

# MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, PHD

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW-Madison Policy Library (<https://policy.wisc.edu/>). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With faculty advisor and Department of Mechanical Engineering Graduate Committee approval, students are allowed to transfer up to 28 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions toward the minimum graduate degree credit requirement and the minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement. No credits from other institutions can be counted toward the minimum graduate residence credit requirement. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

##### Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

With faculty advisor approval, students may transfer a maximum of 7 credits from a UW-Madison undergraduate degree or an ABET-accredited undergraduate degree (from another institution). Only coursework that is applicable to the degree curriculum is eligible (based on UW-Madison course/course equivalency number). These credits will not be allowed to satisfy the minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement unless taken in courses numbered 700 or above (UW-Madison course equivalent). No credits can be applied toward the minimum graduate residence credit requirement. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

##### Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

##### Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

With faculty advisor and Department of Mechanical Engineering Graduate Committee approval, refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

#### PROBATION

The Department of Mechanical Engineering Graduate Committee academic progress policy may be reviewed in the Graduate Handbook (see Contact box for link).

### ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

All students must have a mechanical engineering faculty advisor who assists them in planning a course sequence that meets degree requirements, who helps guide them and mentor them in their research, and who will discuss career objectives with the student.

A qualifying exam committee must include the student's mechanical engineering faculty advisor and two other mechanical engineering faculty members.

A preliminary exam committee must include the student's mechanical engineering faculty advisor and at least three other members who will also serve on the final oral defense committee.

A final dissertation oral exam (defense) must be presented to the dissertation committee of at least five members (but no more than eight) consisting of your advisor, who chairs the committee, three other graduate faculty or former graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement, and one of the following: another graduate faculty, a retired faculty member with emeritus status, or a UW-Madison academic staff member who has been approved by the Mechanical Engineering executive committee. At least one faculty member on the committee must be from outside the Mechanical Engineering Department. Members of the committee from outside of Mechanical Engineering should be selected to have a background appropriate to evaluate the dissertation.

### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credit maximum. Refer to the Graduate School: Maximum Credit Loads and Overload Requests (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1228/>) policy.

### TIME LIMITS

#### Qualifying Exam

The written portion of the qualifying exam is offered twice a year, once in August/September and once in January, generally the week before classes start. The associated literature review presentation must be completed within the timing limits stated (see graduate handbook, contact box).

1. If you enter the PhD program directly without an MS or equivalent degree, you will first earn 30 graduate credits. Take your qualifying exam either the first or second time that it is offered after the semester in which you earn those 30 credits.
2. If you earn a UW-Madison Mechanical Engineering MS and immediately enter the PhD program in the following semester, take your qualifying exam either the first or second time it is offered after the semester in which you earned your MS.
3. If you enter the PhD program with an MS degree either from another department or institution or are returning to UW-Madison with an MS degree after an absence, take the exam at the start of your third PhD semester.

#### Preliminary Exam

PhD students must complete their preliminary exam within five years of passing their qualifying exam.

#### Dissertation Defense (Oral Thesis Presentation)

There must be at least nine (9) months between the preliminary exam and dissertation defense.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to successfully complete the dissertation defense and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

## Average Time to Degree

The average time to degree, beyond the bachelor degree, is 5 years.

## GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

## Mechanical Engineering Grievance Procedures

If a student feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student, the University offers several avenues to resolve the grievance. Students' concerns about unfair treatment are best handled directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, they should contact the advisor or the person in charge of the unit where the action occurred (program or department chair, section chair, lab manager, etc.). Many departments and schools/colleges have established specific procedures for handling such situations; check their web pages and published handbooks for information. If such procedures exist at the local level, these should be investigated first. For more information see the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: <https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=grievancesandappeals>. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Affairs ([engr-dean-graduateaffairs@engr.wisc.edu](mailto:engr-dean-graduateaffairs@engr.wisc.edu)) provides overall leadership for graduate education in the College of Engineering (CoE), and is a point of contact for graduate students who have concerns about education, mentoring, research, or other difficulties.

1. The student is encouraged to speak first with the person toward whom the grievance is directed to see if a situation can be resolved at this level.

2. Should a satisfactory resolution not be achieved, the student should contact the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies or the John Bollinger Chair of Mechanical Engineering (<https://engineering.wisc.edu/departments/mechanical-engineering/people/>) to discuss the grievance. The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies or Department Chair will facilitate problem resolution through informal channels and facilitate any complaints or issues of students. The first attempt is to help students informally address the grievance prior to any formal complaint. Students are also encouraged to talk with their faculty advisors regarding concerns or difficulties if necessary. University resources for sexual harassment, discrimination, disability accommodations, and other related concerns can be found on the UW Office of Compliance website (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>). Other campus resources can be found above.
3. If the issue is not resolved to the student's satisfaction the student can submit the grievance to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies in writing, within 60 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment.
4. On receipt of a written complaint, a faculty committee will be convened by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies to manage the grievance. The faculty committee will obtain a written response from the person toward whom the complaint is directed. This response will be shared with the person filing the grievance.
5. The faculty committee will determine a decision regarding the grievance. The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies will report on the action taken by the committee in writing to both the student and the party toward whom the complaint was directed within 15 working days from the date the complaint was received.
6. At this point, if either party (the student or the person toward whom the grievance is directed) is unsatisfied with the decision of the faculty committee, the party may file a written appeal. Either party has 10 working days to file a written appeal to the School/College.
7. Documentation of the grievance will be stored for at least 7 years. Significant grievances that set a precedent will be stored indefinitely.

The Graduate School has procedures for students wishing to appeal a grievance decision made at the school/college level. These policies are described in the Graduate School's Academic Policies & Procedures: <https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=grievancesandappeals>.

## OTHER

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