes. Correlation and power spectral density functions. Linear systems driven by random processes. Optimum detection and estimation. Bayesian, Weiner and Kalman filtering.

ENG EK 501 Mathematical Methods I: Linear Algebra and Complex Analysis An introduction to basic applied mathematics for science and engineering, emphasizing practical methods and unifying geometrical concepts. Topics include linear algebra for real and complex matrices. Quadratic forms, Lagrange multipliers and elementary properties of the rotation group. Vector differential and integral calculus. Complex function theory, singularities and multi-valued functions, contour integration and series expansions. Fourier and Laplace transforms. Elementary methods for solving ordinary linear differential and systems of differential equations with applications to electrical circuits and mechanical structures.

CAS MA 561 Methods of Applied Mathematics I Derivation and analysis of the classical equations of mathematical physics; heat equation, wave equation, and potential equation. Initial boundary value problems, method of separation of variables, eigenvalue problems, eigenfunction expansions. Fourier analysis. Existence and uniqueness of solution.

CAS MA 565 Mathematical Models in the Life Sciences An introduction to mathematical modeling, using applications in the biological sciences. Mathematics includes linear difference and differential equations, and an introduction to nonlinear phenomena and qualitative methods. An elementary knowledge of differential equations and linear algebra is assumed.

CAS MA 579 Numerical Methods for Biological Sciences An introduction to the use of numerical methods for studying mathematical models of biological systems. Emphasis on the development of these methods; understanding their accuracy, performance, and stability; and their application to the study of biological systems.

CAS MA 684 Applied Multiple Regression and Multivariable Methods Application of multivariate data analytic techniques. Multiple regression and correlation, confounding and interaction, variable selection, categorical

predictors and outcomes, logistic regression, factor analysis, MANOVA, discriminant analysis, regression with longitudinal data, repeated measures, ANOVA.

CAS PY 501 Mathematical Physics An introduction to complex variables and residue calculus, asymptotic methods, and conformal mapping; integral transforms; ordinary and partial differential equations; non-linear equations; integral equations.

ENG BE 567 Nonlinear Systems in Biomedical Engineering Introduction to nonlinear dynamical systems in biomedical engineering. Qualitative, analytical and computational techniques. Stability, bifurcations, oscillations, multistability, hysteresis, multiple time-scales, chaos. Introduction to experimental data analysis and control techniques. Applications discussed include population dynamics, biochemical systems, genetic circuits, neural oscillators, etc.

NOTE: If students take courses from the BE 601-604 series they must take BE 601 and then either BE 602, BE 603, or BE 604 to satisfy the Math Requirement. Rudimentary programming skills are necessary for these modules.

ENG BE 601 Linear Algebra The first of four math modules designed to reinforce basic mathematical and computer programming concepts pertinent to graduate research in biomedical engineering. This course will emphasize the five cornerstones of applied linear algebra: Linear combinations, decompositions, orthogonality, metric, and linear transformations. Topics include LU and QR factorizations, finite difference methods for solving partial differential equations (PDEs), least squares, Fourier series and wavelets, solid mechanics, Markov chains, principal component analysis, and signal processing techniques. This course will provide the necessary linear algebra background needed to solve problems in BE 602, 603 and 604.

ENG BE 602 Ordinary Differential Equations This math module will focus on four key ODE concepts: Linear dynamical systems, nonlinear conservative and excitable systems, discrete- time state machines, and generalized Fourier series solutions to Sturm-Liouville problems. Topics include: Filters, enzymatic networks, mechanical models for biomaterials, oscillators and limit cycles, phase- locked loops, nonlinear Leslie matrices, Legendre polynomials, Bessel functions, and a prelude to solving PDE problems associated with heat transfer, diffusion, and electrostatics. Prior exposure to linear algebra (BE 601 or equivalent), and working knowledge of a programming language (Matlab, Python, etc.) is helpful. *Not offered regularly. Check Student Link for availability.*

ENG BE 603 Partial Differential Equations This math module will focus on elliptical and parabolic PDEs associated with transport phenomenon problems in biomedical engineering. We will visit four PDE concepts: Separation of variables, integral transform solutions, superposition principles, and numerical approximations using finite-difference schemes. Topics include: 2D and 3D anisotropic Laplace's, Poisson's, and the heat equations in different coordinate systems, Fourier and Laplace transform solutions, 2D ADI methods, Green's functions, and the method of images. Prior exposure to linear algebra (BE 601 or equivalent), ODEs (BE 602 or MA 226 equivalent), Fourier series, Fourier and Laplace transforms (BE 401 equivalent), and working knowledge of a programming language (Matlab, Python, etc.) is highly recommended. *Not offered regularly. Check Student Link for availability.*

ENG BE 604 Statistics and Numerical Methods This math module will focus on how linear algebra, ODEs, statistics, and signals & systems techniques can be used to interrogate data from biological and engineering experiments. The lecture topics include: Jacobi, Gauss-Seidel, and SOR iterative solvers for large linear systems; Gauss-Newton iterations (nonlinear least-squares); the ANOVA table, multi- factor regression, and intro to the general linear model (GLM); data deconvolution; Monte Carlo, bootstrap, and kernel density estimation. Prior exposure to linear algebra (BE 601 equivalent), basic probability and statistics (BE 200 equivalent), and working knowledge of a programming language (Matlab, Python, etc.) is highly recommended.

ENG BE 747 Advanced Signals and Systems Analysis for Biomedical Engineering Introduction to advanced techniques for signals and systems analysis with applications to problems in biomedical engineering research. Time-domain

and frequency-domain analysis of multiple input, multiple output systems using the fundamental matrix approach. Hilbert transform relations; applications to head- related transfer functions. Second-order characterization of stochastic processes: power density spectra, cross-spectra, auto-and cross-correlation functions. Gaussian and Poisson processes. Models of neural firing patterns. Effects of linear systems on spectra and correlation functions. Applications to models of the peripheral auditory system. Optimum processing applications. Applications to psychophysical modeling. Introduction to wavelets and wavelet transforms. Wavelet filter banks and wavelet signal processing.

ENG ME 566 Advanced Engineering Mathematics Introduces students of engineering to various mathematical techniques that are necessary in order to solve practical problems. Topics covered include a review of calculus methods, elements of probability and statistics, linear algebra, transform methods, difference and differential equations, numerical techniques, and mathematical techniques in optimization theory. Examples and case studies focus on applications to several engineering disciplines. The intended audience for this course is advanced seniors and entering MS engineering students who desire strengthening of their fundamental mathematical skills in preparation for advanced studies and research.

GRS MA 681 Accelerated Introduction to Statistical Methods for Quantitative Research Introduction to statistical methods relevant to research in the computational sciences. Core topics include probability theory, estimation theory, hypothesis testing, linear models, GLMs, and experimental design. Emphasis on developing a firm conceptual understanding of the statistical paradigm through data analyses.

Finding a Research Home

Most students choose to perform their research with a primary BME faculty member or within affiliated research centers (Biological Design Center, Biomolecular Engineering Research Center, Center for Multiscale and Translational Mechanobiology, Nanotechnology Innovation Center, Neurophotonics Center, NSF Engineering Research Center in Cellular Metamaterials, Precision Diagnostics Center). Further information can be found on their respective websites.

Faculty, scientists or researchers (holding a PhD or MD) within or outside of the University can be approved using the MS Thesis Supervisor Approval Form to be a student's principal research advisor if they have an active research collaboration with a primary BME faculty member who will agree to be the student's research co-advisor. This form should be submitted as soon as the co-advisors are identified.

Research Project

A major requirement for the MS with Thesis is a research-based thesis. Each student is responsible for finding a research project, conducting scientific studies under the guidance of an approved faculty member, presenting the proposal and results to the general scientific community in a public defense and submitting a Thesis.

Academic vs. Research Advisors

All incoming Masters students are advised by Prof. Mario Cabodi, Director of BME Masters Programs.

For MS with Thesis students, the research advisor also serves as the student's academic advisor. However, if a MS Thesis Supervisor Approval Form was required (see above), the BME co-advisor serves as the academic advisor.

Finding a Research Advisor and Project

Occasionally students enter the program with a specific research advisor in mind and may even plan to work on a specific project. The majority of students, however, will utilize the first two semesters to determine what their specific interests are in the field of biomedical engineering and identify potential labs.

Another valuable way of learning more about specific research opportunities is through the required BE 790

seminar series and to speak with other graduate students who are currently working in the department's various labs. The best measure for learning about working in a specific lab is to make an appointment to speak with the faculty member in charge of a lab you are interested in. Once a student finds a research opportunity and has the consent of a faculty member to be his/her advisor, the process of developing a thesis project begins.

Off-Campus Thesis

Thesis research is usually carried out in laboratories and centers of BME faculty located on campus. In cases of non-BU advisors (see section above regarding required approval) the research is often performed off-campus, in the lab of the principal research advisor. There may be special problems that arise due to intellectual property and other conflicts of interest, which must be addressed prior to starting the work.

Invention and Copyright Agreements

Students who receive support from sponsored research programs or who make significant use of University funds and facilities are required to sign the BU Intellectual Property Policy Agreement. Seek counsel with your faculty advisor about this policy. A signed agreement form is required through PolicyTech for the Charles River Campus.

MS Thesis Advisory Committee Membership

After identifying a research advisor and project, each MS Thesis student forms an Advisory Committee which will run the MS Proposal and Thesis Defense.

The Advisory Committee must have a minimum of three members:

- Two members must be from the BME primary faculty (tenured or tenure-track).
- One member must have a primary appointment within the College of Engineering (BME Affiliated faculty, BME Research faculty or appropriate BME Research Associates can fill this role).
    - NOTE: If the committee includes three members from the primary BME faculty, then no one from this category is required.

The Chair of the Advisory Committee must be a primary BME faculty member who is NOT the research advisor or co-advisor.

If a researcher from outside the University serves on an Advisory Committee, a Special Service Appointment Form must be completed. The completed form and a copy of the person's curriculum vitae, with the Associate Chair for Graduate Programs signature, will then be submitted to the Graduate Programs Office for College-level approval.

MS Thesis Proposal

A brief written proposal (3-5 pages) of the MS research project must be presented no later than the semester before the student defends their thesis. It is the student's responsibility to schedule a formal meeting with their Advisory Committee members for discussion and approval of the proposal document. The student must present the MS Proposal and Thesis Committee Approval Form to the committee during this meeting. If the proposal is approved, the faculty members must sign the form, thereby indicating their willingness to participate on the committee. The student must submit the signed approval form, slides and the proposal document to Inna Gerzon. It is required that the student's committee meet with the student regularly (at least annually) throughout the remainder of their thesis research.

MS Thesis

A Thesis must be written and defended successfully for completion of the MS degree. In order for a student to make full use of the critiques on the proposal offered by his/her committee, students are not permitted to defend in the same semester in which the proposal was submitted. A full description of the format requirements for the written thesis is included in the BU Libraries "A Guide for the Writers of Dissertations and Theses".

It is the student's responsibility to confirm a date and time of the presentation with their committee members. The MS Thesis Defense Approval Form must be completed and submitted to Inna Gerzon two weeks prior to the presentation date. She will process announcement of the MS Thesis Defense to the BME faculty and graduate students via email and add the event to the BME calendar.

The format of the defense is not rigid and is decided on by the Chair of the Advisory Committee. The student can expect to give a 30-40 minute seminar presenting the results of the completed project. There may be questions during the presentation or after the student has completed the presentation, depending on the decision of the committee.

Following a reasonable question period, the audience is dismissed, so that the committee may ask questions of the student privately; then the student is dismissed and the committee remains to complete its assessment of the thesis defense. The Advisory Committee must vote unanimously to pass the student. The results are noted on the MS Thesis Defense Form and submitted to Inna Gerzon.

Submission of the Final Thesis

The student will then follow the electronic submission guidelines provided by Mugar Library. Inna Gerzon will provide departmental electronic approval for the student upon receiving the original signatures page.

MS Program Completion Time Schedule

It is up to the student and their research advisor to complete the project in a reasonable amount of time for a MS thesis. Most students graduate from the MS with Thesis program in two years after entering, which usually includes at least one year of full-time work on the research project.

Each student has a maximum of five (5) years from the time of matriculation to complete the requirements for the MS degree. If a student has still not finished the required courses and research thesis in this time, the student must reapply and be accepted again to the department in order to continue.

Financial Information

Students receiving any form of financial support for graduate studies are not permitted additional employment without prior written approval from both the student's advisor and the department.

Masters Research Assistantships

It is important to first recognize that Masters Research Assistantships (MRA's) are not guaranteed for MS with Thesis students. MRA's are offered by individual faculty members with sponsored research grants. Students interested in off-campus Masters Research Assistantships should speak with the Director of BME Masters Programs for departmental approval (to ensure that the research project is appropriate and that there is direct involvement of a BME faculty member).

A Masters Research Assistant (MRA) is a member of a research group in a laboratory or center. Work on the Thesis is normally part of this position's assignments. MRA's are expected to work full-time, with time allowed for courses during the academic year. An MRA carries no tuition support.

Logistical Information

BME Graduate Student Lounge

The BME Lounge is located on the second floor of 44 Cummington Mall near the elevator.

BME Kitchenette

There is a small kitchenette (including a refrigerator) that is available for faculty, graduate students and staff in ERB 407. A copy machine is available for students.

Getting to the BU Medical School Campus

Traveling between Boston University's Charles River campus and the Medical Campus is easy thanks to the **Boston University Shuttle (The BUS)** service. The Shuttle runs every 10-30 minutes (depending on the day and time). IT IS FREE! Call 877-355-1555 to receive recorded information. The closest stop is at the corner of Blandford St and Commonwealth Ave. Schedules and real-time bus locations can be found online.

Staff Directory

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