The University of Texas at Austin
Texas Materials Institute

Materials Science and Engineering Graduate Program Student Handbook

Master of Science in Engineering (MSE)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

AY 2025-2026

Concentrations:

1. General Materials Science
2. Nanomaterials
3. Clean Energy Materials

Contents

Introduction

The Texas Materials Institute (TMI) was established in 1998 to administer the Materials Science and Engineering (MS&E) Graduate Program, to maintain instrumentation and associated infrastructure necessary for modern materials research, and to promote the coordination of all aspects of interdisciplinary materials research and education among participating academic departments at The University of Texas at Austin. More detailed information about our facilities and the academic program can be found on the TMI web site: http://www.tmi.utexas.edu. Faculty members affiliated with TMI have appointments in assorted home departments within the Cockrell School of Engineering or the College of Natural Sciences. Information on all faculty members associated with TMI can be found on the TMI web site as well as on various departmental or research unit web sites.

This Handbook is provided as a guide to you in your pursuit of a master's or doctoral degree in the Materials Science and Engineering Program at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin). This information should be used solely as a guide. The official university-wide requirements for graduate degrees are detailed in the current *Graduate Catalog* and *General Information,* both of which can be found here*:* http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/. Further information about requirements specific to the MS&E Program may be obtained from the graduate advisor or the graduate coordinator.

Some important points to consider from the official *Graduate Catalog,* that are not program specific, include:

- No more than 6 hours of transferred credit can be applied towards the degree, for both M.S.E. and Doctoral students. These credits must be petitioned for by the student and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee, with the approval of the graduate dean. You must provide official transcripts and “an official explanation of the course numbering and grading systems at the school at which the credit was earned.” Often, this will include submitting a syllabus of the course being petitioned.
- No coursework over six years old can be included on the Program of Work unless approved by the graduate dean.
- Only 20% of courses counting towards the Program of Work (i.e. the 30 hours of coursework required) can be credit/no credit (CR/NR).
- Students may apply for a leave of absence for no more than 2 long semesters, and these must be approved in advance by the graduate advisor and graduate dean. Those already admitted into Candidacy will be approved for a Leave of Absence “only in rare and unusual circumstances.” All students on approved leave must apply for readmission in order to return, but if applied for during the 2 long semesters, readmission is automatic and the application fee is waived. Importantly, a leave of absence “does not alter the time limits for degrees or coursework.”
- The Graduate School’s time limit for a Master’s degree is 6 years. While there is no set time limit for a PhD, students who have not progressed in a timely manner, including not defending their dissertation 3 years after applying for candidacy, will be reviewed ever year by the Graduate Studies Committee. Those not making satisfactory progress may be asked to leave.
- The Graduate School requires a minimum of 30 credit hours for a Master’s degree, depending on the option the student picks (with thesis, with report, without thesis/report). PhDs are required to have a minimum of 30 hours of advanced coursework. Six of those hours must be dissertation work to graduate.

Organization and Administration

Graduate programs at UT Austin are administered through approximately 40 ***Graduate Studies Committees*** *(GSCs).* Members of a GSC are assistant professors, associate professors, and professors who are active in their particular graduate degree program. Each GSC elects its own chairperson. The GSC recommends admission of students to the program, sets requirements for graduate degrees in the program, recommends students for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D., and is responsible for maintaining the high quality of graduate education in the program. The list of faculty in the MS&E GSC can be found here: https://tmi.utexas.edu/people/graduate-studies-committee.

The ***graduate advisor*** is a member of the GSC who is appointed by the Vice President and Dean of Graduate Studies to advise all graduate students and represent the Graduate School in matters pertaining to graduate students. Questions about degree requirements and academic policies should be directed to the graduate advisor (an appointment may be necessary if the question is too complex to be covered over email).

The ***graduate coordinator*** (GC) assists the graduate advisor and the GSC by keeping complete academic records for the students and ensuring that paperwork is processed in a correct and timely manner. The graduate coordinator fields all student questions and accepts walk-ins during normal workday hours. Students may also call the GC at 512-471-1504 or send an email to mse@tmi.utexas.edu with any questions. Please see the GC before seeking assistance from others. Although convenient, advice given to you by other students may not be accurate.

Your ***faculty supervisor*** directly supervises your research. He/she plays a vital role in all areas of your graduate education; therefore, it is very important that you discuss your research regularly with your faculty supervisor. Make sure you attend all group meetings and that your course selections meet both the MS&E program thrust area requirements and your faculty supervisor's approval. You are not permitted to take courses not approved by your supervisor; this could result in termination of your teaching or research assistantship and/or a postponed graduation date.

In most cases, some or all the funds that pay your salary and your tuition come from research grants administered by your supervisor, so he/she is responsible for reporting your research progress to the funding agency. If you are appointed as a research or teaching assistant, you are an employee of the university and must follow university regulations for employment. You are employed even during academic holidays such as Winter Holiday and Spring Break. Coordinate your vacation time with your supervisor BEFORE booking any trips.

The following individuals currently administer the MS&E graduate program:

Dr. Jamie Warner, Director, Office: EER 6.620

Dr. Yuebing Zheng, Graduate Advisor & Graduate Studies Chair, Office: ETC 9.104

Alyssa Peterson, Graduate Program Administrator, Office: EER 6.614A, Phone: 512-471-1504

General Program Information

Additional General Information for Both MSE and PhD Students:

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Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty

Never copy another person's work, unless you put it in quotations and cite exactly what you are copying, who said it, and where it was printed. Even if you just borrow someone else's idea without quoting it word for word, you must cite where you got the idea. Severe penalties can occur if you copy without giving proper credit. This is known as plagiarism and is one example of scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student, or the attempt to commit such an act. Detailed definitions of these infractions are found in the *General Information Catalog*. Their definitions include (taken directly from the website):

1. **Copying** – copying answers or information from another individual's academic assignment;
2. **Failure to Comply with Instructions** – failing to comply with instructions pertaining to an academic assignment or course requirement, and where that failure results in an unfair academic advantage;
3. **Unauthorized Materials** – obtaining, using, or possessing materials without authorization, including but not limited to class notes, textbooks, calculators, online resources, and/or electronic devices;
4. **Unauthorized Aid or Assistance** – providing aid or assistance to, or utilizing aid or assistance from, another individual or source without authorization, and pertaining to an academic assignment or course requirement;
5. **Substitution** – substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute, to attend a class or complete any academic assignment or other course requirement;
6. **Falsification or Fabrication** – falsifying or fabricating any information, data, or citation in any academic work offered for credit, or work done in conjunction with the completion of course or degree requirements;
7. **Plagiarism**
    a. when a person represents another's material as their own work without attribution;
    b. when a person misrepresents citation or attribution for purposes of an academic advantage; or,
    c. when a person submits essentially the same work for two assignments without the permission of the Faculty Member.
8. **Collusion** – unauthorized collaboration with another student or students;
9. **Failure to Follow Course Requirements** – conduct that fails to adhere to standards promulgated by an academic unit or Faculty Member, and that is not otherwise constitutionally protected;
10. **Other Academic Misconduct** – any activity in which a student receives or attempts to receive an unfair academic advantage.

In addition, the University of Texas has an Honor Code that every student agrees to when they enroll and register for courses:

Affirmation
I pledge, as a member of the University of Texas community, to do my work honestly, respectfully, and through the intentional pursuit of learning and scholarship.

Elaboration
I pledge to be honest about what I create and to acknowledge what I use that belongs to others.
I pledge to value the process of learning in addition to the outcome, while celebrating and learning from mistakes.
This code encompasses all of the academic and scholarly endeavors of the university community.

This and more can be found on the Dean of Students Office page for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. All cases of scholastic dishonesty will be submitted to the Dean of Students Office.

Doctoral students are also researchers and must also hold themselves to a high standard of integrity while conducting their research.

Research Misconduct is covered under UT's Handbook of Operating Procedure (HOP) 7-1230. Research misconduct is "The intentional, knowing, or reckless fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research, or in reporting research results…Research Misconduct does not include honest error or differences in

interpretations or judgments of data, scholarly or political disagreements, good-faith personal or professional opinions, private moral or ethical behavior or views, or authorship or collaboration disputes unless such disputes also involve Research Misconduct as defined by this policy."

Definitions of these types of misconduct include (taken directly from the HOP):

- **Fabrication** is the making up of data or results and recording or reporting them as true.
- **Falsification** is the manipulation of research materials, equipment, or processes, or change or omission of data or results such that the research is inaccurately represented in the research record.
- **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

The Dean of Students Office also has resources for avoiding academic integrity problems, including links on avoiding plagiarism, collusion as academic misconduct, and providing or receiving aid or assistance. Both the University Writing Center and the Graduate School offer resources on avoiding copyright, plagiarism, and other ethical issues that occur within the academic world.

In the end, students found guilty of academic or research misconduct can face a variety of outcomes, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Semesters and Course Loads

A student's enrollment status is determined by the number of credit hours for which the student is enrolled in residence in a semester.

Long-session semesters: For graduate students, **nine** credit hours is considered full-time status for long semester, which include the traditional Fall and Spring semesters. All students that are supported by a research (GRA) or teaching (TA) position must enroll for a minimum of nine hours to maintain their student employee status. *This is also the minimum that is required for all international students*. Generally, research assistantships and teaching assistantships will pay for a maximum of nine hours, so virtually all full-time MS&E students take nine hours during long session semesters so that they do not incur additional costs. Anything under nine credit hours is considered part-time.

Summer session: For graduate students, **three** credit hours is considered full-time status for long semester. The Graduate School requires registration during the summer if you are making use of **any** UT facilities except the library. Fellowship holders, AIs, TAs, or GRAs, must be registered for three hours in any summer session if they will be receiving funding during that summer. Anything under three credit hours is considered part-time. Students do *not* need to be registered for summer courses to be considered continuously enrolled within their program.

Course Modality: International students are often limited on the "mode" of the courses they take, meaning that the courses must be listed as either "Face-to-Face" or "Hybrid" in the University Course Catalog to comply with visa requirements. Similar restrictions also apply to those using their Veterans Benefits. If you have questions concerning the mode of a course, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator or the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office.

Grade Point Average: You must maintain at least a B (3.0) average in both your major and supporting courses to remain in good standing in the Graduate School. However, to qualify for PhD candidacy, you must have a GPA of 3.30 in Core courses. You can check your current GPA anytime through your Graduate Degree Planner via UT Direct. This will include your Program of Work GPA, which are the courses that are counted toward your 30 minimum credit hours. If you see that any of your courses are applied incorrectly, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

If you fall under the necessary GPA, you are at risk for academic dismissal. Per the *Graduate Catalog*: "A graduate student whose cumulative graduate grade point average falls below 3.00 at the end of any term of enrollment will be warned by the Office of Graduate Studies that their continuance in the Graduate School is in jeopardy. The student must attain a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.00 during the next term they are enrolled or be subject to dismissal. During this period, the student may not drop a course or withdraw from the University without the approval of the graduate advisor and the graduate dean." Scholastic warning statuses are reflected on your permanent record. Dismissal from the program will also result in a notation on their UT academic record and can only be readmitted by petition.

Financial Support

The primary types of financial support available in the Materials Science and Engineering Program are research assistantships and fellowships. You may apply to TA in any department; however, you only receive resident tuition if the department in which you TA is related to your degree program and the TA appointment is for at least 20 hours per week. Continued financial assistance is always dependent upon maintaining at least a 3.00 grade point average and continuing to make progress towards attainment of your degree.

In addition, the Graduate School places a 14 long-session semester (7 year) limit on financial assistance for graduate students (summers do not count). After 14 semesters, no student may continue to receive support by employment in a student position (TA, GRA, AI). Students may continue via scholarships (not tied to GRA or TA work) or self-funding.

Any semesters or years of full scholarship support or self-funding are not counted toward the 14 long semester limit. This means, for example, that if you received a full scholarship for your third year of study, by your 5th year, you would only have had 6 semesters of funding through student employment and not 8, because 2 semesters were covered by a scholarship. Partial scholarships that only help pay for part of your tuition and fees, but still have you rely on your GRA, TA, or AI position for most of your tuition and stipend, do not fall under this exception.

Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) Positions

GRA positions are the most common form of financial assistance available for MS&E students. Funding is provided through research grants obtained by faculty. The number of graduate research assistantships varies, depending on individual faculty research support. Therefore, all graduate research assistantships are dependent upon availability and duration of funding.

All GRA positions fall under the UT Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) 9-2030. Graduate Research Assistants are “students who, in the course of their academic training, are employed in part-time or temporary research positions, where the student's academic training is based in part on the research performed or where the research duties being performed will assist the student in fulfilling his or her degree requirements.” The main duties are “to contribute under supervision to a program of departmental or interdepartmental research. The appointment is made with the understanding that the required services will contribute to the professional training of the student.” This means that you should not be running personal errands - like picking up laundry or picking up curbside groceries – while you are a GRA. If you find yourself being asked (or forced) to complete personal, non-lab related work and you do not feel comfortable addressing your concerns with your supervisor, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, Graduate Advisor, TMI Director, or the Office of the Student Ombuds for help.

GRAs are students first. You MUST be enrolled as a student to hold the position. This is why GRA appointments are limited to 20 hours a week during the first 2 long semester appointments, and no more than 30 hours after that. If you find that you are being asked or required to work more than that, especially if it is interfering with your coursework or program progress, speak to your advisor about your workload. If, like above, you do not feel comfortable addressing your supervisor about this, contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, Graduate Advisor, or the Office of the Student Ombuds for help.

Teaching Assistantship (TA) Position

Teaching Assistants are “graduate students who help faculty with the conduct and delivery of courses. Services provided by teaching assistants include, but are not limited to, grading, monitoring, leading lab and/or discussion sessions, offering office hour assistance to students, and performing clerical tasks associated with course instruction” (UT HOP 9-2020). You should speak to your supervisor about TA policies. Each department has different policies and procedures concerning allocation of TA positions. Remember, you only receive resident tuition if the department in which you TA is related to your degree program and the TA appointment is for at least 20 hours per

week. You also need to be enrolled in 9 credit hours (3 credit hours during the summer) to hold a TA appointment.

Additionally, the Texas Legislature has mandated that all international students demonstrate oral fluency in English before being allowed to teach. Therefore, all international students who are interested in possibly applying for teaching assistantships need to take the ITA "Oral English Proficiency Assessment" exam. It is offered before each new semester. You may take it one time for which the MS&E program will pay. If you must retake it, there is a $100 fee. Following the assessment, there is one "ITA/AI Orientation to Teaching at UT Austin" session you must take online.

Fellowships

There are University Fellowships available for continuing MS&E students. Announcements about possible fellowships will be sent out by e-mail. You are encouraged to apply if you think you meet the requirements.

University & School Fellowships: Each year the Graduate School and the Cockrell School of Engineering accepts nominations of students from all programs and departments for consideration for University and School Fellowships. Students are nominated by faculty or self-nominate and are selected based on grade point average, papers published, leadership activities on and off campus, conferences attended, and other evidence of outstanding achievement. Emails will be sent out when nominations are open and due. Reply to the graduate coordinator if you think you should be eligible for a University or School Fellowship. The competition is university- and School-wide, so these fellowships are highly competitive.

Travel Awards: Professional Development (Travel) Awards are available to help defray expenses for a few advanced doctoral students attending major professional meetings. Priority is given to students who are in their last year of doctoral study and have had a paper accepted for presentation at a major professional meeting. *Students will only be considered for this award if the published abstract for this talk lists their affiliation as Materials Science and Engineering, University of Texas at Austin.* If you are planning to attend and present a paper at a professional meeting, reply to the email notifications about the upcoming award deadlines sent out by the Graduate Program Coordinator. The GPC submits award nominations to the Graduate School. The exact amount of the award varies depending on the funds available.

Deadlines and dates for which award to apply to are below:

Travel Period	Application Period	Student Deadline to Submit Report & Evidence of Attendance
Fall Semester - Aug. 25 – Nov. 30	Sept. 1 to Nov. 30*	Dec. 15
Spring Semester – Dec. 1 - May 4	Dec. 1 to May 4*	June 15
Summer Semester - June 1 - Aug. 24	June 1 to July 7*	Sept 15

*Deadline for this period.

Waivers

Out-of-State Tuition Waivers

All "benefits-eligible" students (20-hr appointment as a GRA or TA for a full semester) or students with scholarships of at least $1,000, are eligible to pay resident tuition. Unfortunately, resident tuition is NOT billed automatically. If you meet the requirements, you must complete the waiver on-line here each semester (Waiver for Faculty Members, Teaching Assistants, and Research Assistants, and their Dependents). Students whose tuition is being paid through faculty grants should ask their supervising professor to provide all the necessary information to the applicable support staff so that an electronic document can be created to pay for all or part of your tuition. If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may check with the graduate coordinator or your supervisor. **Even if your full tuition is paid and the balance is zero, you must still confirm your attendance in My Tuition Bill by the due date or you will be dropped from your courses!**

Health Insurance Waivers

All F-1 and J-1 students will be automatically charged for International Student Health Insurance. However, all benefits-eligible (20-hr GRA or TA appointments) international students will automatically qualify for employee insurance.

In order to not be charged additionally for the International Student Health Insurance, you must apply for a Health Insurance Waiver online here **each semester**. All international students are required to carry health insurance, and information can be found here. More information about requirements for international students and waiving health insurance can be found here, on the International Student and Scholar Services site.

Student Grievance Procedures

It is hoped that most problems encountered by students can be resolved through informal discussion between the parties involved. If informal discussion does not resolve the issue, there are other means available.

All grievances are handled using the procedure described in the Graduate School Handbook of Operating Procedures, Section E under "Responsibilities and Procedures":

1. Adjudicating Grievances of Graduate Students
    a. A graduate student has the right to seek redress of any grievance related to his or her academic issues that are relevant to the student's progress towards a graduate degree.
    b. Every effort should be made to resolve grievances informally between the student and the faculty member most directly involved or, such efforts failing, by the graduate adviser, the chair of the graduate studies committee of the student's degree program, the unit administrator. When serious issues cannot be resolved informally, the graduate student will have recourse to the formal grievance procedure as outlined below in Subsections 2-3. It should be noted that the precise procedure to be followed in adjudicating a given grievance will depend on the particular circumstances of the case.
        i. Grade disputes are handled according to departmental review policies by the department offering the course in question. The order of review for grade disputes is the course instructor, graduate adviser, unit administrator, and dean of the college or school offering the course. The decision of the college or school dean is final.
        ii. Non-academic grievances submitted to the Graduate School will be referred by the dean of the Graduate School to the appropriate University administrative office, normally the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of Human Resources, or the college/school dean in which the incident being grieved occurred. Only in cases of multiple points of grievance will the complaint be reviewed by more than one administrative unit of the University.
        iii. Grievances related to nonacademic issues and scholastic dishonesty are handled according to the procedures outlined in the General Information Catalog.
    c. A graduate student may submit a formal grievance through the procedures referenced in sections d and e below with the assurance of timely and thorough consideration. A graduate student will not be retaliated against for filing a formal grievance. A graduate student who believes he or she has been retaliated against should immediately report his or her concern to an associate or assistant dean of Graduate School. Allegations of retaliation will be referred to the appropriate office for review.
    d. All grievances must be submitted in writing to the Graduate School, which will notify the chair of the graduate studies committee, unit administrator, and the dean of the college or school that a grievance has been filed and of the procedures for handling the grievance. The time limits given below may be extended for good cause.
    e. A student must submit their grievance within 60 days of the incident that is the subject of the grievance. When there is written notification to the student of the action that is the subject of the grievance, an intent to grieve must be submitted to the Graduate School within 30 days and the grievance must be completely submitted within 60 days from the event that is the subject of the grievance.

2. First Level of Adjudication: Graduate Studies Committee
    a. The first level of consideration is the appropriate graduate studies committee. The graduate studies committee, having received formal notification of the grievance from the Graduate School, shall review the grievance and meet with the grievant if requested. The graduate studies committee shall then vote either to uphold or to reconsider the action that is the subject of the grievance. The chair of the graduate studies committee shall notify the Graduate School of the results of the graduate studies committee review within 30 days of receiving the grievance.
    b. The results of the graduate studies committee review will be provided to the grievant. The grievant will have 30 days to notify the Graduate School if they are satisfied with those results or if they wish to proceed to the second level of adjudication as provided below.

3. Second Level of Adjudication: Dean of the Graduate School and Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
    a. When the grievance cannot be resolved at the level of the graduate studies committee to the satisfaction of the grievant, the grievance and the decisions of the graduate studies committee will be forwarded to the dean of the Graduate School. The dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the college or school dean(s), may decide the case on their own review and authority, or if they deem it appropriate, convene a Graduate School ad hoc panel to review the case and provide advice.
    b. The dean of the Graduate School will review the facts of the case, including any recommendations received from a Graduate School ad hoc panel if constituted, and render a decision within 45 days of the grievant's request for review by the dean of the Graduate School. A copy of the decision will be sent to the grievant, any ad hoc panel constituted during the review process, the chair of the graduate studies committee, the graduate adviser, the unit administrator, and the college or school dean(s). The decision of the dean of the Graduate School is final.

Grievances that arise from Graduate Research Assistantships are covered under HOP 9-2030, Graduate and Undergraduate Research Assistants (directly from the HOP):

I. Dismissal and Termination of Appointment and Procedure for Grievances
    2. Every effort should be made to resolve grievances informally between the research assistant and the employing faculty member. When serious issues cannot be resolved informally, the research assistant shall have recourse to the grievance procedure outlined below in Sections 3 and 4.
    3. Employment disputes by research assistants are handled according to departmental review policies by the department employing the research assistant. The order of review for employment disputes is as follows:
        a. the faculty member employing the research assistant;
        b. the program graduate adviser (for graduate students);
        c. the department chair or head of the hiring unit employing the research assistant;
        d. the dean of the college or school employing the research assistant.
    4. The decision of the college or school dean is final.

Grievances arising from a TA or AI appointment are covered under HOP 9-2050 (Interim): Teaching Assistant and Assistant Instructor Grievance Procedures.

The Office of the Ombudsman provides services to the university's student body by assisting students who have "university-related complaints of a non-legal nature," such as conflicts with professors, problems with dissertation committees, or issues with unresolved processes. Such assistance includes but is not limited to conducting an impartial investigation of concerns, offering neutral advice and providing mediation.

The Office of the Dean of Students offers Legal Services for Students and can provide advice on legal matters, such as landlord-tenant disputes or employment contracts outside of UT.

Discrimination based on sex should be reported to the Title IX Office.

Grievances concerning any form of discrimination are to be filed with the Department of Investigation and Adjudication.

Requirements and Procedures for MSE & PhD

The Materials Science and Engineering Program offers graduate study and research in diverse technical fields. You will select one of these areas as your major focus. Our program is highly individualized, and you will likely pursue interests that cut across more than one research area.

Degrees in the MS&E program are approached in 3 ways: a terminal master's degree, a master's degree followed by a PhD, or direct admission into the PhD program. You need to decide which plan you want to follow and discuss your decision with your faculty supervisor and the graduate advisor. Final approval will depend on your previous educational achievements and other qualifications, including work experience.

By selecting a specific Thrust area, students can study core MS&E subjects but also develop depth within a specific area of study that cuts across multiple aspects of science and engineering. Both MSE and PhD students should choose a Thrust area as soon as practical; we encourage this selection before the end of the first semester. If you wish to change your Thrust area, first talk to your supervisor and then report the change to the graduate coordinator. The following are Thrust areas are:

1. General Materials Science
2. Nanomaterials
3. Clean Energy Materials

Please see our website for more information on Thrust areas.

Coursework

Coursework for the program is divided into five categories, with courses from each category taken in succession. All courses MUST be taken for a letter grade except for final MSE courses, which should be taken for credit/no-credit. The categories are:

1. Deficiency requirements (if needed)
2. Core Materials Science courses
3. Required Thrust Area courses
4. Advanced level elective courses
5. MSE Courses

Deficiency Requirements:

If it is necessary for you to take deficiency courses, they must be taken in the first semester they are offered after you enter the program. The graduate advisor will determine, after meeting with you, whether these courses are necessary for successful completion of graduate-level course work. These courses are:

1) Upper division, undergraduate Solid-State Properties/Quantum Mechanics: PH 355, CH 354, or the equivalent

2) Upper division, undergraduate Classical Thermodynamics: CH 353, or the equivalent.

Core Materials Science Courses:

These courses are required for all degree plans **before Fall 2021**:

1. Phase Transformations: ME 386P1 or equivalent
2. Thermodynamics: ME 386P3, CH 382L, CHE 387, or equivalent
Choose 1 from 3 below
3. Mechanical Behavior of Materials: ME 386P2 or equivalent
4. Structure of Materials: ME 386P5 or equivalent
5. Solid State Properties of Materials: ME 386P4 or equivalent

These courses are required for all degree plans for **Fall 2021 and after**:

1. Phase Transformations: ME 386P1 or equivalent
2. Thermodynamics: ME 386P3, CH 382L, CHE 387, or equivalent
3. Structure of Materials: ME 386P5 or equivalent
Choose 1 from 2 below:
3. Mechanical Behavior of Materials: ME 386P2 or equivalent
5. Solid State Properties of Materials: ME 386P4 or equivalent

Required Thrust Area Courses:

The required Thrust courses depend on the Thrust area you are enrolled in. See below for a list of courses that satisfy each Thrust area. You must take three courses to satisfy this requirement. If you find a course that you think fits into a Thrust area but is not listed, please ask the graduate advisor. New courses are added on a regular basis.

For those enrolled **before Fall 2021**:

General Materials Science	Clean Energy Materials	Nanomaterials
1. Elective #1	Choose three from list below:	Choose three from list below:
2. Elective #2	1. ME 386Q-14 Electrochemical Materials	1. CHE 384 Nanomaterial Chemistry and Engineering
3. Elective #3	2. CH 390L Electrochemistry I	2. ME 387R-9 Practical Electron Microscopy
	3.CH 390L Electrochemistry II	3. ME 397 Introduction to Micro and Nanomanufacturing
	4. ME 386Q Electrochemical Energy Systems	4. ME 397 Nanotech Sensing/NEMS/Energy
	5. EE 396K-25 Organic/Polymer Semiconductor Devices	5. EE 396V/CHE 384 Inorganic Nanostructures for Device Applications
	6. EE 396K-27 Charge Transport in Organic Semiconductors	6. EE 396V Advanced Solid-State Materials/Nanostructures
	7. EE 396V Semiconductor Nanostructures	7. ME 381R-7 Nanoscale Energy Transport/Conversion
	8. ME 381R Nanoscale Energy Transport/Conversion	
	9. ME 382Q Solar Energy System Design	
	10. ME 397 Nanotechnology for Sustainable Energy	

For those enrolled **Fall 2021 or after**:

General Materials Science	Clean Energy Materials	Nanomaterials
Elective #1	Elective #1	Elective #1
Elective #2	Elective #2	Elective #2
Elective #3	Elective #3	Elective #3

Advanced Level Elective Courses:

Advanced level courses are offered in a variety of other subject areas (microscopy, spectroscopy, x-ray diffraction, polymers, etc.) that may be of interest to you, depending on your specific field of study. Please see the current course schedule available on the TMI website for a list of courses offered for each semester. Electives are selected with the advice and consent of your supervising professor and approval of the graduate advisor.

MSE Courses:

The MS&E program itself offers a limited number of courses under the MSE designation: seminar, individual research, thesis, report, and dissertation courses. Academic courses are chosen from courses offered with departmental designations such as Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Engineering Mechanics, Mechanical Engineering, and Physics. It is a good idea to plan your program of work early in your academic career with the help of your faculty supervisor and the graduate advisor. Remember that most graduate courses are offered at most once a year, while others are offered less frequently.

MSE 397 Graduate Seminar must be taken at least once before you register for any MSE research courses. This class is offered on a credit/no credit basis. Students who are registered for MSE 397 will be required to attend seminars. Even if you are not registered for the seminar class, MSE seminars are critical for broadening your knowledge base in Materials Science outside of your immediate research area, and for this reason, you are STRONGLY encouraged to attend every seminar. Watch for announcements posted on the TMI website, the bulletin boards on the 6th floor of EER, as well as via email.

The MS&E research courses are MSE 197R, 297R, and 397R. Be sure to register for MSE research, rather than an equivalent course designation in your faculty supervisor's home department (such as Mechanical Engineering, Electrical & Computer Engineering, etc.). A faculty member must agree to supervise your research before signing up for these courses. Registration for a research (or research problems) course in another department requires permission of the graduate advisor and your research supervisor. Such registration must be on a credit/no credit basis.

After being admitted into candidacy, you may enroll in MSE Dissertation credits. These are listed as MSE 399W, MSE 699W, and MSE 999W. The number at the beginning is the number of dissertation credits the course is worth; therefore 399W is 3 credits worth of dissertation writing, while 999W is 9 credits, or a full enrollment's worth. If you plan taking another course after you reach candidacy, you can use a combination of these dissertation courses to maintain full and continuous enrollment.

Dropping a Class: Q-Drops

A student may drop a class from the 13th through the 20th class day, with the "Q" symbol appearing on their record but without academic penalty. However, this requires the approval of your supervisor, Graduate Advisor, and the Dean of the Graduate School, and is granted only in extenuating circumstances. Dropping a course this late also runs the risk of leaving students without the required full course load, which would impact GRA appointments, visa requirements for international students, and financial aid.

Number of Credit Hours

If you are a full-time student – and all GRAs and TAs are full time students – you must have a total of 9 credit hours during the long semesters and 3 credit hours during the summer.

If you are an MSE student or a full time PhD student who is NOT in PhD candidacy and you have completed MSE 397 Seminar, then you should use MSE 397R to fill any credit hours that are needed so that you are enrolled for 9 hours total. Thus, if you are not taking any other lecture or seminar courses, you will sign up for three sections of MSE 397R in fall and spring and one section in summer. If you are taking one 3- hour lecture or seminar course, then you generally sign up for two sections of MSE 397R in fall and spring. If you are taking two 3 hours lecture or seminar courses, then you generally will sign up for one section of MSE 397R in fall and spring.

There is one exception to this rule: If you are an MSE (i.e. a Master's) student, your second to last semester you **must** take MSE 698A Thesis Reading (this is a 3-credit hours course), and during your last semester you **must** take MSE 698B Thesis Writing (this is also a 3-credit hour course). These two classes are taken in place of MSE 397R in the semesters in which they are taken. You can only apply for graduation while enrolled in 698B.

For PhD students who have advanced to candidacy, when you are taking less than 9 credit hours of lecture or seminar courses, you will use MSE 399W (3cr), MSE 699W (6cr), or MSE 999W (9cr) to fill the remaining hours.

All MS&E students must take Research, Thesis, Report, and Dissertation from the Materials Science & Engineering program regardless of your research supervisor's home department (i.e. do not sign up for ME 397 Research or CHE 399 Dissertation). Check the course schedule each semester to enroll in the correct unique ID course.

Progress Towards Degree

If you are receiving a fellowship or assistantship, we expect you to complete the organized course work requirements for the MSE degree within four long- session semesters (plus a summer session), or roughly 2 years from your first semester. If you are not receiving a fellowship or assistantship, it is still in your best interest to make expeditious progress. For PhD students, we expect graduation in no more than 10 long semesters (5 years), but most students finish in fewer.

In all cases, **it is vitally important to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better** or you will be placed on scholastic probation. This is not just an MSE requirement; this is a Graduate School requirement. If you fall below the 3.0 minimum at the end of any term, you will be warned by the Graduate School and maintain at least a 3.0 during the next term, or you will be subject to dismissal. During this time, you cannot drop a course or withdraw from the program without the approval of the Graduate Advisor and Graduate School Dean.

While on scholastic probation you are not eligible for teaching assistantship or research assistantship positions or any of the associated benefits. A loss of an assistantship means you will not receive a stipend, and you will have to pay tuition yourself and out-of-state residents will pay out-of-state tuition rates. It is imperative that you maintain the minimum grade point average on your courses.

For the program, to qualify for candidacy, you must have **a GPA of 3.30** in your Core courses.

You are expected to conduct research starting with your first semester. It is vitally important that you maintain communications with your supervisor to ensure that you are making adequate progress on your research. For most students, this will mean at least weekly meetings with your supervisor. Failure to make adequate progress in research can result in your teaching or research assistantship being withdrawn. A loss of an assistantship means you will not receive a stipend, and you will have to pay tuition yourself and out-of-state residents will pay out-of-state tuition rates

1st Year Review of Progress of Work

The Graduate School requires that all doctoral students review their degree plans for their programs, which covers the degree requirements and estimated timelines for degree milestones. To review your Milestones, visit the Graduate Degree Planner in your UT Direct, select “See Your Program of Work at a Glance” on the lefthand side, and then select “Program of Work” for your program.

After you review your PoW and Milestones, you can click the button “I have reviewed my Milestones.” The date will appear on the Milestone Review History. If any of your coursework was matched incorrectly to the requirements, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Master of Science in Engineering (MSE) Degree

Three options are available in the MSE program: Master's with thesis, Master's with report, and the no thesis/no report option (see the *Graduate Catalog*). If you are supported on a research or teaching assistantship, you must complete a thesis. If you are self-supporting, you may pursue any of the three master's options, if you have approval of the graduate advisor. You must have a faculty supervisor for either the thesis or report options.

At least one full year is required to complete the master's degree program.

Master of Science in Engineering with thesis. For students electing this option, **30 semester hours of credit** are required, consisting of 24 hours of organized coursework and six hours in the thesis courses. Students begin the program by completing deficiency courses, but they may petition to waive these courses if they have equivalent credit. Nine hours in core courses and 9 to 15 additional hours in advanced-level courses must then be taken. A maximum of 6 hours of upper-division coursework may be counted toward the required 30 hours.

The student should choose a thesis research topic and begin research during the first semester.

Master of Science in Engineering with report. This option requires **33 semester hours of credit**, consisting of 30 hours of organized coursework and three hours in the report course. The program must be approved by the graduate adviser. At least 9 hours in core courses and an additional 15 to 21 hours of advanced-level coursework must be taken. Up to 9 hours of upper-division coursework may be counted. Enrollment in this option must be approved by the graduate adviser.

Master of Science in Engineering without thesis or report. For students electing this option, **36 semester hours** of coursework are required. Nine hours in core courses and an additional 18 to 24 hours in advanced-level courses must be taken. The program must be approved by the graduate adviser. Up to 9 hours of upper-division coursework may be included. No research is required, but the level of academic performance is the same as that required for the master's degree with thesis.

The basic course requirements for the MSE degree are as follows:

a) Deficiency courses

b) Core courses (9 credit hours)

c) Thrust courses (9 credit hours)

d) Advanced electives (6-12 credit hours)

e) MSE courses
- Research hours vary
- Thesis: 6 credit hours (MSE 698A, MSE 698B)
- Report: 3 credit hours

MSE Program of Work

The Graduate School requires that you take 18 hours (and no less than 15 hours) of courses in a major field, including deficiency, core courses, and Thrust area courses. You also need 6 to 9 hours of supporting courses, plus additional Thrust area course and advanced electives. Six hours of upper- division undergraduate coursework may, with the permission of the graduate adviser, be counted towards the degree. Upper-division undergraduate grades count toward your overall GPA.

All these courses must be taken for a letter grade and not on a credit/no-credit basis. Deficiency courses are undergraduate courses and can be counted as part of your 30 required hours on your program. If you take other undergraduate courses, remember to ask the graduate advisor BEFORE you take the course if it will count towards your program of work. It is important to always check with your supervisor and/or the graduate advisor before taking any courses not on the TMI-approved course list available online.

At the beginning of the semester in which you will graduate, you should consult with the graduate coordinator to ensure that your Program of Work document is completed correctly. You should be able to find your Program of Work under your Graduate Degree Planner on UT Direct. Please make sure that you consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator about your PoW, since an incomplete or erroneous PoW will delay the acceptance of your application to graduate.

Once it is finalized, the Program of Work document will be sent electronically to the graduate advisor, GSC chair, and graduate dean's office for final approval before your graduation application will be accepted. The graduation application will then be routed to the graduate advisor and Office of Graduate Studies degree evaluator for approval as well. Also keep in mind that all coursework must have been taken within the preceding six years of the date you are applying for MSE graduation, and you cannot have any Incompletes ("I") on your PoW.

Thesis

Your thesis committee consists of two readers, your faculty supervisor, and at least one other faculty member, whom you should choose in consultation with your supervisor and the graduate advisor. In general, these committee members should be members of the MS&E Graduate Studies Committee. Be sure to ask a professor's permission before listing him or her as a part of your thesis committee.

Once you have an approved research topic from your supervisor, you may register for thesis. The first semester you register for thesis, you must register for MSE 698A, Thesis Reading. Subsequent semesters you will register for MSE 698B, Thesis Writing. You **must** be registered for MSE 698B during the semester in which your thesis is filed with the Graduate School, most commonly the semester you graduate. Be sure to register for MS&E thesis, not the thesis course in your faculty supervisor' s home department (Engineering Mechanics, Chemistry, etc.). Since your degree is in Materials Science and Engineering, your thesis course must be in MS&E as well.

The thesis is field specific but is usually a longer written work that involves original research, data, and analysis. Unlike a longer dissertation, which is aimed at adding new information to the larger field, a thesis tends to be shorter and prepares students for their professional (non-research-based) goals. The length and format should be agreed upon between the student and supervisor well in advance of any due dates.

The Graduate School offers Microsoft Word templates to assist you in formatting your thesis or dissertation. Before using a template, review the Using the Thesis and Dissertation Templates User Guide. Another option, approved by the Graduate School, is LaTeX Document Preparation. Theses must follow the guidelines of the Graduate School booklet "Format Guidelines for Dissertations, Treatises, Theses and Reports".

If you want to write your thesis in a language other than English, you must petition the Graduate School to do so.

Report

Your report committee consists of two readers, your faculty supervisor, and at least one other faculty member, whom you should choose in consultation with your supervisor and the graduate advisor. In general, these committee members should be members of the MS&E Graduate Studies Committee. Be sure to ask a professor's permission before listing him or her as a part of your thesis committee.

Once you have an approved research topic from your supervisor, you may register for MSE 398R, Master's Report. You will register for the course the semester you plan to graduate. Be sure to register for the MS&E report course, *not* the report course in your faculty supervisor's home department (Mechanical Engineering, Chemistry, etc.). Since your degree is in Materials Science and Engineering, your report course must be in MS&E as well.

A **master's report** is a type of written document that is typically part of the requirements for completing a master's degree program. It is generally used in fields where a full thesis or dissertation may not be necessary. The purpose of a master's report is to demonstrate the student's ability to conduct research, analyze data, and present findings in a formal, academic manner.

Key Features of a Master's Report:

1. **Focused Topic**: Unlike a thesis, which can be more comprehensive, a master's report usually addresses a specific problem or issue within a particular area of study.
2. **Research and Analysis**: The report often involves applying research methods to investigate a question or solve a problem. It may include data collection, analysis, and interpretation.
3. **Practical Application**: In many cases, the report emphasizes practical application and problem-solving, rather than purely theoretical analysis.
4. **Concise and Structured**: It is typically shorter and more concise than a full thesis, with a clear structure that includes an introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion.
5. **Project-Based**: In some disciplines, a master's report may be based on a project or internship experience, where the student applies their academic knowledge to a real-world problem.

Master's Report vs. Thesis:

- A **thesis** is generally more comprehensive and aims to contribute new knowledge to the field.
- A **master's report** is usually shorter, more focused, and sometimes more practical in nature. It may be based on case studies, applied research, or industry projects.

In summary, a master's report is a scholarly document that showcases a student's research and analytical abilities, usually within a narrower scope than a full thesis, and it might also emphasize practical problem-solving or industry-related topics.

The Graduate School offers Microsoft Word templates to assist you in formatting your thesis or dissertation. Before using a template, review the Using the Thesis and Dissertation Templates User Guide. Another option, approved by the Graduate School, is LaTeX Document Preparation. Theses must follow the guidelines of the Graduate School booklet "Format Guidelines for Dissertations, Treatises, Theses and Reports".

Graduation for MSE

The Graduate School sets firm deadlines for submission of paperwork the semester you plan to graduate. All pertinent dates, including the thesis or report submission deadlines, are listed in the Course Schedule and at this site. The application for master's graduation is an electronic form. If you miss the electronic processing deadline (usually mid-November for fall graduation and mid-March for spring graduation), you will need to reschedule your graduation with the Graduate School. Several other deadlines, forms and guides that may be helpful in your MS&E graduation application can be found at the link above.

You must be registered for MSE 698B during the semester you want to apply for graduation and submit your thesis or report.

The Graduate School requires the digital submission of your thesis.

The Graduate School has very specific requirements regarding the format of the thesis. They offer Microsoft Word templates to assist you in formatting your thesis or dissertation. Before using a template, review the Using the Thesis and Dissertation Templates User Guide. Another option, approved by the Graduate School, is LaTeX Document Preparation. All theses must follow the guidelines of the Graduate School booklet "Format Guidelines for Dissertations, Treatises, Theses and Reports".

**Always check your thesis after converting it to a PDF as formatting may change. **

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

The basic course requirements for the PhD degree are as follows:

a) Deficiency courses

b) Core courses

c) Thrust courses

d) Advanced electives

e) MSE courses

The specific course requirements depend on your chosen Thrust area and research interests. Unlike the requirements for the MSE degree, there is no fixed requirement for the number of advanced electives that are required for the PhD degree. The number of elective courses is determined by the Dissertation Committee during the Preliminary Oral Examination (detailed below). You may petition the graduate advisor to receive credit if you feel that you have taken courses at the graduate level at another institution that are equivalent in content to a required Thrust course at The University of Texas at Austin. However, transfer credit is *not* given for core courses. All MS&E degrees require a minimum of 30 credit hours.

Qualifying Process

To qualify for PhD candidacy**, you must maintain a 3.3 GPA** in the four or five required core courses and show sufficient progress in your research. All students are expected to complete their core courses by the end of their third long semester at UT Austin.

If you do not have a 3.3 GPA in your core courses, you may take 1 additional semester to complete 1 additional core course and raise your GPA to 3.3. You cannot retake a class to raise your core course GPA.

Discuss your class selections with your supervisor and the graduate advisor to ensure you are on the right track. Under extenuating circumstances, exceptions to the 3.3 GPA may be granted. To apply for an exception, an explanation of the circumstances must be submitted to the graduate advisor in writing; applications for exceptions are considered by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Admission to Candidacy

Admission to PhD candidacy is based on the successful completion of course work and progress in research. Most students who are making adequate research progress apply for PhD candidacy during their 3rd long semester at UT.

The application for PhD candidacy can be prepared and submitted on-line through UT Direct here (listed under "Applying for Candidacy"). The official candidacy application requires a short statement describing the general topic of your research (max. 4600 characters). This should not be a historical summary of work done in research nor does it require extensive supporting data, but rather, it should be more like an abstract or proposal. As such, it should include the following:

- A statement explaining why this problem is worth studying from an academic perspective (note that this is not the same thing as the commercial relevance).
- An explanation of the methods and techniques you intend to use to study/address the proposed question(s).

An example candidacy abstract is available for students. Please email the Graduate Coordinator for a copy. Students are expected to structure their candidacy abstract in a similar fashion. Students are expected to first draft their candidacy abstract in MS Word, using 12-point Times New Roman font. Basic proofreading of grammar and spellchecking is required.

After approval of the candidacy abstract by your supervisor, consult with your supervisor and the graduate advisor about who should serve on your PhD committee. Your dissertation committee must consist of at least **four** faculty members. Three of these, including your supervisor who serves as Chair, *must* be members of the MS&E Graduate Studies Committee. The fourth *must* be from outside the MS&E GSC, and is usually from another department within UT.

On rare occasions, you may wish to include a committee member who is not on the faculty at UT Austin. Such a member must have academic and professional standing that is equivalent to that of a faculty member and must be approved by the Graduate School. If you are considering including a non-UT member on your committee, you will need to submit a CV/Resume for the non-GSC member. If you would like advice or have questions about the committee membership, please see the graduate advisor.

After you and your supervisor have agreed on the committee membership, contact each member and ask if they are willing to serve. Some invited committee members may say no. If that happens, speak with your supervisor about other possible candidates. Once complete, the application will route electronically to your research supervisor, the graduate advisor, the GSC chair, and the Office of Graduate Studies for approval. At the end of this process, you will receive and email saying that your application has been approved, and you are then eligible to register for dissertation courses.

The Dissertation Committee is responsible for conducting the preliminary and final oral examinations and must approve your dissertation. Any changes to your committee after approval of your candidacy application should be discussed with your supervisor and the graduate advisor before submitting an official change of doctoral committee form to the Graduate School. Changes to the committee are scrutinized by the Graduate School and must be justified. Changes in the last 30 days prior to a dissertation defense are granted only in exceptional circumstance. Thus, choose your committee wisely and if changes are needed, make sure you take care of this early.

Continuous Registration and Progress Towards Degree

Once you are admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, you must register continuously each long semester (i.e., fall and spring) until the degree is awarded. After candidacy, you may register for dissertation credits: 399W, 699W, or 999W.

If you have not graduated 2 years after admission to candidacy, the Graduate Studies Committee will begin reviewing your program annually to ensure that you are progressing towards completion of your degree. If you are not making satisfactory academic and research progress at this point, your candidacy may be terminated.

Remember that all coursework necessary for graduation must be within the last 6 years. Delayed progress towards your degree can put some of your coursework outside of the 6-year time limit and would require a petition to the GSC for reinstatement of those courses.

Preliminary Oral Examination and Program of Work

To make satisfactory progress towards a PhD the student should complete the Preliminary Oral Examination after 24-36 months (2-3 years) in residence. One of the big mistakes students make is to wait too long to complete the Preliminary Oral Exam. The right time to do it is as soon as you have sufficient results that you can see light at the end of the tunnel (e.g. you know what you need to do to finish your dissertation). Your Preliminary Oral Exam is not necessarily tied to your admission to candidacy, unless your supervisor makes it one. Therefore, do not feel that you must be in candidacy to complete your Prelims, or that you cannot apply to candidacy until your Prelims are complete.

Note: it is common in many other graduate programs at UT Austin to do this much later; *don't follow the advice of students in other graduate programs*.

The purpose of this examination is to determine the student's grasp of their research problem and to assess future work and goals. The proposal should be approximately 10 double-spaced pages (exclusive of appendices). Copies of this proposal should be submitted to members of your committee **at least two weeks** before the oral presentation is to be made. This proposal should contain:

- A description of the problem the objectives of the research
- The proposed methods of conducting the research
- Preliminary results
- The methods of analyzing the data resulting from the research
- Proposed research required to complete the dissertation
- A proposed timeline for completing the dissertation

Along with the proposal, the student must submit to the committee 1) a Preliminary Oral Exam form, 2) a Doctoral Program of Work and 3) the Learning Outcomes form.

We recommend completing the DocuSign version on the day of your exam, shortly before the exam begins. The Program of Work is a document of the courses you have taken, additional courses that you plan to take, and your prospective dissertation title. There is a minimum requirement of 30 coursework hours for the PhD degree, which includes Dissertation hours, and can be found on your UT Direct under "Graduate Degree Planner". The student should consult with the supervising professor about the details of the written proposal, the oral presentation, and any proposed coursework (other than dissertation).

The Preliminary Oral Exam will consist of three parts, plus the Program of Work. First the student will submit a short-written summary of proposed research and then present a 30-minute presentation on the proposed research. This will be followed by a question-and-answer session on the research program meant to test the student on his/her fundamental understanding of the fields pertinent to the research.

Following the Preliminary Oral Exam, the Dissertation Committee will deliberate and determine whether the student has an adequate plan for proceeding with his/her proposed research. If the Dissertation Committee feels that a major revision of the plan is needed, a re-examination will be scheduled. The Dissertation Committee will also carefully review the Program of Work and determine if any additional courses should be required.

The Dissertation Committee determines whether the research topic is appropriate and if the plan of action is adequate. In effect, they are agreeing that if the student executes this program successfully, it should lead to an acceptable dissertation. In addition, the committee is there to advise the student about any difficulties they can foresee with the research plan and to recommend any suggestions that would help the student achieve maximum success in the research. For this reason, it is essential that the student is completely honest and forthcoming about his/her proposed research.

At the Preliminary Oral, the Dissertation Committee will reach an agreement with the student at the end of the

exam regarding the coursework that will be suitable for their PhD, the committee signs the Preliminary Oral Exam form. This form, as well as the completed Program of Work and Learning Outcomes forms, will be turned into (i.e. emailed) to the Graduate Program Coordinator with all the committee members' printed names and signatures.

Written Dissertation

Dissertations differ between supervisors, but it will ultimately be a long form written work that includes original research, data, and analysis. Most MS&E dissertations contain content from previous journal publications the student wrote, along with additional research and analysis.

The Graduate School offers dissertations templates to help with correct formatting for final submission. The user guide is helpful for understanding how to effectively use the templates. There is also a booklet, "Format Guidelines for Dissertations, Treatises, Theses and Reports," that covers all the formatting required for submitting a final dissertation for graduation.

In addition to information about formatting (fonts, figures, etc.), please pay particular attention to Chapter VI, Section E. This section describes the appropriate methods for including previously published work, like journal articles, in your dissertation.

The University Writing Center is a great resource for dissertating students. They offer a wide range of services, from one-on-one writing appointments with a fellow graduate student, to writing groups, to weekend writing retreats that offer a place to write, distraction-free. You can sign up for their email list here.

Final Oral Defense

You must pass your final oral examination before your dissertation will be accepted by the graduate school. You should begin to schedule your final oral at least two months in advance to ensure all your committee members can attend. Check the Graduate School deadlines for defense dates; a defense cannot be held within 2 weeks of the last day of class unless the entire committee has consented to hold the defense during those 2 weeks. This guideline is not to prevent students from graduating – the formatting, paperwork, and other last-minute details necessary to finish the dissertation and submit in time for the Graduate School deadline means that you *need* time between the defense and final deadlines. While you can hold a defense in the last two weeks of classes, it is not recommended.

No less than four weeks before the date on which you intend to defend the dissertation, a copy of the **final** draft of the dissertation, reviewed for technical and grammatical correctness, should be submitted to each member of the dissertation committee, after receiving approval from your supervisor.

Two weeks prior to the defense date, a written request to hold the final oral examination must be submitted to the Graduate School. This request signifies the receipt of the doctoral dissertation for the purpose of administering the examination. The committee's decision to hold the examination must be unanimous. After all the committee members have signed the document, the graduate advisor must sign the form before you submit it to the Graduate School.

It is expected that all members of your committee will attend, either in person or via teleconference (i.e. Zoom). The Graduate School allows for one committee member (*not* your supervisor) to miss the defense if they agree to still read the dissertation and sign the Report of Dissertation Committee. If one of your committee members will be unable to make your defense, you will fill out the second page of the Request for Final Oral Exam form.

Along with the Request for Final Oral Exam, you will also submit specific documents from your dissertation for a format check. Your dissertation does not have to be completely formatted in order to submit these documents; you can format these pages per the Graduate School formatting instructions and submit them before you finish formatting the rest of your dissertation.

In addition, you must reserve a room for the defense. Students usually hold their defense at their primary research location. Contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for help with reserving a room for your defense. All dissertation defenses at UT are technically open to all members of the University committee and the public, unless restricted by the GSC. When you submit your Request for Final Oral Examination form, the Graduate School will update the Final Oral Exam Schedule to meet the requirements of an open defense.

At the final defense, you will begin by making a short public seminar presentation about your research (30-45 minutes). Remember that since the committee members have already read your dissertation, you need to highlight the importance, significance, and originality of your work. Following your presentation, the public and committee members will ask you questions during the final oral examination concerning your research and results.

Forms for the Defense

At least one week prior to the student's scheduled defense, the Graduate School will email a PDF file of the Report of Dissertation Committee form, pre-populated with the student's name and the names and roles of all the committee members, to the student, their supervisor, and the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student or supervisor will be responsible for bringing the form to the defense, which all committee members will sign after the student successfully completes the defense. All members are required to sign, and no proxies will be allowed. Digital or "scanned" signatures are accepted, and we have a DocuSign version for you to use, either for ease of use or for committee members that cannot attend in person.

The form must be signed by the GSC Chair, downloaded from DocuSign, and turned in by the student to the Graduate School by the semester deadline.

In addition, the supervisor will need to fill out a copy of the Learning Outcomes form after the defense. The supervisor or student may return this form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Other requirements, including the dissertation signature page, can be found here. These are also due by the deadlines set by the Graduate School. The Dissertation Signature Page is no longer signed for digital submission but should still be included in the final dissertation. See the formatting requirements for correct format of all dissertation pages.

Graduation for PhD

The Graduate School sets *firm* deadlines for submission of graduation-related paperwork. You should apply to graduate the semester you plan to complete your final oral defense. All pertinent dates, including the dissertation submission deadline, are listed in the Graduate Catalog and here.

Graduating students are required to publish their dissertation digitally by uploading a single PDF to the Texas Digital Library (TDL). It must be formatted per the Graduate School's guidelines. The dissertation must be uploaded to TDL before submitting the rest of the required pages.

In addition, the Report of Dissertation Committee is required, after the dissertation is submitted to TDL. All members of the committee must have signed the report, and all signatures must be on a single form (i.e. you can't turn in two partially complete forms signed by your committee, even if both forms together have all the signatures). Incomplete forms will not be accepted.

At the same time you submit your Report of Dissertation Committee, you can submit a request to temporarily delay the publication of your dissertation on ProQuest. This is often used when you plan on publishing your dissertation, either in parts or in whole, in the future and want to prevent others from reading your dissertation before you do. You can fill out and submit an Initial Request for Delay of Publication at the same time you send in your final paperwork. If you would prefer to have this document turned into a DocuSign document, email the Graduate Program Coordinator for help.

Both of these documents should be sent to the Graduate School at GradStudentSvcs@austin.utexas.edu by 3 p.m. CDT on the relevant deadline listed on the website. Only submit the documents after you have uploaded your dissertation to TDL. You will receive an email from the Graduate School once your documents have been accepted. During the busy season (the end of semesters, especially Spring semester), it could take a few days to receive the email. If you miss the deadline to submit your material for graduation, you will **NOT** graduate that semester. There is no penalty for applying and not meeting the deadlines; you will simply need to apply for graduation for the following semester and get all your paperwork in on time.

If you want to walk – that is, attend Convocation and be hooded – you will need to apply to walk by the required date. The Cockrell School of Engineering does not hold its own convocation ceremony. Instead, all graduates take part in the Graduate School Convocation. Applying to walk the stage signs you up to receive tickets for the ceremony. You will also need to rent (or buy) regalia and should ask your "hooder" (the person you want to place your hood over you) ahead of time to make sure they are also available that day.

All doctoral graduates are also invited to the University-wide celebration, usually held the Saturday of "official" graduation. More information about this ceremony will be sent out from the university as the Spring semester comes to an end.

Registration Procedures

Registration for each upcoming semester occurs during the middle of each current semester. For example, registration for spring semester will occur in late October or early November. Registration for the summer session and fall semester will occur in mid-April and will continue into early May.

Information is available in the appropriate Course Schedule.

You can add and drop classes until the 4th day of classes. From the 5th to the 12th day, you can only drop or add courses at the discretion of the department you're taking the course from. If you are trying to drop or add a course outside the MS&E program during this timeframe, you will need to speak to that department for help. After the 12th day of class, adding and dropping classes is allowed only in rare and unusual circumstances. Registering after the 12th day of classes requires a Request for Late Registration Form, as well as a petition letter to the Graduate School Dean.

Follow the dates and instructions carefully because if you miss the mid-semester deadlines, you may have to pay a late registration penalty. A late fee of **$25** is assessed for registration through the fourth class day of fall or spring term (or the second class day of a summer session), **$50** for registration from the fifth through the 12th class day of fall or spring term (or third and fourth class days of a summer session), and **$200** for registration after the 12th class day of fall or spring term (or fourth class day of a summer session). Unless late registration is the fault of the department, you are responsible for paying the late registration fees. You are expected to register for courses yourself after your advising hold has been removed. However, if you encounter difficulties, you may contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for assistance.

Advising

Below are the steps for advising and registration:

1. Check your Registration Information Sheet (RIS) for your registration schedule and for any bars you might have. Non-advising bars, such as financial holds, must be taken care of before you can register in the system.
2. Check the course schedule for courses offered in the upcoming semester. Approved MS&E program courses will be posted on the TMI website.
3. Discuss appropriate courses with your research supervisor and get his/her approval.
4. Fill out the MSE Advising form with the required information and courses you want to take. The system will automatically route the form to your supervisor, the Graduate Program Coordinator, and the Graduate Advisor.
5. The GPC will check that your courses fit (generally) within your Program of Work. The Graduate Adviser must approve your proposed schedule before your advising bar can be cleared and you can register.
6. Once the Graduate Advisor has signed off, the GPC will lift your advising hold. If you have no other holds, you can now register for courses. Be aware that some courses offered by other departments might require you to contact that department for approval and enrollment.
7. If you are unable to register for the courses you picked and discussed with your advisor, be sure to discuss alternatives with them. If you have questions about how courses would fit in with your requirements, you can also contact the GPC.

Students who have advanced to Candidacy AND passed the Preliminary Oral Exam can skip these steps. The Graduate Program Coordinator will “batch lift” these bars by a set date detailed in the registration email. If after this date, if your bar has not been lifted, contact the GPC. All other holds (financial, paperwork, visa) will need to be taken care of before you can register, even if the GPC lifts your advising hold.

Registration

Registration is done via the web here. Again, check your Registration Information Sheet (RIS) for your registration dates and times. You will need to know the unique numbers, not just the general course number, of the courses for which you want to register—be sure these are correct! For instance, MSE 397R is the course number and name for MSE Research credits, but "19520" is the *unique* number for the course. They are listed underneath the course number and name in the Course Schedule.

Do not register for any unapproved courses. If you need to change your courses from those agreed upon by your supervisor and the Graduate Advisor, you must contact both via email (be sure to copy the Graduate Program Coordinator) for approval. If you don't, you run the risk of enrolling in a course that will not count towards your Program of Work or has a prerequisite you do not have. If you are not sure if a course will count towards your PoW, you can check your Graduate Degree Planner on UT Direct or contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Pay your fee bill by the due date. If you do not, your registration will be canceled. If a GRA or TA is paying your bill, check that your balance on My Tuition Bill is paid before the 4th day of classes, or your registration will be cancelled. If you require a Tuition Reduction Benefit (TRB) waiver, be sure you can completed one for each semester.

Once your tuition is paid, you MUST confirm your attendance, and the system will only allow you to confirm attendance when your balance is zero. **You must still confirm your registration when the balance due is $0.00**. Be sure to click the button to confirm attendance and ensure that you receive the message "Your registration is complete" after you confirm your registration.

Even if a third party (like your supervisor) is paying your tuition, you must log in to "My Tuition Bill" to confirm your registration to prevent your classes from being dropped.

Resources

MS&E students at the Texas Materials Institute and The University of Texas at Austin are supported by a wide range of services and resources.

- Computer & Printing Facilities
- Libraries
- Mail
- Email & Tech
- Office and Keys
- Parking & Transportation
- Professional Development
- Student Organizations
- Student Records
- University Catalogs
- Writing Resources
- Mental Health Resources
- Career Services
- Parents & Pregnant Students
- Social Media
- Helpful Sites

Computer and Printing Facilities

A Learning Resource Center or computer lab is available to all MS&E students. It is in EER 6.614. To gain access you must first visit the ID Card Center in the FAC to have your proximity card activated and then inform the graduate coordinator to finalize access with Facilities. This is not necessary for incoming cohorts, as the Graduate Program Coordinator will submit the batch of names to Facilities before New Student Orientation. This room has desks, computers, printer, scanner, paper, and supplies.

There are work and computer workstations in the Engineering Library, located in EER on the first floor.

Printers and some copiers are available in various places on campus, including libraries. You may get an access code or copy card from your research supervisor that you can use when making copies for official UT business only. You should load money onto your own account you will use the printers across campus for personal use. The EER printer in 6.614 is free of charge to MSE students.

Libraries

The principal library used by MS&E students is the McKinney Engineering Library, located in the Engineering Education and Research Center (EER) on the first floor (1.706).

It is a branch of the General Libraries and has more than 165,000 volumes in all fields of engineering. Patent information, standards, and manufacturers' catalogs are available at this branch. A network containing the Applied Science and Technology Index, Engineering Index and numerous other databases are available for free self-service computerized literature searches.

Other branch libraries that are useful to engineering students are the Kuehne Physics-Mathematics-Astronomy Library at the Physics, Mathematics & Astronomy Building (PMA), 4.200, and the Walter Geology Library in the Jackson Geological Sciences Building (JGB), 4.202.

The main library is the Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL), located on the corner of Speedway and 21st. Check out the main Library website for information on hours; each branch has different hours of operation. You may access the UT library online catalog (UTCAT), using a public terminal in the library or from a personal computer, for information on items in the General Libraries and library hours.

Many research tools, including numerous journal subscriptions and online databases, are available online through the main UT Austin Libraries page. The PCL also includes a **Graduate Landing Spot** inside the Scholars Commons, which includes rooms that can be reserved, places to study, and a small kitchen. The University Writing Center is housed in the PCL. For PhD students who have reached candidacy, the PCL has small, closed study rooms available for semester- or year-long check out. The PCL also hosts Data & Donuts each semester, which are small workshops on various technical or software topics, as well as other workshops of various topics.

Library orientation tours are usually offered at the beginning of each semester or feel free to ask a librarian if you have questions about finding materials in the library. Please note that all students are fined for overdue books, but most books can be checked out for an entire semester.

Every major in the university is given a Subject Librarian, which is a librarian who is an expert in helping students in that field, either with their research, finding appropriate resources and databases, or pointing them in the right direction for their research question. The Subject Librarian for MS&E is Larayne Dallas, and she works in the Engineering Library. You can find how to contact the Subject Librarian on the Materials Science and Engineering Subject Guide webpage.

Mail

TMI no longer has individual mailboxes for staff or students. However, students can use the TMI mailbox for official university business. Mail is delivered to EER once a week and staff check the mailbox once a week as well. If you receive mail to the TMI mailbox, you will receive an email when it can be picked up from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Mail can be addressed to:

The University of Texas at Austin

Materials Science and Engineering Program
Your Name
2501 Speedway
C5500
Austin, TX 78712-293

Campus mail (i.e. mail between buildings/departments, usually in brown envelopes and with no postage) should be addressed in this way:

Your Name
Materials Science and Engineering Program
Mail Code C5500

Email & Tech

Email
All UT students have an official email with your UT EID and the suffix of "@my.utexas.edu." This email is listed as your primary email and will be used for official communication with the University. More information about this email, new starting Summer 2025, can be found on the Official Student Email page. For how to access and use this email, here is the Knowledge Base article for students.

If you want to use a different email, either a UT Webmail email you previously set up or a personal email (like Gmail or Yahoo) for communication with the Graduate Coordinator and other MS&E listservs, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Duo and MFA
The University uses Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for access to most university logins. Duo is the app UT uses for its MFA, and it is essential that you download the app to a phone you will have consistent access to. For help on using Duo, registering your devices, and possible backup plans, see the Knowledge Base articles.

UT Wi-Fi
The University has free Wi-Fi for students and requires a UT EID and password to login. Check out the Knowledge Base article for questions or help.

Canvas
Canvas is the learning management system (LMS) UT uses for courses, similar to Blackboard or Moodle. It also requires an EID and password for login. The website also offers tutorials and tech support for uses. If you have questions or need assistance, you can contact the Service Desk at 512-475-9400 or help@utexas.edu.

UT Box
As UT students, you have access to Box cloud storage through UT, via UT Box. It is free of charge, but you do lose access after leaving the university (due to graduation or withdrawal).

Zoom
All UT students have a student Zoom account, which is accessed via SSO Login, which requires your EID and password. For more information on how to get started with your UT Zoom account, see the Help Website here. You can use your personal Zoom account, but there may be instances where meetings are limited to UT accounts or emails, and the UT Zoom often offers additional services not offered with standard personal Zoom accounts.

You can find more about Technology for Students here. You can find all Campus IT Policies here.

Offices and Keys

Key requests are obtained through your current PI or faculty advisor. Please contact them to arrange office assignments and to collect your key before your first day. The Lock & Key Service is located next to the Chemical & Petroleum Engineering (CPE) building, on Speedway. All keys must be returned by their due date.

If your faculty does not have an assigned administrative contact to handle these requests, please have them email the Graduate Program Coordinator to start the process of getting you access and any required keys. If you are emailing to request a key or ID-card access to a room, we need confirmation from your supervisor that you indeed need a key/access; either an email, written note, or some form of documentation stating that you need what you are requesting to the room you are asking for. DO NOT fill out the “Request a Key and Authorization” form yourself, as the contacts to input on that form are higher than yourself.

Your UT ID card is your key to get into the Graduate Lab, 6.614. Be sure that your card is proximity-enabled, which can be done at the ID Card Services Center.

Parking & Transportation

Parking is very limited at UT Austin and UTPD officers do give parking tickets.

As a student you are eligible to purchase a "C" permit (student parking). Permits do not guarantee you a spot and it may be necessary to arrive very early to find parking. You are also able to put your name on a waitlist for an "S" permit if you live off campus (NOT in an official UT residence hall). You must sign up for your preferred garage on the waitlist each semester. The waitlist can be lengthy, and the garages with waitlists tend to be expensive. However, if/when you receive a permit, you can hold on to that permit until you graduate (unless you want to give it up sooner). The cheapest garage tends to be East Campus Garage (ECG), on the other side of I-35. While it is across the interstate from campus, there is a shuttle (Route 640 – Forty Acres) that runs frequently between the garage and campus.

Registered graduate students who are employed by UT for at least twenty hours per week (GRAs, TAs, and some fellowship holders) may qualify for an "A" permit (see parking maps here). The graduate coordinator sends in a parking verification form to the parking office in late August. If you believe you qualify for "A" parking and the parking office does not have your name, contact the graduate coordinator. You may also complete an application to receive "A" parking online under the "My Parking Profile" tab on the far right-hand side of the Parking and Transportation Services page (you need your EID to login).

For more information on eligibility, fees, location of the parking lots, or other information on parking, refer to Parking and Transportation Services here. If you do drive and park on campus, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the emails PTS sends out, as they often alert you to construction and events that might make driving to and parking on campus harder – so you can plan accordingly!

UT Austin offers a shuttle service to registered students to many parts of Austin, including the Pickle Research Center. Maps and time are available on the website. Austin city buses, part of CapMetro, are also free for UT students; you just need your UT ID card to board. You can use the CapMetro Trip Planner to help you research which routes would be best for you.

UT encourages the use of bikes to get to, from, and around campus. You do need to register your bike, which is free. There are bike lockers in various parking garages, and racks around campus. ALWAYS lock your bike. You can find more information about biking to campus, including maps, Fixit Stations, shower facilities, and the yearly bike auction, at the BikeUT website.

Electric scooters are approved to park on campus in designated parking spots. Follow the rules and guidelines for using scooters on campus, which can be found here.

For those that walk to campus, UT Sure Walk is available for those living around campus who feel uncomfortable walking home late at night. They will have fellow students accompany you on your walk or provide you with a complimentary car or car ride, depending on where you live.

There is more information on various forms of transportation at the PTS Transportation website.

Professional Development

Engineering Teaching Assistant Certification
The Engineering Teaching Assistant Certification program provides professional learning opportunities in the fundamentals of engineering education, promoting student success and other aspects of fulfilling their responsibilities as educators and mentors. Certification is required for all new Cockrell School TAs during the first semester in which they are appointed. TAs who aspire to have a career in academia have additional opportunities to participate in a community of practice and attain an Advanced Engineering TA Certification.

The certification process consists of four elements, all of which must be completed to attain certification:

- Eight-hour TA certification workshop
- In-class observation or participation in a teaching practicum session
- Early-semester survey of teaching effectiveness
- Official UT Austin course-instructor survey (CIS or eCIS) — TA version

Pre-Certification: Training in Engineering Teaching Methods
All graduate students who have not been appointed as TAs are encouraged to participate in the Engineering TA Certification Workshop at any time. When a pre-certified graduate student is later appointed as a TA, he/she can complete the remaining certification requirements during the first semester of appointment to attain full Engineering Teaching Assistant Certification.

Advanced Engineering Teaching Assistant Certification
Certified Engineering Teaching Assistants can attain advanced-level certification by fulfilling the following requirements:

- Participate in two continuing-education workshops, one of which can be outside the Cockrell School
- Successfully complete an additional in-class observation and follow-up coaching
- Develop a teaching statement and teaching portfolio

Preparing Future Faculty Workshops
All graduate students and post-docs, particularly those who aspire to have an academic career involving teaching and/or research, are welcome to participate in workshops that range from the following topics:

- Developing your Curriculum Vitae (CV), Research Statement and Teaching Statement
- Active learning strategies to increase student engagement and learning
- Preparing to apply and interview for an engineering faculty position
- Developing a research proposal

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
The CTL offers multiple different professional development programs for graduate students, including a Teaching Preparation Series that can result in a “Teaching Preparation Certificate” or an “Advanced Teaching Preparation Certificate.”

Engineering Career Assistance Center (ECAC)
The ECAC offers career counseling, workshops, and networking opportunities. They have career counselors that can help you improve your job search, in both academia and industry. Through their ENGR Direct page, they also offer tips on resumes, job applications, and other job documents.

Office of Career and Life Design

Part of the Graduate School, the newly created Office of Career and Life Design offers professional development and career counseling for graduate students and post docs. They offer career advising for those looking to go on the job market, courses on career design or skill development, practice interviews and interview rooms, and networking events. Located at the Flawn Academic Center (FAC), on the 2nd floor (2.236), they will be holding events throughout the year for graduate students interested in professional development and future career plans.

Student Organizations

The UT Official Directory, issued annually, contains a list of all Registered Student Organizations, with names and phone numbers for more information. A comprehensive list can also be found here. These student organizations encompass many kinds of clubs, such as political associations, ethnic associations, religious groups, sports clubs, etc. Here are a few applicable organizations:

1. **Graduate Engineering Council (GEC)**

The GEC is an organization developed to promote social and academic interaction among graduate students in the College of Engineering. The council is composed of representatives from each graduate program in engineering, including MS&E. The GEC publishes a Graduate Engineering Guide, sponsors several seminars and social events each semester, and compiles a resume book.

2. **Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)**

The Graduate Student Assembly is a university-wide organization aimed at representing the interests of all graduate students at The University of Texas. It provides representation within the formal university structure: Graduate Assembly, senior cabinet, and Student Senate. GSA has representatives on the Faculty Council, the Graduate Guide, and various committees such as the TA/AI Welfare, Rights, and Responsibilities Committee.

3. **Society of Women Engineers Graduate Division**

A Part of the Society of Women Engineers at UT Austin, Graduate SWE is "a focused group of graduate students committed to providing a support network for women pursuing advanced degrees in engineering or computer science. Started in the Fall of 2008, the Graduate Division "provides a support network for graduate women in engineering and computer science as well as personal, professional, and leadership development opportunities. The committee also serves as mentors to UT's undergraduate SWE Section and maintains strong relationships with several complementary committees and programs at UT, including the UT Women in Engineering Program Faculty Committee, the SWE Women in Academia Committee, and the SWE Graduate Focus Interest Group."

4. **Student Parent Organization**

The mission of Student Parent Organization is to create community, provide access to resources, and advocate for parenting students at UT. Student parents must balance family life and academic responsibilities which can lead to feelings of loneliness. SPO is here to remind student parents that you are not alone, and you deserve your place in the Longhorn community. They hold events and meetups and hold an Orange Blossom Graduation for all student parents at the end of the Spring semester.

More student organizations can be found at the Cockrell School's Student Organizations page.

Student Records

The Graduate Program Coordinator keeps current student files. You must keep your latest contact information up to date with the university on the Student Records page with the university.

Student records include all educational records except for directory information and are not public records. Directory information is defined as "a student's name, local and permanent addresses, electronic mail addresses, UT EID, telephone listing, place of birth, major field(s) of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height if a member of an athletic team, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees, awards and honors received (including selection criteria), the most recent previous educational institution attended, job title and dates of employment when employed by the University in a position that requires student status, and other similar information. Other similar information includes a student's classification and expected date of graduation and student parking permit information." This information can be restricted by the student, and can be done so here (UT Direct link, EID needed for login).

Student records are governed by FERPA, or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. It is a federal law that pertains to the release of and access to educational records. The law, also known as the Buckley Amendment, applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA applies to personally identifiable information in educational records. This includes items such as the student's name, names of family members, addresses, personal identifiers such as Social Security numbers and personal characteristics or other information that make the student's identity easily traceable. The University may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record only under the condition that all requirements are met in 34 CFR Part 99, Family Education Rights and Privacy. In short, once you enroll as a student, university employees cannot give out your information to anyone other than you, unless you grant others access (like your parents or your spouse). You can find out more about FERPA here.

In addition, please make sure all information is correct in Workday.

If you would like your email changed on the MS&E student listserv, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

University Catalogs

Pertinent university procedures and regulations are addressed in these university catalogs: *General Information* and *The Graduate Catalog*. All university programs follow the policies laid out in the Catalog and is considered the "document of authority" for all students. All MS&E students should be familiar with the information provided.

General Information, published annually in July, contains current and historical information about the university and regulations that apply to all students during the academic year printed on the title page. It covers general policies and information for admissions, registration, tuition and fees, academic policies and procedures, student services, and libraries and other academic resources. *General Information* is intended for use with each of the other issues of the catalog of the university.

The *Graduate Catalog* is published in July of odd-numbered years and contains degree requirements for both master's and doctoral students. It also contains the official regulations of the Graduate School, such as continuous registration, time limits, and graduation requirements. It also contains descriptions for most graduate courses offered by all departments, which is where you would find if a particular course is equivalent for another.

The Course Schedule is issued each semester (fall, spring and summer) and is viewable online. Once you select a semester, the webpage contains procedures on how and when to register, lists which classes are available during the semester, when and where they meet, and deadlines. It also contains the final exam schedule and the calendar of the university. You can also find the official university academic calendars here.

Writing Resources

The University Writing Center and the Sanger Learning Center offers a number of services for graduate students, including feedback on theses and dissertations.

University Writing Center

The UWC is in the Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL) at 2.330, which the ground floor when you walk into the library. They have several services for graduate students, including individualized writing appointments, weekly writing groups, monthly writing retreats, workshops, and other resources specifically for graduate students. All of this is free for current UT students.

- Writing Appointments: 45-minute appointments with a writing consultant. They can help with any writing project, at any stage in the writing process, and at any point in the program, from class papers to your thesis proposal to your final dissertation.
- Writing Groups: Sometimes you just need the accountability of others to get your writing done, and UWC offers weekly writing groups, both in-person and online, that offer accountability in a friendly atmosphere. They typically meet weekly for a semester, and you can sign up for multiple semesters in a row.
- Writing Retreats: Once a month, the UWC offers a full-day retreat at their writing center, where graduate students can have a quiet area to focus on their writing, surrounded by others doing the same. They typically have snacks available, as well as appointment times to meet with a writing consultant, if you want. You can stay for as little or as long as you'd like.
- Workshops: The UWC offers workshops throughout the academic year, both in-person and online. They also have some previously recorded workshops available on their YouTube Channel.
- Resources: Both the website and UWC have handouts for a variety of subjects, from documentation and style guides, to writing guides, to grammar and punctuation guides, to sources on writing resumes, abstracts, and literature reviews.

Sanger Learning Center

The Sanger Learning Center is located inside the Jester (JES) dorm, across from the PCL, on the main floor. While aimed at undergraduate students, they offer some resources for graduate students, including appointments with Learning Specialists.

- Learning Specialist Appointments: Learning Specialists can help with issues like time management and planning, dissertation and thesis planning, and studying with ADHD and/or learning disabilities.

Mental Health Resources

Situation:	Plan of Action:
I'm experiencing an emergency or immediate safety threat and/or concern.	Call 911 or UTPD: 512-471-4441
I'm experiencing a crisis	Call the UT 24/7 Crisis Line: 512-471-2255 or walk-in to UT's Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm, SSB 5th Floor
I'm concerned another person at UT may be in crisis	Call the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050 or report online via their website
I might need mental health support	Reach out to UT's Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC): 512-471-3515, Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm, SSB 5th floor to speak with someone about the best support option for you, including individual and group counseling, classes and workshops. You can also contact the Engineering CARE Counselor Danielle Underwood: 512-471-8396, EER 2.848. UT employees may be eligible for individual video counseling through UT's Employee Assistance Program: 512-471-3366
For non-mental health support with an emergency	Contact Student Emergency Services at 512-471-5017 (8am-5pm, M-F) or in SSB 4.104

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) 512-232-5050

Are you worried about a student in your class, bothered that your roommate has been acting differently, or concerned about the behavior of a co-worker? Do you have concerns but are not sure what to do? If so, contact the Behavior Concerns Advice line at **512-232-5050** or report online using the form on their website.

The Behavior Advice Line is a service that provides The University of Texas at Austin's faculty, students, and staff an opportunity to discuss their concerns about another individual's behavior. Trained staff members will assist the individual in exploring available options and strategies. They will also provide appropriate guidance and resource referrals to address the situation. Any concerns for the welfare of a fellow student can be directed to this number. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, however the university may be required to release some information to appropriate parties. **Your online request is not anonymous**. If you wish to remain anonymous, please call the BCAL line at 512-232-5050.

Cases that present an immediate threat to self, others, or property should be considered an emergency and should be directed to The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD) by calling 911.

Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC)

The CMHC provides counseling, psychiatric consultations, and prevention services that facilitate student's academic and life goals while enhancing their personal growth and well-being. They have short-term individual counseling, group counseling, workshops, classes, and MindBody labs. The CMHC is in the SSB on the 5th floor.

CMHC Crisis Line

The CMHC Crisis Line is a confidential service of CMHC that offers an opportunity for UT-Austin students to talk with trained counselors about urgent concerns. A counselor is available every day of the year, including holidays. You can call us when you want, at your convenience. Our telephone counselors will spend time addressing your immediate concerns. Our telephone counselors also have specific training in responding to crisis situations.

Counselors in Academic Residence Program (CARE)

CARE's primary mission is to provide access to mental health support for students who are struggling emotionally and/or academically. Our presence normalizes the counseling process and makes us readily available for services. We decrease barriers by assisting students in a location that is familiar and convenient for them. CARE counselors get to know the concerns that are unique to their college's students. They integrate in the college and provide support and consultation on mental health issues for advisors, faculty and dean's staff.

The CARE counselor for the Cockrell School of Engineering is Danielle Underwood, LCSW. Her office hours are Wednesdays from 11am-12pm. Danielle is in Engineering Student Services South, EER 2.848. Call 512-471-8396.

Student Outreach and Support (SOS)

Formerly Student Emergency Services, SOS helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. **Please note, their office does not provide counseling services.**

Emergency Situations include but are not limited to:

- Missing Student
- Family Emergency
- Fire or Natural Disaster
- Student Death (former or current)
- Medical or Mental Health Concern
- Academic difficulties due to crisis or emergency situations

Call 512-471-5017 or email dosstudentsupport@austin.utexas.edu. Calls and emails are answered 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday. Voicemails and messages received after hours are responded to the next business day.

Career Services

Cockrell Engineering Career Assistance Center (ECAC)
The ECAC has resources to help in the job search process, whether that's in industry or academia. The ECAC is in EER. 2.604 and is open Monday through Friday, 8am-5pm (closed for lunch during the summers). They hold advising drop-in hours Monday-Friday, from 9am-11:30am and 1pm-4:30pm.

To make appointments online and view more career resources from the ECAC, sign into the UT Job system 12Twenty@Texas, visit the Career Resources at ENGR Direct, or the Grad Student Career Help on ENGR Direct.

Graduate School
The Graduate School has resources and information for both academic and "Alt-Ac" (i.e. industry) careers. Here you can find links to HireUTexas, a job board for UT students can find employment opportunities. They have links to online career exploration resources, such as Intersect Job Simulations, Versatile PhD, My IDP for Sciences, and Interstride for International Graduate Students.

Office of Career and Life Design
An office of the Graduate School, the Office of Career and Life Design offers career advising, industry networking events, discipline networking nights, job document help, interviewing prep, and academic career guidance.

The Office sends out a weekly newsletter to all graduate students and post-docs, with information on career resources, events, opportunities, and jobs.

Parents & Pregnant Students

Life doesn't get put on hold when you enter Graduate School. Graduate Students often come in with families or start families while in school. Both the Graduate School and the Cockrell School of Engineering have family-friendly policies in place for parents and pregnant students. There are also campus resources for parents and pregnant students.

Graduate School's Statement of Support: "The Graduate School recognizes that life events such as becoming a parent can interrupt a student's academic career. The Graduate School is committed to supporting our students. It is our commitment to work with sensitivity and imagination to ensure that all available arrangements are explored by advisers, academic staff and departmental leaders."

Cockrell School's Family Friendly Policy:

The Cockrell School is aware that some graduate students start families while enrolled in our graduate programs. To aid these graduate students in balancing their scholarly and parenting responsibilities, the Cockrell School provides accommodation for childbirth, newborn care and adoption to qualifying graduate students.

Accommodations

We offer five types of accommodations for graduate students with growing families. These accommodations are available to full-time, enrolled Cockrell School graduate students (enrolled for at least nine credit hours each long semester and three hours in summer) who are in good academic standing. The accommodations are available to students who experience a childbirth (either who give birth or whose spouse or partner gives birth) or who adopt a child. It is the responsibility of a graduate student anticipating a birth or adoption to inform his or her graduate advisor and research supervisor of any anticipated accommodation needs as early as possible.

1. Academic Accommodations

Eligible students are allowed a one-semester extension of the academic milestones required to fulfill the requirements of their degree. The extension includes coursework, qualifying exams, committee meetings, presentations and any other required academic responsibilities. The extension may be taken either during or immediately following the semester in which the student's child is born or adopted. After an accommodation period, students are expected to resume progress toward degree completion, and faculty are encouraged to remain flexible in their expectations so that students can meet the demands of graduate study while adjusting to new demands in their parental roles.

2. Teaching Assistant (TA) Accommodations

The Cockrell School strongly encourages departments to provide non-TA/AI support for graduate students during the semester in which a child is born or adopted. If this cannot be done, new parents may request to be appointed to TA positions whose duties can be done in flexible environments and on flexible schedules. Flexibility regarding the distribution of specific TA duties within a semester is strongly encouraged for supervisors of students anticipating the birth or adoption of a child. The student and graduate advisor (or other supervisor) should agree to review these TA duties on a periodic schedule to ensure that work is being completed in a timely and satisfactory manner. A TA whose accommodations include performing at least some duties away from campus should review University guidelines regarding telecommuting and may be asked to sign a Telecommuting Agreement.

3. Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) Accommodations

Some graduate students may be able to carry out modified research duties following the birth or adoption of a child – thereby continuing progress towards the goals of their research, meeting the requirements of the external funding agency and remaining in compliance for reporting efforts on federal grants, if appropriate. (Modified duties may include: scholarly research and literature compilations, data processing and analysis, scientific writing, or preparation of other scientific communication materials). Students should check with their program's graduate advisor and graduate coordinator for information and discuss the feasibility of an accommodation with their supervising

professor.

4. Cockrell School of Engineering Alternative Duty Accommodations

If graduate students appointed as TAs or GRAs cannot be accommodated by departments or research projects as outlined in Provisions 2 and 3 above, they may apply to the Cockrell School's Academic Affairs Office for a funded six-week alternative duties accommodation during the semester in which a child is born or adopted. The nature of the alternative duties will be determined in collaboration with the student's supervising professor.

5. Parental Leave

In some cases, a complete break from all employment responsibilities may be most appropriate for new graduate student parents (Authorization for Leave of Absence). Benefits-eligible graduate student employees who continue to meet eligibility requirements for employment are entitled to Parental Leave of up to twelve weeks following the birth of a child or an adoption or foster-care placement of a child under age three. This leave is unpaid, and – unless the student qualifies for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – employee health insurance premium sharing is unavailable for any full month of leave (see the Human Resources Parental Leave webpage. Please see your department's graduate advisor or graduate coordinator for assistance.

Application Requirements

After consulting with their supervising professor, students must apply in writing to their graduate advisor for a parental accommodation. If the graduate advisor determines that a Cockrell School of Engineering Alternative Duty Accommodation (Provision 4) is needed, a written request must route through the department chair to the associate dean of academic affairs.

Notes

As with all academic employee appointments, future financial support is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress as defined by the student's GSC and satisfactory job performance as defined by the employing unit.

International students may have to satisfy additional obligations in provisions 2–5 above and are strongly encouraged to consult in advance with the International Office about possible visa implications.

In the event that a student's request for accommodation is denied, the student may appeal to the dean of engineering, who will consider the appeal in coordination with the Cockrell School's Human Resources staff.

If medical conditions indicate that additional accommodations may be necessary, students should contact Services for Disabilities and Access to determine what additional accommodations are reasonable.

Workplace Accommodations for Pregnant Employees: "The University provides reasonable accommodations to employees experiencing limitations associated with pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions under the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA). While many accommodations under the PWFA can be managed at the departmental level, Institutional Accessibility and Accommodation facilitates the process when situations are more complex. Documentation from an individual's healthcare provider is necessary in these situations to assess the limitations associated with one's condition(s) and what accommodations are appropriate. Institutional Accessibility and Accommodation can be contacted via email at ada@austin.utexas.edu. More information about the PWFA accommodation process is here."

The Title IX Office has information regarding the rights of parents and pregnant students, including information on supportive measures, leaves of absences, priority registration, and policies against discrimination. They have a Student Parent Liaison, Robert Leary, who can be reached at supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu or by phone at 512-471-0419.

The Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) 3-3021, Preventing Discrimination Against Pregnant and Parenting Students, regulates the protection and equal treatment of parents and pregnant students on campus.

Student Parent Organization

The mission of Student Parent Organization is to create community, provide access to resources, and advocate for parenting students at UT. Student parents must balance family life and academic responsibilities which can lead to feelings of loneliness. SPO is here to remind student parents that you are not alone, and you deserve your place in the Longhorn community. They hold events and meetups and hold an Orange Blossom Graduation for all student parents at the end of the Spring semester.

Childcare

All UT students and employees are eligible to use UT's Child Development Centers. There is often a waitlist, so applying early, either after admission acceptance or in pregnancy, is advised. The tuition is tiered based on income, with a limited number of slots for the lowest tuition rate.

All UT benefits-eligible employees (including GRAs) have access to HealthPoint Work/Life Balance Services, which includes access to Care.com for finding childcare options and other parenting resources.

Social Media

The official website for the Texas Materials Institute is tmi.utexas.edu.

We have a LinkedIn page, Texas Materials Institute, that you can follow and link to.

Helpful Sites

UT System

- UT: http://www.utexas.edu
- TMI: http://tmi.utexas.edu/
- Health services: http://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/
- Counseling services: http://cmhc.utexas.edu/
- Legal services for students: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/lss/
- Graduate student forms: https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/forms
- Parking: parking.utexas.edu
- Texas One Stop: https://onestop.utexas.edu/
- UT Direct: https://utdirect.utexas.edu
- My UT: http://my.utexas.edu
    - My Tuition Bill, What I Owe, Where's My Check
- Official UT calendar: http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/
- Tuition bill waivers: http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/registration-tuition-and-fees/tuition-and-fees/tuition-waivers/
- Office of the Registrar: http://registrar.utexas.edu
- New employee orientation: https://hr.utexas.edu/student/new-student-employee-checklist
- Health Insurance: https://hr.utexas.edu/student/student-employee-insurance-benefits/academic-graduate-student-employee-insurance-options
- Safety training: http://ehs.utexas.edu/

Government Offices

- Tx Dept. of Public Safety: https://www.dps.texas.gov/
    - Driver licenses, ID card services
- Texas DMV: https://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/register-your-vehicle
    - Vehicle registration
- Travis County: https://www.traviscountytx.gov/
- Travis County Voter Registration: https://tax-office.traviscountytx.gov/voters
- Austin City Website: https://www.austintexas.gov/