Department of Bioengineering

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Fall 2015

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
Welcome from the Department Head .................................................................5

Contact Information ..........................................................................................6

1. General Information for All Graduate Students ........................................8
   1.1 Mission of the Graduate Program ...............................................................8
   1.2 Departmental Governance ..........................................................................8
   1.3 Background Requirements .........................................................................8
   1.4 Orientation Program for New Graduate Students ....................................8
   1.5 Building and Laboratory Access ...............................................................8
   1.6 Student ID Cards .......................................................................................8
   1.7 Telephone System ....................................................................................9

2. Degrees Offered ............................................................................................10
   2.1 Doctor of Philosophy in Bioengineering ....................................................10
   2.2 Joint MD/PhD in Bioengineering ...............................................................10
   2.3 Master of Science in Bioengineering ........................................................10
   2.4 Master of Engineering in Bioinstrumentation .........................................11
   2.5 Concentration in Biomechanics ...............................................................11
   2.6 Concentration in Cancer Nanotechnology ...............................................11
   2.7 Certificate in Business Administration for Non-Business Graduate Students ..........12

3. Admissions Policy .........................................................................................13
   3.1 Contact Information ..................................................................................13
   3.2 Deadlines for Applying ............................................................................13
   3.3 PhD and MS Admissions Requirements ....................................................13
   3.4 Admission to the PhD Program with a Prior MS ....................................13
   3.5 Transfer Policy ........................................................................................14
   3.6 English Proficiency ................................................................................15
   3.7 Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) .....................15

4. Course Grades, Credit, and Registration ....................................................16
   4.1 Grades ......................................................................................................16
   4.2 Credit .......................................................................................................16
   4.3 Required Credit Loads ............................................................................16
4.4 Transfer Credits and Course Waivers ................................................................. 16
4.5 Obtaining Certification of Full-time Student Status ........................................ 17
4.6 Limited Status ...................................................................................................... 17
4.7 Registration for Courses ...................................................................................... 17
4.8 Adding/Dropping Courses ................................................................................... 17

5. The Master’s Degree in Bioengineering ............................................................... 18
5.1 Requirements for the Master’s Degree .............................................................. 18
  5.1.1 Non-thesis (coursework) Master’s Degree .............................................. 18
  5.1.2 Thesis Master’s Degree ............................................................................. 18
  5.1.3 GPA Requirement and Good Standing in the Department ..................... 21

6. The Doctoral Degree in Bioengineering ............................................................... 22
6.1 Graduate College Requirements for the PhD Degree ..................................... 22
  6.1.1 Credit and Residence ................................................................................. 22
  6.1.2 Time Limit .................................................................................................. 22
  6.1.3 Preliminary and Final Examination ......................................................... 22
  6.1.4 Theses and Dissertations .......................................................................... 23
6.2 Department of Bioengineering Requirements for the PhD Degree ............ 23
  6.2.1 English Proficiency .................................................................................. 23
  6.2.2 Joining a Research Group ........................................................................ 24
  6.2.3 Changing Research Groups ..................................................................... 24
  6.2.4 Coursework Requirements ...................................................................... 25
  6.2.5 GPA Requirement and Good Standing in the Department ..................... 25
  6.2.6 Graduate Student Annual Reviews ......................................................... 25
  6.2.7 The Qualifying Exam ................................................................................ 25
  6.2.8 Professional Ethics Training ..................................................................... 28
  6.2.9 Choosing a Thesis Committee .................................................................. 28
  6.2.10 Preliminary Examination ......................................................................... 28
  6.2.11 Final Examination ................................................................................... 29
  6.2.12 PhD Thesis Deadlines ............................................................................. 30
  6.2.13 General Procedure for Depositing a Thesis ........................................... 30
  6.2.14 Final Exit Interview and Department Checklist ....................................... 31
  6.2.15 Additional Checklist for Graduating PhD Students ............................... 31

7. The MD/PhD Degree in Bioengineering ............................................................... 33
7.1 Overview of the MD/PhD Program ................................................................. 33
7.2 Admissions Policy ............................................................................................. 33
7.3 Sequence of Studies and Academic Progress ................................................. 33
7.4 Advisory Conference and Annual Plan of Study .......................................... 34
7.5 Students Withdrawing from or Transferring from the Bioengineering PhD Program .... 34
7.6 Continuation or Matriculation in the College of Medicine after Withdrawing from the Medical Scholars Program .................................................. 35
7.7 Clerkship Credit for Students Withdrawing from the Medical Scholars Program .................................................................................................................... 35
7.8 Dismissal of Students from the Medical Scholars Program ......................... 35
7.9 Professional Development ................................................................................. 36
8. Financial Support in Bioengineering

8.1 Appointments and Salaries

8.1.1 Registration Requirement
8.1.2 Tax Status of Salaries and Stipends
8.1.3 Work Hours and Conditions
8.1.4 Resignation and Termination of Appointments
8.1.5 Leaves of Absence Involving Suspension of Registration
8.1.6 Coverage Responsibility

8.2 Benefits

8.2.1 Tuition and Fee Waiver
8.2.2 Vacation
8.2.3 Bereavement Leave
8.2.4 Personal Leaves Not Involving Suspension of Registration
8.2.5 Sick Leave
8.2.6 Parental Leave
8.2.7 On-Campus Health Care
8.2.8 Off-Campus Health Insurance

8.3 Teaching Assistantships

8.3.1 Teaching Assignments
8.3.2 Teaching Loads
8.3.3 Campus Teaching Resources
8.3.4 Graduate Teacher Certificates

8.4 Research Assistantships

8.5 Fellowships

8.6 Conference Travel Awards

9. Appeal and Grievance Policy

9.1 Introduction
9.2 Scope and Coverage
9.3 Description of the Grievance Procedures

9.3.1 Informal Resolution
9.3.2 Written Grievance
9.3.3 Potential Outcomes of Intake Dean’s Review
9.3.4 Request for Panel Review
9.3.5 Panel Report
9.3.6 Final Decision
9.3.7 Appeal

9.4 Confidentiality

10. Services Provided to Graduate Students

10.1 Department of Bioengineering Advisory Council (BEACON)
10.2 GradBMES
10.3 Engineering Career Services
10.4 Counselors
10.5 GRADLINKS
Welcome to Bioengineering at Illinois! The field of bioengineering is transforming health, medicine and biology, and translational bioengineering is poised to become a major nationwide focus. Challenges in cancer, neuroscience, age-related diseases, and global health are waiting for bioengineers to make a significant, lasting impact. Systems-level thinking and approaches, enabled by computation, sensing, and feedback controls, will be critical to solving complex biomedical problems. With a degree from Illinois, you will be well-positioned to attack these issues that face our country and the world.

Illinois has a history of longstanding strengths in imaging, biosensors and bionanotechnology, mechanobiology, and biophysics, and growing strengths in synthetic biology, computational and systems medicine, and regenerative medicine. Our Bioengineering faculty have established important partnerships with interdisciplinary research institutes and facilities on campus such as the Institute of Genomic Biology, Beckman Institute, Micro and Nanotechnology Lab, Materials Research Lab, and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications – along with increasing clinical collaborations at Carle Hospital in Urbana, Mayo Clinic in Rochester, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Now is a great time to “Be BIOE”! We are ready and focused on achieving worldwide aspirations of having a profound biomedical and translational impact on medicine and health. I wish you every success in your graduate school endeavors, and look forward to seeing you make your mark on the world.

Rashid Bashir
Abel Bliss Professor and Head
Department of Bioengineering
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217-333-2364, 310 Illini Union Bookstore

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217-333-6278, 204 Coble Hall

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217-333-4610, 204 Coble Hall
1. General Information for All Graduate Students

1.1 Mission of the Graduate Program
The mission of the Department of Bioengineering Graduate Program is the provision of graduate education and research that fully integrates the science of biology and the practice of engineering, and thereby prepares graduates for highly productive and distinguished careers in research, academe, or business.

1.2 Departmental Governance
The Department of Bioengineering is led by the Head, who is responsible for the functioning of the Department in accordance with the departmental bylaws. The Department includes faculty with majority appointments in Bioengineering and a much larger set of Affiliate Faculty whose primary appointments are in other departments. Both regular and affiliate faculty may advise graduate students, serve on student committees, and serve on other departmental committees. The Head appoints the Bioengineering Graduate Executive Committee that exercises oversight for the entire graduate program. For administrative purposes, students submit all forms and other information to the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

1.3 Background Requirements
The requirements of the University of Illinois Bioengineering BS degree program constitute an excellent model for the background needed to excel in the Department of Bioengineering graduate program. Taken broadly, this background is: chemistry through biochemistry; mathematics through differential equations; calculus based physics; coursework in both molecular, cellular, and systems level biology; circuits, systems, and instrumentation and a selection from thermodynamics, biomechanics, fluid dynamics, biosystems modeling, or bioinformatics; and a concentration in one area of bioengineering. Hence, knowledge of both basic science and engineering design are critical.

1.4 Orientation Program for New Graduate Students
Before the beginning of the fall semester, an orientation program introduces incoming graduate students to the Department of Bioengineering and its faculty, the operation of the graduate program, and the department’s facilities. During this time, new Teaching Assistants attend a week-long orientation program and a campus-wide teaching symposium. Contact the department’s Coordinator of Graduate Programs for more information about the orientation program.

1.5 Building and Laboratory Access
In order to obtain building and laboratory access, students must see Lisa Leininger in 1270 Digital Computer Lab. Lisa will distribute the appropriate key(s) or add access to a student’s ID card.

1.6 Student ID Cards
Student identification (ID) cards are obtained at the ID Center in the Illini Union Bookstore (809 S. Wright Street). A letter of admission is required for new students to obtain an ID card. The ID cards are used to ride the Champaign-Urbana buses for free. They are also used for entrance into the fitness and library facilities.
1.7 Telephone System
The University of Illinois uses the Lync software for telephone use. Lync operates through a computer and internet connection. When calling an on-campus location, only the last 5 digits need to be dialed. Dial “9” first before an off-campus number, including 911 for emergencies. For more information on using Lync, see http://www.cites.illinois.edu/mshelp/use.html. For troubleshooting and to set up the Lync system, contact Engineering IT at engrit-help@illinois.edu.
2. Degrees Offered

Through the Graduate College of the University of Illinois, the Department of Bioengineering offers the following degrees:

1. Doctor of Philosophy in Bioengineering
2. Joint MD/PhD in Bioengineering
3. Master of Science in Bioengineering
4. Master of Engineering in Bioinstrumentation

Graduate students in some of the degree programs above may also elect to complete the following concentrations:

1. Biomechanics
2. Cancer Nanotechnology
3. Certificate in Business Administration for Non-Business Graduate Students

2.1 Doctor of Philosophy in Bioengineering
The doctoral program in Bioengineering requires 96 hours of graduate-level coursework, a Master’s degree or equivalent, and a PhD dissertation. At least 64 hours must be earned in residence. In addition, each student must pass the Qualifying Examination, be admitted to PhD candidacy, and then pass the Preliminary and Final Examinations.

The 96 hours of credit may be divided into three stages, consisting of at least 32 hours leading to an MS degree, 12 hours of graded graduate-level coursework in addition to the MS degree requirements, and at least 52 hours of thesis research credit (BIOE 599).

2.2 Joint MD/PhD in Bioengineering
The joint MD/PhD program (the Medical Scholars Program) is available for students wishing to combine clinical medicine with research in Bioengineering. Students interested in pursuing the MD/PhD degree must be accepted to the Department of Bioengineering and the Medical Scholars Program. Students begin the program by fulfilling the degree requirements in Bioengineering; MD training is integrated with graduate training in subsequent years. All graduate and medical training is done at the Urbana-Champaign campus, but the Medical Scholars Program is jointly administered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine. Generally, students finish both degrees in an average of 8 years.

Note: The current Medical Scholars Program is under revision and will not be accepting new applicants until approximately fall of 2018.

2.3 Master of Science in Bioengineering
The Master of Science degree is a two to three-year program, with thesis and non-thesis options. Only the thesis option is available to doctoral students. M.S. students complete core courses and thesis research. Students who choose the non-thesis option are required to take an additional eight credit hours of coursework in lieu of research credit.
2.4 Master of Engineering in Bioinstrumentation
The Master of Engineering in Bioinstrumentation is a one-year professional master’s degree program for students interested in the science and business issues related to measuring physiological biological structures, small biological units, and biological molecules. The program begins with a five-day Bioinstrumentation Boot Camp, followed by 17 credit hours of coursework in the fall and spring semesters. The program culminates with a capstone project in the summer.

2.5 Concentration in Biomechanics
The Biomechanics concentration prepares students for collaborative research across the disciplines of engineering, biology, and the sciences. Students must be enrolled in a graduate degree program from one of the participating departments (Bioengineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Mechanical Science and Engineering). Students who choose the Biomechanics concentration must earn a B or better in each concentration course and complete at least 12 hours from the course options. Courses taken toward this concentration will count toward the student’s degree, but only one course may overlap with other concentrations.

Current course options include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABE 446</td>
<td>Biological Nanoengineering</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOE 406</td>
<td>Bone Biology and Biomechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOE 479</td>
<td>Cancer Nanotechnology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME/BIOE 482</td>
<td>Musculoskeletal Tissue Mechanics</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME 483</td>
<td>Mechanobiology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSE 474</td>
<td>Biomaterials and Nanomedicine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYS 475</td>
<td>Biological Physics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAM 461</td>
<td>Cellular Biomechanics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Concentration in Cancer Nanotechnology
The Cancer Nanotechnology concentration prepares students for collaborative research across the disciplines of engineering, biology, and the sciences with an emphasis on the use of Nanotechnology in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Students must be enrolled in a graduate degree program from one of the participating departments (Bioengineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Mechanical Science and Engineering). Students must earn a B or better in each concentration course, and students must complete 12 credit hours from the course options. Of these 12 hours, one must be a core Cancer course and one a core Nanotechnology course. Students may elect to take a second core Cancer course and/or a second core Nanotechnology course as an elective. Courses taken toward this concentration will count toward the graduate degree, but only one course may overlap with other concentrations.
Current course options include:

Core Cancer Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOE 479</td>
<td>Cancer Nanotechnology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB 400</td>
<td>Cancer Cell Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOE 498 RB</td>
<td>Cancer Science and Technology</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Nanotechnology Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABE 446</td>
<td>Biological Nanoengineering</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOE 416</td>
<td>Biosensors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE/ME 485</td>
<td>Intro to Electromechanical Devices and Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elective Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSHN 480</td>
<td>Basic Toxicology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME 483</td>
<td>Mechanobiology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME 487</td>
<td>MEMS-NEMS Theory and Fabrication</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME 586</td>
<td>Mechanics of MEMS and NEMS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7 Certificate in Business Administration for Non-Business Graduate Students

The College of Business offers a Certificate in Business Administration for Non-Business Graduate Students Program. This program is designed to provide non-business graduate students (in both PhD and MS programs) with a strategic framework for making informed business decisions. The ten-session curriculum offers students a concentrated, detailed program that examines an array of topics.

For further information, see [http://business.illinois.edu/cib/](http://business.illinois.edu/cib/) or contact Ms. Sandra Carroll, College of Business, at 217-244-3115.
3. Admissions Policy

3.1 Contact Information
You can obtain information about applying to our graduate programs in the Department of Bioengineering by emailing the Department at bioen@illinois.edu or by calling 217-300-4474. Departmental information about the admissions process and application forms are also available on our website:

http://bioengineering.illinois.edu/graduate/apply-graduate-studies

3.2 Deadlines for Applying
Applications for the PhD and MS programs are due by December 15 to receive full consideration for fall admission and fellowship competitions. Applications for the MEng programs are typically due mid-spring, but may have more flexible deadlines. Students should consult the MEng Program Coordinator for detailed information.

3.3 PhD and MS Admissions Requirements
The requirements for admission are an undergraduate degree in biology, engineering, or a related field. Engineering students must have prior training in life sciences. Biology students must have strong mathematical and quantitative preparation, including calculus and differential equations. Successful applicants typically have GPAs above 3.4 (4.0 scale). A student’s academic record, letters of recommendation, and research experience (for PhD and thesis MS) must be a strong indicator of their fitness to pursue advanced study and research in bioengineering.

Application materials to our PhD and MS programs should include:

- A completed online application form
- Personal statement
- Resume
- Three letters of recommendation
- Transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work (one transcript from each institution attended)
- Official Graduate Record Examination general test scores
- Official English language proficiency test scores for applicants whose native language is not English; see Section 2.4 for more details

All PhD students (without a prior Bioengineering MS) are admitted to the MS program first, then recoded to the PhD program after completing the MS requirements.

3.4 Admission to the PhD Program with a Prior MS
Students who have obtained a master’s degree in Bioengineering or a related discipline have the option to petition to the Department of Bioengineering to waive the elective coursework requirement. Students who wish to pursue this option must create an Excel spreadsheet that compares the MS coursework from the previous institution against the UIUC MS degree requirements and submit it to the Director of Graduate Programs and Graduate Programs
Coordinator for review. Each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis. All students must complete the core curriculum; only the additional electives can be waived.

3.5 Transfer Policy
On occasion, a student who is in a PhD program in another department on campus may request to transfer into the Department of Bioengineering. In such cases:

- The Department expects that such transfers will be very rare and will have especially strong justification in all relevant ways.
- Transfer requests shall be initiated by a formal petition from the students to the Department of Bioengineering. This petition shall include a statement by the study to justify the transfer request.
- It is expected that the potential transfer will be discussed with the student’s home department, which will be asked for a copy of the student’s original application to the PhD program. If the research proposed in the petition can reasonably be performed while the student remains in the home department, then the petition shall be rejected.
- Except in extenuating circumstances, no student will be allowed to transfer into Bioengineering if they have passed the preliminary examination, qualifying examination, or equivalent in their home department. If either of these conditions is met, then the petition will normally be rejected.
- The Graduate Admissions Committee and the relevant area representative on the committee shall initially review the original application file, considering solely the question: “If this student had applied directly to the Bioengineering PhD program, would the student have been likely to receive an offer?” If this question cannot be answered positively, then the petition will normally be rejected without further consideration.

Considerations of student performance after arrival at UIUC will not normally be used to override a substandard application file, regardless of student grades in UIUC graduate courses or UIUC research progress.

- Before proceeding any further with a potential transfer, a Bioengineering research advisor shall be identified and shall commit in writing to accepting the student. No rotations are allowed by the student, and there shall not be any “group-joining process” thereafter.
- The final decision on a potential transfer shall be made by the Department Head, in consultation with the Graduate Admissions Committee, the Graduate Program Director, the proposed Bioengineering research advisor, and any others whom the Head wishes to consult. A positive indication in step 5 above does not compel a positive decision by the Department Head at this stage.
- Prior to the transfer, an explicit timeline by semester of all Bioengineering graduate program requirements (qualifying exam, master’s thesis, and preliminary exam) shall be established. This timeline shall take into account the student’s experience and any other relevant factors. The Graduate Program Director shall approve this timeline before any further action on the transfer will be taken.
- Regardless of the timing of the transfer, the student shall be paid as a Research Assistant (RA) by the Bioengineering research advisor for whatever fraction of a semester remains in the semester of the transfer, as well as the following full semester (a student who transfers in a Spring semester shall be paid as a RA by the advisor in both the subsequent
Summer and Fall). After that RA period, the student may be eligible to serve as a Teaching Assistant.

- The Department shall incur no extra or special financial costs associated with the transfer. For example, if the home department or unit requires that they receive financial compensation in association with the student leaving their department (e.g., if MCB requires compensation for one or more first-semester rotations), then the Bioengineering research advisor shall be solely responsible for all of these costs.

### 3.6 English Proficiency

All students who are not native speakers of English are required to fulfill certain requirements established by the University to receive admission with full graduate standing. Non-native speakers are normally required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) before admission to the University. TOEFL or IELTS scores must be less than 2 years old from the first day of class at the University.

The ESL Placement Test (EPT) is given to new international students whose TOEFL scores are 102 or below for the TOEFL iBT. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign establishes this requirement. Students will not be allowed to register without satisfactory completion of the EPT. Students will be placed into or exempted from ESL courses based on the results of the test.

Teaching is not a requirement of the Bioengineering Graduate Program, but some students may be assigned Teaching Assistantships for financial support. There are special requirements for students whose native language is not English. The requirement can be met in one of two ways. The University requires a minimum TOEFL iBT speaking score of 24, or a minimum score of 8 on the speaking section of the IELTS. Any applicant whose native language is not English is required to provide TOEFL iBT or IELTS scores in order to receive full consideration for admission and financial aid. Exemption from the TOEFL does not give exemption from the speaking section of the TOEFL iBT or the speaking section of the IELTS. If a student has not passed the TOEFL iBT or IELTS they will need to pass the University’s English Proficiency Interview (EPI). Students who do not receive a passing score after three attempts to pass the EPI may not be eligible for a teaching assistantship.

The Department’s Coordinator of Graduate Programs will schedule the EPI for students prior to their arrival on campus, and will provide all pertinent information in advance of the interview.

### 3.7 Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

The Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is the campus office devoted to international students and provides a variety of services and advising. International graduate students must check in with ISSS when they arrive on campus to have their employment eligibility verified (I-20 form). ISSS provides such services as transportation assistance, orientation to campus and community life, housing assistance, and information about social gatherings. They also advise on such issues as income tax, immigration regulations and documents, and job search strategies. ISSS is located in room 400 of the Turner Student Services Building, 610 E. John Street, Champaign, IL 61820, and their office hours are 8:30 am – 5:00
pm, Monday – Friday. The office phone number is 217-333-1303 and their website is http://isss.illinois.edu.
3. Course Grades, Credit, and Registration

4.1 Grades
To receive graduate credit, graduate students should enroll in 500-level courses. Some 400-level courses may be acceptable, but prior approval by the Department is required. At the University of Illinois, letter grades correspond to the following grade points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>A+</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B-</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C-</th>
<th>D+</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>D-</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade points</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although A, B, C, and D are passing grades, **no course in which a student has earned less than a B- may be applied to a graduate degree**. In graduate school, grades of C are given for substandard work, and are roughly equivalent to grades of D for undergraduates. See sections 5.1.3 and 6.2.5 for more information.

4.2 Credit
Graduate credit at the University of Illinois is measured in hours. Courses in the 500 series, with the exception of some courses such as the 500 and 501 language courses, carry graduate credit and are restricted to graduate students except under special circumstances. Most courses at the 400-level carry graduate credit as well as undergraduate credit. Each course description indicates the credit available.

4.3 Required Credit Loads
To maintain full-time student status, graduate students with assistantship appointments falling between 25 and 67% FTE (full-time equivalent) must register for 12 hours each semester and 6 hours each summer. (Note: Almost all graduate students have 25 or 50% appointments). Students should register for BIOE 599 for the appropriate number of credit hours to bring their total hours to 12 or 6. See section 5.1 for master’s degree coursework requirements and section 6.2.4 for doctoral degree coursework requirements.

It is important to maintain full-time student status for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, the following: student loans, fellowship and traineeship appointments, insurance, and international student requirements.

4.4 Transfer Credits and Course Waivers
Graduate coursework taken at another accredited institution within the last five years with grades of A or B may be counted toward a graduate degree at the University of Illinois, with approval by the Department of Bioengineering. Coursework can either be transferred (in which case it appears on the University of Illinois transcript), or University of Illinois course(s) (up to 8 hours) equivalent to the one(s) taken elsewhere can be waived.

Students must successfully complete at least 8 hours of graduate coursework on the University of Illinois campus before requesting a transfer. The course(s) to be transferred must not have been used toward another degree. Students can request a course waiver at any time, but the course(s)
must not have been used toward another degree. To request a transfer or waiver, students should contact the Coordinator of Graduate Programs and provide a syllabus of the course(s) taken at the previous institution. Both requests require approval by the student’s advisor and the Department Head. Transfer requests require a petition to the Graduate College.

4.5 Obtaining Certification of Full-time Student Status
If verification of full-time student status is required (for example: loans, immigration, or fellowships) the student must be registered for 12 credit hours. The Coordinator of Graduate Programs can provide an unofficial letter, but students requiring an official letter, sealed by the University, should contact the Registrar’s Office Transcript Section at 140 Admissions and Records Building, 901 W. Illinois Street, or at http://registrar.illinois.edu/transcripts/verify_main.html. For further information on credit loads, see section 3.3.

4.6 Limited Status
Limited status indicates that a student has not satisfied a mandatory departmental or university requirement and is ineligible to receive a degree. Limited status can be imposed for a variety of reasons, most commonly for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA, failure to provide final undergraduate transcripts, or failure to complete required ESL courses (international students only). A student can be removed from limited status by fulfilling the requirement.

4.7 Registration for Courses
Class registration is done via the online UI Self-Service system. The University Identification Number (UIN), which is assigned through the Admissions and Records Office and can be located on your university ID, is required for registration. Directions for accessing and using Self-Service are found at www.registrar.illinois.edu/registration/procedures.html. All graduate students must use the NESSIE system (https://nessie.uhr.uillinois.edu/) to record their appointment in order to assure proper application of tuition and service fee waivers.

4.8 Adding/Dropping Courses
A student may add or drop a course each semester until the deadline listed in the Graduate College Calendar available at http://www.grad.illinois.edu/general/current/. Students should discuss any intent to add or drop a course with their advisor and with the instructor of the course before action is taken. Before the add/drop deadlines, students may add and drop courses themselves via UI Self-Service. After the deadlines, students must ask the Coordinator of Graduate Programs for assistance.

Generally, students who drop a course should increase their hours of BIOE 599 in compensation so as to maintain the required credit load (typically 12 hours minimum in the fall and spring semesters).
4. The Master’s Degree in Bioengineering

5.1 Requirements for the Master’s Degree
There are two ways to fulfill the requirements for a MS in Bioengineering: a non-thesis (coursework) masters or a thesis masters. The specific requirements for these degrees are detailed below.

Should the departmental requirements for these degrees be revised, continuing students may choose whether they wish to fulfill the requirements in effect when they began graduate study or those specified in the revised policy, unless otherwise stipulated.

5.1.1 Non-thesis (coursework) Master’s Degree
The Master of Science in Bioengineering degree program is an option for students seeking employment immediately upon completion of the MS degree. Students may elect to change to the thesis MS option or the PhD degree. In such cases, students should contact the Coordinator of Graduate Programs for assistance.

The non-thesis MS degree requires the completion of a minimum of 40 hours of graduate-level coursework to include the following:

- Bioengineering core curriculum
  - BIOE 500 (2 hours)
  - BIOE 501 (1 hour)
  - BIOE 502 (2 hours)
  - BIOE 504 (4 hours)
  - BIOE 505 (4 hour)
- Bioengineering core electives
  - BIOE 506 (4 hours)
  - BIOE 507 (4 hours)
- Additional 20 hours of graduate-level (400/500 level) coursework
  - 8 hours of 500-level credit in a focus area in either engineering or life sciences
    - Engineering focus: Must take 4 hours in life sciences
    - Life sciences focus: Must take 4 hours in engineering

The Graduate College requires candidates for the MS degree to complete all requirements for the degree within five calendar years after the first registered term in the Graduate College. However, the Department expects most full-time candidates for the MS degree will complete the requirements in three to four semesters.

5.1.2 Thesis Master’s Degree
The Master of Science in Bioengineering degree program is an option for students who wish to complete a MS thesis and then continue on to a PhD program. Students may elect to change to the non-thesis MS option or the PhD degree. In such cases, students should contact the Coordinator of Graduate Programs for assistance.
The thesis MS degree requires the completion of a minimum of 32 semester hours of coursework to include the following:

- **Bioengineering core curriculum**
  - BIOE 500 (2 hours)
    - BIOE 501 (1 hour)
    - BIOE 502 (2 hours)
    - BIOE 504 (4 hours)
    - BIOE 505 (4 hours)

- **Bioengineering core electives**
  - BIOE 506 (4 hours)
  - BIOE 507 (4 hours)

- **Thesis Research** (4 hours)

- **Additional 8 hours of graduate-level (400/500 level) coursework**

The program culminates in the completion of a thesis that is approved by the department head or delegate faculty.

The Bioengineering Graduate Executive Committee may waive the core course requirement for a student with exceptional preparation. In this case, of the formal coursework, 8 hours of 500-level credit must be completed in a focus area in either engineering or life sciences; if the focus area is engineering, an additional 4 hours at the 500 level must be taken in the life sciences area; if the focus area is in the life sciences, an additional 4 hours at the 500-level must be taken in engineering. Completing the core courses satisfies the requirement for the engineering option.

Students should seek a research advisor with research interests similar to their own and explore possible thesis topics as early as possible, but no later than the end of the second semester of study. When a student and a faculty member have agreed on a thesis topic, a completed Master’s Thesis Advisor Agreement Form (available from the Departmental website) must be submitted to the Bioengineering Coordinator of Graduate Programs.

The Graduate College requires candidates for the MS degree to complete all requirements for the degree within five calendar years after the first registered term in the Graduate College. However, the Department expects that most full-time candidates for the MS degree will be able to complete all requirements in three to four semesters.

### 5.1.2.1 The Master’s Thesis

All theses must be acceptable for deposit in the Graduate College; a thesis that fails to meet Graduate College standards will be rejected. Theses must be the work of a single author.

If thesis research involves the use of human subjects, warm-blooded animals, or hazardous materials or procedures, the student must comply with the University’s policies and procedures governing such work. See [http://irb.illinois.edu](http://irb.illinois.edu).

Because all theses are made available to the public, a thesis containing classified material, i.e., material deemed non-publishable under federal security regulations, cannot be accepted. However, theses may be withheld temporarily from public release under certain circumstances.
(for example, to protect a patent application). See http://www.grad.illinois.edu/step-3-deposit and click the link to Thesis Withholding Request Form.

5.1.2.2 Deadlines for the Master’s Thesis
The Graduate College sets several deadlines during the academic year that dictate in what semester and year the MS degree will be officially conferred. Students may deposit their thesis in advance of any one of these deadlines. See www.grad.illinois.edu/general/calendar/current for the dates of these deadlines for the current academic year.

5.1.2.3 General Procedure for Depositing a Thesis
Several procedural requirements for depositing a thesis must be strictly followed. Before the thesis is in final form, the student should go to the Graduate Programs Coordinator and inform the Coordinator of her or his intent to graduate. After the thesis is in final form, it must receive a format check by the Graduate Programs Coordinator. The thesis is then electronically submitted to the Graduate College for further review. Once the thesis is approved by the Graduate College and all necessary paperwork is on file with the Thesis Office (204 Coble Hall), the deposit process is complete.

Style and Format Requirements. The student’s research advisor will hold the student responsible for spelling, grammar, organization, stylistic consistency, correct sequence of pages, and agreement between the table of contents and the body of the thesis, as well as content. The department (via the format check by the Graduate Programs Coordinator) will check to see that these requirements have been met. Every candidate should consult the Graduate College website for thesis formatting requirements: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/graduate-college-thesis-requirements. There are no department-specific formatting requirements.

All completed theses must be acceptable for deposit in the Graduate College Thesis Office. This office has primary responsibility for processing, binding, and storing theses as well as for maintaining uniformity in thesis format and organization. The Graduate College Thesis Office will reject any thesis that fails to meet Graduate College standards.

Publishing the Thesis. Every masters candidate is required to publish his or her completed work by assigning certain rights to ProQuest, which is the company which maintains an online repository of all theses deposited with the Thesis Office.

Publishing of Findings before Degree Conferral. Before the degree is conferred, a student may find it desirable or expedient to publish some of the findings that will later be incorporated in the thesis. If this is done, then an appropriate acknowledgment of the earlier publication should be included in the thesis. The Graduate College encourages such publication, but the thesis may not be published in its entirety before all degree requirements have been met.

Copyright. Copyright is a legal protection of a person’s work that is recorded with the U.S. Copyright Office in the Library of Congress. The webpage http://www.grad.illinois.edu/step-1-development#copyrightwebsite describes copyrighting in greater detail. Students may register for a copyright on their own, by completing an application form, paying the basic fee, and
submitting an extra copy of their thesis to the U.S. Copyright Office. Doctoral candidates may choose to ask ProQuest to complete these steps for them for a slightly higher fee.

**Compliance with Research Policies.** If thesis research involves the use of human subjects, warm-blooded animals, or hazardous materials or procedures, then the student must comply with the University’s policies and procedures governing such work. Doctoral degree candidates should obtain more information at [http://research.illinois.edu/training/integrity.cfm](http://research.illinois.edu/training/integrity.cfm).

5.1.3 GPA Requirement and Good Standing in the Department
Students are progressing satisfactorily towards the degree completion if they maintain a GPA of 3.0 or greater, find a research group by the end of the first semester in residence (thesis master’s only), and do not receive a grade of C or lower in any course.

Students who have a GPA below 3.0, who receive a grade of C or lower in any course, or who are otherwise not making satisfactory progress toward the MS degree may be allowed to continue in the program, be placed on probationary status, or be asked to leave the department, depending on the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Programs and the decision of the Department Head.
5. The Doctoral Degree in Bioengineering

6.1 Graduate College Requirements for the PhD Degree

6.1.1 Credit and Residence
Doctoral programs are divided into three stages, as described below, and must include a minimum of 96 hours of credit. At least 64 hours, including thesis credit, must be earned in courses meeting on the Urbana-Champaign campus, at the Chicago campus, or in other locations approved by the Graduate College for graduate credit. After the residency requirement has been fulfilled, a student who plans to leave campus may file a petition with the Graduate College (via the Coordinator of Graduate Programs) for permission to register in absentia for thesis credit. Such registration is uncommon but may be appropriate when collaboration requires a student to work for extended periods away from the Urbana-Champaign campus.

Stage I. During Stage I, the student is working to complete the requirements for a master’s degree or its equivalent. In the Department of Bioengineering, a master’s degree is obtained as part of the PhD program. In rare cases, students admitted to the PhD program with a master’s degree from a previous institution may be advanced directly to Stage II.

Stage II. Additional coursework and research in preparation for the preliminary examination. Passing the preliminary examination marks the end of Stage II.

Stage III. Research and other activities culminating in an approved dissertation and final oral examination (defense). Continuous registration (summer sessions optional), should be maintained until a student has completed the credit requirement for the doctoral degree. Registration in BIOE 599 (research credit) is also required for the term in which a student takes the final examination, regardless of when the thesis will be deposited with the Graduate College or when the degree will be conferred.

6.1.2 Time Limit
Doctoral candidates must complete all degree requirements within seven years after their initial registration in the Graduate College. A student entering directly into Stage II, with a master’s degree from another university or with a significant lapse of time since earning a master’s degree on this campus, has six years in which to complete degree requirements. For more information on the time limit policy, see http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chaptervi/section05.

6.1.3 Preliminary and Final Examination
Preliminary examinations are taken at the end of Stage II of doctoral programs. Final examinations are oral and public. The Dean of the Graduate College appoints doctoral committees at departmental request to administer preliminary and final examinations. These committees must be composed of at least four voting members, including at least three members of the graduate faculty, two of whom must be tenured. Decisions of the committees for the preliminary examination must be unanimous, but the final examination decision does not need to be unanimous. The candidate passes the final examination if the Director(s) of Research vote pass and no more than one of the remaining committee members votes fail. The committee will indicate on the Final Exam Result form if revisions are required. The candidate fails the final
examination if a Director(s) of Research votes fail or if two or more committee members vote
fail. The committee may grant the student another opportunity to take the examination after
completing additional research or writing, as recommended by the committee. However, a new
committee must be appointed by the Graduate College. The new committee may, but is not
required to, consist of the same members as the original committee.

6.1.4 Theses and Dissertations
All candidates for the PhD degree in Bioengineering are required to write a master’s-level thesis
and PhD dissertation, unless the candidate is admitted with a prior MS in Bioengineering. All
theses and dissertations must be acceptable for deposit in the Graduate College; a thesis or
dissertation that fails to meet Graduate College standards will be rejected. Theses and
dissertations must be the work of a single author.

If thesis and/or dissertation research involves the use of human subjects, warm-blooded animals,
or hazardous materials or procedures, the student must comply with the University’s policies and
procedures governing such work. See http://irb.illinois.edu.

Because all theses and dissertations are made available to the public, a thesis or dissertation
containing classified material, i.e., material deemed non-publishable under federal security
regulations, cannot be accepted. However, theses and dissertations may be withheld temporarily
from public release under certain circumstances (for example, to protect a patent application).
See http://www.grad.illinois.edu/step-3-deposit and click the link to Thesis Withholding Request
Form.

6.2 Department of Bioengineering Requirements for the PhD Degree
The Doctor of Philosophy in Bioengineering is a diverse, multidisciplinary program that
emphasizes translational research at the intersection of engineering, biological and medical
sciences. Students complete a core coursework curriculum and a thesis MS degree during the
course of their doctoral studies. To continue in the doctoral program, students take a qualifying
exam at the end of the first year, and after completing the MS thesis, students select their thesis
committee and must pass the preliminary exam. Typically students complete their dissertation
and defend it 1.5 – 2 years after the preliminary exam. The mean time to a degree in the program
is 5.3 years.

6.2.1 English Proficiency
Teaching is not a requirement of students in the Bioengineering graduate program, but many
students teach at some point during their graduate career. The ability to communicate clearly in
English is necessary for the students to provide effective instruction. Illinois state law and the
University require all students who will teach and who are not native speakers of English to
demonstrate competence in spoken English. These students must either pass the “Test of English
as a Foreign Language” (TOEFL) with a score of 24 or greater before they arrive on campus or
receive a score of 5 on the “English Proficiency Interview” (EPI) after they arrive on campus.

The EPI typically is held during the first days of orientation, and non-native English speakers
who have not passed the TOEFL are required to arrive on campus in time to take this
examination. The department’s Coordinator of Graduate Programs will schedule appointments for students and notify them in advance of the date, time, and location of the interview. If students do not pass the EPI on the first attempt, several options to improve their spoken English skills are available. They may enroll in graduate-level English as a Second Language (ESL) courses such as ESL 404, 406, or 410. Another option is to receive ten hours of private tutoring from a tutor approved by the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL).

6.2.2 Joining a Research Group
Entering students are directly admitted into research groups and do not rotate prior to joining a group. In rare cases where an admitted student is unable to join a group prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the student will need to find financial support, either through a fellowship or a Teaching Assistant position in Bioengineering or a related discipline.

Students must consult with their research advisor or an advisor appointed by the Bioengineering Graduate Executive Committee to complete a course plan within the first month of admission to the program. Initial course plans signed by the advisor become part of the student record. Once a student has selected a faculty research advisor, courses may be selected by the research advisor and student. The Bioengineering Graduate Executive Committee is responsible for (a) examining the background of each student to identify deficits and prescribe remedial coursework where appropriate and (b) ensuring students meet course requirements for the degree objective.

6.2.3 Changing Research Groups
Infrequently, students change research groups prior to completing their degree. In such cases, the initial research advisor is strongly encouraged to indicate in a formal letter to the student (copy to the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Programs Coordinator) that he or she will not continue to serve as the student’s research advisor or provide financial support. The student must acknowledge in writing that s/he understands the terms and conditions of switching groups (see below).

In order to remain in the Bioengineering Graduate Program, a student transferring between research groups will need to find a new research advisor within one semester of leaving the first group. During that period, it is the student’s responsibility to secure financial support until s/he finds a new research advisor who will provide financial support. Students may rotate in a group during that period, but should be paid as a Research Assistant at a minimum of 25% FTE (full-time equivalent). If, after the semester of transition the student fails to find a new group s/he will leave the program or complete a non-thesis or thesis MS at their personal expense.

Transitioning to a new research group is an important decision, and students are strongly encouraged to ask BEACON (Bioengineering Advisory Council), an unbiased faculty member (one whose group the student is not interested in joining), the Graduate Program Director, and/or the Graduate Programs Coordinator to serve as the student’s advocate(s) and counselor(s). If the situation becomes stressful, graduate students are encouraged to contact the campus Counseling Center for support and help.

If the student does decide to switch research groups, the new advisor must complete and sign an Advisor Agreement Form, which the student will turn in to the Graduate Programs Coordinator.
6.2.4 Coursework Requirements
All PhD candidates in the Department of Bioengineering are required to complete the following coursework requirements. The selection of electives is to a large extent an individual matter, with the student’s research interests and long-range plans as the major factors in determining their selections. Courses both within and outside the Department of Bioengineering can be selected. A grade-point average of 3.0 must be maintained for the student to remain in good standing.

Core Coursework Curriculum (13 hours)

- BIOE 500: Bioengineering Seminar Series – 2 hours (repeated 2 semesters)
- BIOE 501: Journal Reading – 1 hour
- BIOE 502: Bioengineering Professionalism – 2 hours
- BIOE 504: Analytical Methods in Bioengineering – 4 hours
- BIOE 505: Computational Bioengineering – 4 hours

Core Electives (8 hours)

- BIOE 506: Molecular & Cellular Bioengineering – 4 hours
- BIOE 507: Advanced Bioinstrumentation – 4 hours

Additional Electives at the 400 or 500 level (12 hours)

6.2.5 GPA Requirement and Good Standing in the Department
Students are progressing satisfactorily towards the degree completion if they maintain a GPA of 3.25 or greater, find a research group by the end of the first semester in residence, and do not receive a grade of C or lower in any course.

Students who have a GPA below 3.25, who receive a grade of C or lower in any course, or who are otherwise not making satisfactory progress toward the PhD degree may be allowed to continue in the program, be placed on probationary status, be transferred to the master’s program, or be asked to leave the department, depending on the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Programs and the decision of the Department Head.

6.2.6 Graduate Student Annual Reviews
Each graduate student in the Department of Bioengineering will undergo a mandatory performance review by his or her research advisor at the end of each academic year. Students are required to evaluate his or her progress to date, and the research advisor will provide comments on the students’ self-evaluation. The process is entirely electronic and is initiated by a notice to the graduate student body from the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

6.2.7 The Qualifying Exam
The Bioengineering Qualifying Exam (BQE) is held after completing the MS degree requirements, and will evaluate students’ command of Bioengineering fundamentals, in the context of the scientific/engineering literature. The exam will also assess students’ ability to quickly engage in productive research. Students that meet the minimum GPA requirement of
3.25 will be permitted to take the BQE and to continue in the graduate program, contingent on passing the Qualifying Exam.

The BQE consists of a 90 minute examination by a 3-member faculty committee. During the first 60 minutes, committee questions will focus on a discussion of two research papers (see below). The committee should decide on the order in which the papers will be discussed and the time devoted to each paper. The committee can decide to focus on one or cover both. This will be followed by a 30 minute research component, which is comprised of a 10 minute presentation of research accomplishments and 15-20 minutes of committee questions the research. The student will provide the committee members with slides of their research presentation at least 2 days before the exam.

Committee members will record their evaluations and comments online, and should complete their evaluations as soon after the exam as possible. The committee chair is responsible for writing a summary statement and for presenting the committee summary at the faculty meeting where all students are discussed.

6.2.7.1 Paper Selection Guidelines
The student’s PhD advisor will select two primary research publications that illustrate core Bioengineering competencies including, but not limited to, functional knowledge of mathematical, computational, statistical, physiological, and molecular biology subjects, and the ability to clearly discuss these matters in the context of Bioengineering applications.

PhD advisors will select two (foundational) research papers (>3 pages) that illustrate a significant subset of fundamental concepts. The committee is free to decide at the exam time how to distribute questions over the two papers.

6.2.7.2 Pass/Fail Criteria
Performance on the BQE will be assessed based on 4 topics (I-IV below), with specific emphasis as described. Items Ia-c, IIa-d, and IV will be rated on a 5-level scale of excellent to poor.

I. Literature
   a. Knowledge of fundamental principles relevant to selected papers.
   b. Ability to clearly describe the experimental design, results and analysis used by the authors. The student must be able to assess the significance of the results.
   c. Clearly describe the relevance of this research to the field in general and the relevance/importance of the specific findings.
   d. If the paper(s) refer to techniques widely known to the typical readership, the student must be able to discuss those principles and methods.

II. Research Accomplishments (limit presentations to 5-8 slides that address main points below- provide slides to committee at least two days in advance)
   a. Demonstrate engagement in his/her research, as demonstrated by overall description of project and progress made.
   b. Ability to translate course knowledge to research (for example, statistical analysis, knowledge of basic principles, etc.).
c. Ability to clearly articulate the significance of their own work in the broader context of the field.
d. Ability to critique the advantages of their research strategy relative to competing approaches.

III. Verbal presentation skills: Ability to clearly articulate principles addressed in I & II and to clearly answer questions

IV. Ability to clearly explain the biological and engineering significance of both the research papers and his/her independent research project

6.2.7.3 Exam Outcomes (Faculty Vote and Follow Up)
Closed-door evaluations and voting will be held on the same day as the BQE exams, or as soon as possible thereafter. The deliberations are strictly confidential and are not to be discussed with anyone outside of the meeting.

Votes will be based on 1) BQE committee evaluation, based on the criteria as defined above, 2) Advisor input, and 3) Graduate course grades. The faculty discussion should follow the following format:
- 2-3 minute summary of committee assessment (emphasize above criteria)
- 2 minute advisor assessment, including a statement regarding the willingness of the current advisor to continue financial support
- 5-10 minute discussion (entire faculty)
- Secret ballot (online) vote

Note: A conditional pass (CP) can be recommended in rare cases where there is a clear, identifiable action that would directly address the deficiency.

All decisions are to be conveyed to the students by only the Graduate Program Director and by the Graduate Programs Coordinator. Students will receive the final decision and any relevant feedback regarding strengths/weaknesses, particularly for those who fail the BQE.

6.2.7.4 First Exam Fail Result and Retake Procedure
Students who fail the first BQE will have the option of retaking the exam at the end of the fall semester (typically early-mid December), after undertaking steps to correct for deficiencies that were identified during the first exam. The format will be identical to the first exam, and the results of the prior exam will be shared with the second BQE committee. The selection of papers will be at the discretion of the advisor, and should include at least one new paper that was not covered in the original BQE. The committee can be different, but at least one member of the original committee will participate in the second exam, when possible. Only students who successfully pass either the first or second BQE exam will be allowed to continue in the doctoral program, subject to guidelines defined by the Graduate College. Students who do not continue in the doctoral program will be eligible for a master’s degree.
6.2.8 Professional Ethics Training
The Graduate College, under university guidelines, requires that all graduate students receive training in professional ethics. The Department of Bioengineering fulfills this requirement through a course, BIOE 502 “Bioengineering Professionalism”, which is offered every fall semester. All first-year graduate students are required to enroll in this course. See also http://ethics.uillinois.edu.

6.2.9 Choosing a Thesis Committee
The thesis examination committee consists of at least four faculty members, including at least one from outside the student’s area of specialization. The student’s advisor must be a member of the committee, and the other members are chosen by the student in consultation with their advisor. The Graduate College places some restrictions on the constitution of the committee.

Usually, the thesis committee continues to monitor the student’s progress after the preliminary examination and will again serve on the student’s final examination committee. Under appropriate circumstances, members of the committee can be changed. If committee member(s) are changed, then it is the student’s responsibility to find a replacement(s). This final examination committee attends the final defense, approves the thesis, and signs the Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form.

6.2.10 Preliminary Examination
The Preliminary Exam is an oral examination before the Preliminary Exam Committee that is normally taken during the fifth semester, before the majority of the dissertation research has been completed. The PhD candidate is responsible for arranging with committee members a suitable time and place for the examination. The candidate must submit a Preliminary Exam Scheduling Form to the Graduate Programs Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the date chosen. In turn, the Graduate Programs Coordinator coordinates with the Graduate College to obtain the required paperwork for the exam. Students should pick up their exam paperwork from the Graduate Programs Coordinator shortly before the exam time.

The first stage of the PhD degree program must be completed before the Preliminary Examination can be taken. The candidate must submit the written thesis proposal to the committee at least one week prior to the exam. The proposal is in the form of a typical NIH grant application, and is comprised of four sections: 1) Specific aims (1 page), 2) Background and significance (2 pages), 3) Preliminary results (3 pages), 4) Methods (4 pages) and is limited to 10 pages including all text and figures, but excluding references. The proposal must include a tentative title for the dissertation.

The Preliminary Examination is intended to test the suitability of the research plan for a PhD dissertation and the candidate’s preparation and capability to carry out the plan proposed. It begins with a short, 30 minute presentation by the candidate, outlining the problem, providing background and significance, and describing the procedures and methods to be used. The presentation will also describe preliminary results and a clear plan for the additional work required to complete the dissertation. The committee then questions the candidate regarding the problem, the preliminary results, and the proposed work. The candidate may be asked to clarify matters in the thesis proposal and defend various aspects of the work already completed or the
work being proposed. The committee may suggest alternative methods of attacking the problem or suggest different aspects of the problem as suitable areas for exploration. The committee also may ask questions of a more general nature in order to test the adequacy of the candidate’s preparation for the proposed research.

At the conclusion of the examination, the chair of the committee announces one of four decisions:

1) The candidate passed the Preliminary Examination and may proceed to independent study and research for the doctoral degree
2) The Examination is temporarily adjourned. The candidate must revise the thesis proposal and be examined again within the next six months
3) The candidate failed the Examination, but may submit a new thesis proposal and take another Examination after completing additional coursework, independent study, or research
4) The candidate failed the Examination and will not be permitted to retake the exam

6.2.11 Final Examination
The Final Examination for the PhD degree is a public, oral examination administered by the Final Exam Committee. It must take place at least six months (but no later than 5 years) after the Preliminary Examination has been passed. At least two weeks before the date selected for the Final Exam, the student should complete the Final Exam Scheduling Form (found on the Department’s website) and deliver it to the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

The Final Exam cannot be held sooner than one week after an advanced draft of the entire dissertation has been submitted to the final examination committee. The dissertation defense is advertised throughout the Department of Bioengineering and is attended by interested faculty and students.

It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with the committee members a date that is acceptable to all of them. If all committee members’ schedules cannot be accommodated, then the Graduate College allows voting members to participate via teleconference or other electronic communication media. The committee chair and at least one voting member of the committee must by physically present for the entire duration of the final exam.

The examination begins with a short, 30 minute presentation by the candidate outlining the problem chosen, the procedures and methods used, and the results obtained. The committee then questions the candidate regarding the research results and completeness of the written dissertation to determine its suitability for completion of the PhD degree. The candidate may be asked to clarify materials presented and defend various aspects of the work. Errors and ambiguities in the written and oral presentations will be brought to the candidate’s attention for discussion and possible correction. At the conclusion of the examination, the chair of the committee announces one of two results:

1) Pass the candidate. The candidates passes the final exam if the Director(s) of Research vote Pass and no more than one of the remaining Committee members votes Fail. The
Committee will indicate on the Final Exam Result Form if revisions are required. The Committee will sign the Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form after the completion of the examination and the completion of any required revisions.

2) Fail the candidate. The candidate fails the Final Exam if a Director of Research votes Fail or if two or more Committee members vote Fail. The student may be granted another opportunity to take the exam, at the discretion of the Committee, after completing additional research or writing. However, a new committee must be appointed by the Graduate College. The new committee may, but is not required to, consist of the same members as the original committee.

6.2.12 PhD Thesis Deadlines
The Graduate College requires that the PhD degree be completed by the end of the seventh year, or by the end of the sixth year if the student has received a master’s degree elsewhere. After that time, the student is prevented from further registration. Extensions of this time limit may be granted in exceptional cases by petitioning to the Graduate College.

If more than five years elapse between a student’s preliminary and final examinations, the student will be required to demonstrate that his or her knowledge is current by passing a second preliminary examination, which is a prerequisite for admission to the final examination. The form of the second preliminary examination need not be identical to that of the first.

The Graduate College sets several deadlines during the academic year that dictate in what semester and year the PhD degree will be officially conferred. Students may deposit their thesis in advance of any one of these deadlines. See www.grad.illinois.edu/general/calendar/current for the dates of these deadlines for the current academic year.

The Graduate College requires registration in BIOE 599 in the term in which the student takes the final examination for the doctoral degree. There is, however, a period after the end of each semester during which the final exam may be given without the need to register for the next term. See www.grad.illinois.edu/general/calendar/current for specific deadlines.

6.2.13 General Procedure for Depositing a Thesis
Several procedural requirements for depositing a thesis must be strictly followed. Before the thesis is in final form, the student should go to the Graduate Programs Coordinator and inform the Coordinator of her or his intent to graduate. The student should complete the Preliminary and Final Exam Scheduling Form as soon as possible and deliver it to the Coordinator in order to request the final exam paperwork from the Graduate College. After the final exam, the Thesis/Dissertation Approval form must be signed by the final examination committee and then by the Department Head. There can be no errors or corrections of any kind on these pages. After the thesis is in final form, it must receive a format check by the Graduate Programs Coordinator. The thesis is then electronically submitted to the Graduate College for further review. Once the thesis is approved by the Graduate College and all necessary paperwork is on file with the Thesis Office (204 Coble Hall), the deposit process is complete.

Style and Format Requirements. Before the thesis can be submitted to the Graduate College Thesis Office, the student must submit a near-final copy to the Graduate Programs Coordinator.
for review of the general format of the thesis, including the style to be followed in footnotes, bibliographies, tables, chapter headings, and similar matters. The final examination committee will hold the student responsible for spelling, grammar, organization, stylistic consistency, correct sequence of pages, and agreement between the table of contents and the body of the thesis, as well as content. The department will check to see that these requirements have been met. Every candidate should consult the Graduate College website for thesis formatting requirements: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/graduate-college-thesis-requirements. There are no department-specific formatting requirements.

All completed theses must be acceptable for deposit in the Graduate College Thesis Office. This office has primary responsibility for processing, binding, and storing theses as well as for maintaining uniformity in thesis format and organization. The Graduate College Thesis Office will reject any thesis that fails to meet Graduate College standards.

**Publishing the Thesis.** Every doctoral candidate is required to publish his or her completed work by assigning certain rights to ProQuest, which is the company which maintains an online repository of all theses deposited with the Thesis Office.

**Publishing of Findings before Degree Conferral.** Before the degree is conferred, a student may find it desirable or expedient to publish some of the findings that will later be incorporated in the thesis. If this is done, then an appropriate acknowledgment of the earlier publication should be included in the thesis. The Graduate College encourages such publication, but the thesis may not be published in its entirety before all degree requirements have been met.

**Copyright.** Copyright is a legal protection of a person’s work that is recorded with the U.S. Copyright Office in the Library of Congress. The webpage http://www.grad.illinois.edu/step-1-development#copyrightwebsite describes copyrighting in greater detail. Students may register for a copyright on their own, by completing an application form, paying the basic fee, and submitting an extra copy of their thesis to the U.S. Copyright Office. Doctoral candidates may choose to ask ProQuest to complete these steps for them for a slightly higher fee.

**Compliance with Research Policies.** If thesis research involves the use of human subjects, warm-blooded animals, or hazardous materials or procedures, then the student must comply with the University’s policies and procedures governing such work. Doctoral degree candidates should obtain more information at http://research.illinois.edu/training/integrity.cfm.

6.2.14 **Final Exit Interview and Department Checklist**
Once their thesis and final examination is complete, students must schedule a final exit interview with the Graduate Program Director or his/her designee. Before the interview can be scheduled, the “Before You Leave the Department of Bioengineering” checklist must be completed. The form may be obtained from the Graduate Programs Coordinator.

6.2.15 **Additional Checklist for Graduating PhD Students**
- Register for BIOE 599 during the semester in which the final defense takes place
- Defend thesis before the Graduate College deadline (see Graduate College Calendar)
- Apply for graduation before deadline (see Graduate College Calendar)
• Title page check in the Graduate College Thesis Office (204 Coble Hall)
• Departmental format review (Graduate Programs Coordinator)
• Format review in the Graduate College Thesis Office (204 Coble Hall)
• Deposit before the Graduate College deadline. Materials required:
  o One original Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form, signed by entire committee
  o ProQuest Agreement Form
  o A deposit fee will be charged to the student’s account
  o Survey of Earned Doctorates completed
  o Optional: $45 cashier’s check to license copyright
  o Update address information on Self-Service; the diploma will be mailed to the student’s permanent address
7. The MD/PhD Degree in Bioengineering

Note: This information pertains to students who matriculated into the MD/PhD program prior to the fall of 2015 ONLY.

7.1 Overview of the MD/PhD Program
The Medical Scholars Program (MSP) is a joint program of the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign and the Graduate College at Urbana-Champaign and is in association with the professional programs of the Urbana-Champaign campus. The MSP educates students to become physician-scholars who will provide leadership in the health care delivery system as policy makers, teachers, researchers, or practitioners of medicine, with a strong emphasis on the generation of new knowledge and new concepts. Students in the program earn a Doctorate of Medicine and a PhD in Bioengineering.

7.2 Admissions Policy
Students in the program must be admitted independently into the College of Medicine and the Department of Bioengineering, as well as the Medical Scholars Program. For more information on admission to the PhD program in Bioengineering, see chapter 3.

7.3 Sequence of Studies and Academic Progress
The Medical Scholars Program provides an academic environment for integration of graduate and medical education and expects students to proceed at an appropriate pace through their dual degree studies. The time schedule for meeting the various milestones (preliminary examinations, course requirements, qualifying examinations, National Board examinations, etc.) will be based on established guidelines in consultation with the student and their graduate advisor. It is recognized that individual programs of study may vary greatly with respect to sequence due to factors such as differences in requirements among graduate programs, funding considerations, and the nature of the research. Consequently, petitions for exceptions to the policy may be approved by the Director of the Medical Scholars Program.

In order to assure both integration and reasonable academic progress:

1. All MSP students begin their studies in full-time graduate course work and/or research. Exceptions are granted for students enrolled in medical studies and may be granted for students already enrolled in graduate study in the department in which they intend to do their PhD at the time of admission to the MSP. Students are encouraged to take M1 classes while completing their graduate program requirements.

2. Students are expected to complete the PhD requirements prior to initiating the second year (M2) of the medical curriculum. Exceptions to this policy require explicit permission from the graduate thesis advisor and the MSP Director. The graduate advisor might also wish to consult with the student’s thesis committee.

3. MD/PhD students granted exceptions to policy 2 above must progress to Stage III of the Bioengineering graduate program prior to participating in more than one clerkship rotation in the medical curriculum.
4. As per College of Medicine policy, MSP students must pass all M1 courses taken during each academic year including summer makeup examination(s). Students must repeat all M1 courses taken to date if students fail any component of the M1 curriculum.

7.4 Advisory Conference and Annual Plan of Study
1. Entering students are required to schedule an initial advisory conference with the MSP Director (or designee) during the first semester of enrollment in the MSP. Only the student need attend this initial meeting. Thereafter, students are required to schedule an advisory conference on an annual basis in the spring semester with their graduate advisor or another representative of their graduate program.

2. Students who cannot schedule the advisory conference within the time period provided by the MSP are required to notify program administration of the reason for postponement.

3. Failure to schedule an advisory conference will result in consultation between the MSP Director and the student’s advisor(s) to prepare recommendations regarding the student’s program of studies.

4. Following the MSP advisory conference each year there should be a formal document containing the agreed upon plan for the student for the next year.

5. Whenever it is determined by the College of Medicine or the Department of Bioengineering that a student in the MSP is in academic difficulty, the MSP office will be notified and will, in turn, notify the Department of Bioengineering and the student’s graduate advisor.

7.5 Students Withdrawing from or Transferring from the Bioengineering PhD Program
If a MSP student wishes to transfer to another department from Bioengineering, the student must receive permission from the MSP Director. Major changes in training (e.g. from PhD to JD or MBA) will require the student to:

1. Submit a letter to the MSP Director detailing the rationale for the proposed degree change.

2. Submit at least one current letter of recommendation, including one from the student’s current graduate advisor.

3. Re-interview as for admission to the MSP.

If the MSP Subcommittee on Admissions denies the request to change graduate programs, the student can pursue the original graduate plan or must agree to withdraw from the MSP.

7.5.1 Failure to Complete the PhD in Bioengineering
If a Medical Scholars Program student decides not to pursue the PhD in Bioengineering, or fails to make satisfactory progress, the student will be automatically withdrawn from the Medical Scholars Program.
7.6 Continuation or Matriculation in the College of Medicine after Withdrawing from the Medical Scholars Program
Students who withdraw or are withdrawn from the MSP and who wish to commence or continue in the College of Medicine must request approval by means of the following procedures:

1. The student, after consultation with the MSP Director and either the student’s graduate advisor or a designated representative of the graduate program, submits a petition to the MSP Director, stating the reasons for withdrawal from the graduate program and requesting approval to continue his/her studies in the College of Medicine.

2. The MSP Director refers the matter to the College of Medicine – Urbana Champaign (COM-UC) Associate Dean for Student Affairs with an accompanying letter stating the recommendation of the Medical Scholars Program. This recommendation will be based upon the record of the student, including input from the advisor or another representative of the graduate program and the clinical advisor, where appropriate.

3. If the student is: 1) in good academic standing as determined by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and 2) the recommendation from the Director of the Medical Scholars Program supports the student’s petition, and 3) if no other reason for denial is evident, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will ordinarily recommend to the COM-UC Student Progress and Promotions Committee the continued matriculation of the student in the COM-UC.

4. Students have the right to appeal an adverse decision of the COM-UC Student Progress and Promotions Committee to the Executive Committee as well as to the College Committee on Student Promotions if the Executive Committee upholds the decision of the SPPC and the SPPC makes no further adverse recommendation.

7.7 Clerkship Credit for Students Withdrawing from the Medical Scholars Program
When an MD/PhD student withdraws from the Medical Scholars Program and is allowed to continue as a traditional medical student, the student potentially can be eligible to receive partial elective clerkship credit for his/her graduate studies/research in Bioengineering. The general guideline is that a student, who is in good academic standing in the Bioengineering PhD program, will be eligible to receive 3 weeks of elective clerkship credit (up to a maximum of 16 weeks) for every year spent enrolled as a full-time graduate student (meaning that each semester s/he was enrolled for at least 12 hours of graduate credit and less than 7 hours of College of Medicine classes). At the time the student withdraws from the MSP, the Director of the Medical Scholars Program and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Medical Scholars Program will jointly decide how many weeks of elective clerkship credit the student will receive.

7.8 Dismissal of Students from the Medical Scholars Program
Students who are technically in good standing may be dismissed from the Medical Scholars Program for reasonable cause by the MSP Director without dismissal from the Department of Bioengineering or the College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign. The following procedures will apply in these situations:
1. Problems pertaining to a student in the Medical Scholars Program which could result in that student’s dismissal from the program and which do not fall directly within the province of an academic deficiency in either the College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign or the Graduate College on the Urbana-Champaign campus will be reviewed by the Director of the Medical Scholars Program and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Medical Scholars Program.

2. If the Director and Associate Dean feel that dismissal is warranted, they will make a recommendation to an ad-hoc subcommittee of the Medical Scholars Program Steering Committee. This committee will be comprised of four faculty members currently serving on the Steering Committee. At least one of these faculty should be in the COM-UC and at least one should be affiliated with Bioengineering or an academically related program. The Deans of the COM-UC and UIUC Graduate College, as well as the student’s thesis advisor (if they are a member of the steering committee) are excluded. The subcommittee will choose a chair and will appoint a member of the MSP student body to serve on the subcommittee (with vote). The subcommittee will review all pertinent information pertaining to the student’s situation, and will confirm, deny, or alter the original recommendation. The student will be notified of the committee’s recommendation in writing by the MSP Director and Chair of the subcommittee.

3. In the event that a student wishes to appeal the recommendation of the subcommittee, members of the Medical Scholars Program Steering Committee who did not serve on the ad-hoc subcommittee will act as the appeals committee. The student representative on the Steering Committee will be included as a member of the appeals committee. The Deans of the COM-UC and the Graduate College, as well as the student’s thesis advisor (if they are a member of the steering committee) are excluded from the appeals process. The committee will choose an acting Chairman for the appeals process. The MSP Director and Chair of the subcommittee will present their findings. The student will have the right to appear in person at that appeal. The student will be notified of the committee’s decision in writing by the MSP Director and Acting Chair of the Committee.

4. Should the student wish to file a grievance after the decision, they will be advised of the appropriate policies applicable to their situation. The grievance procedure could follow either UIUC or UIC policies depending on the nature of the problem that initiated the dismissal decision and/or the recommendations of the committee.

7.9 Professional Development

Students are expected to participate in MSP sponsored activities both by regular attendance and by service on planning committees associated with these activities and/or the MSP Advisory Committee. If a student is unable to attend the annual Fall Retreat, it is expected that an explanation will be provided in advance to the MSP Director in writing or by email. Students are encouraged to organize interest groups with the Medical Scholars Program to provide forums for the exchange of knowledge and viewpoints on medicine and health care from the student body’s diverse disciplinary perspectives and to foster professional and social interaction.
8. Financial Support in Bioengineering

8.1 Appointments and Salaries
PhD and thesis-MS students in good standing in the Department of Bioengineering are primarily supported through Research Assistantships. A small number of Teaching Assistantships are available in Bioengineering, and students may also teach in other departments. Very few Teaching Assistantships are available for summer sessions.

Students in the non-thesis master’s program are not eligible for financial support.

Salary amounts are based on an academic progress scale, as follows:

- Pre-MS degree: $2,098/month ($23,078 over 11 months)
- Post-MS degree: $2,161/month ($23,770 over 11 months)
- Post-Qualifying Exam: $2,226/month ($24,483 over 11 months)
- Post-Prelim: $2,293/month ($25,218 over 11 months)

All appointments at the University are made in fractions of a “full-time equivalent” or FTE. Whenever possible, graduate students in the Department of Bioengineering are appointed to half-time (also referred to as 50% or .50 FTE) appointments. The appointment can be divided in several ways: the most common are 50% FTE on a Research Assistantship, 50% FTE on a Teaching Assistantship, or 25% Research Assistantship plus 25% Teaching Assistantship. The Teaching Assistantship salaries are funded through the department providing the appointment; Research Assistantship salaries are funded through faculty research advisors – usually through federal or private grants made to support their research program.

Summer appointments are generally 50% FTE over 2 months.

8.1.1 Registration Requirement
Recipients of assistantships must be registered during the term they are appointed, with the exception of the summer term. If a student receives a summer assistantship (the period between May 16 and August 15), and the student was registered for the immediately preceding spring semester or has registered for the following fall semester, the campus policy does not require the student to register for the summer term. Students who are supported through fellowships do not have a minimum registration requirement, but the Department of Bioengineering requires students to register for at least 12 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters.

8.1.2 Tax Status of Salaries and Stipends
The income tax liability of students is determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the State of Illinois Department of Revenue (IDR) and not by the University. The information provided in the remainder of this subsection is based on the present understanding of the tax code.

Assistantship salaries are taxable income to the recipient. The value of any tuition and service fee waiver associated with the assistantship is not taxable income. The University withholds
Fellowship stipends are taxable income to the recipient. The value of any tuition and service fee waiver associated with the fellowship is not taxable income. At this time, the University does not withhold income taxes on fellowship stipends unless the University Payroll Office is explicitly requested to do so. Also, it does not report fellowship stipends as income to the IRS or IDR. It is the fellow’s responsibility to declare the fellowship stipends as taxable income on the appropriate income tax returns, and to make arrangements for paying any taxes due on this income.

Student Assistants on Non-Immigrant Visas are taxed as non-residents (and thus somewhat differently from U.S. residents). The U.S. also has tax treaties with many countries, and these treaties affect the tax liabilities of fellows or assistants who are citizens of these countries. In such cases, the assistant may arrange with the Payroll Office for increased (or reduced) withholding that will more closely approximate the estimated tax liability.

8.1.3 Work Hours and Conditions
It is not possible to determine absolutely the number of hours of work each week expected of most assistants, especially when the time devoted to a research assistantship is tied to thesis research. However, hours for work not related to the student’s thesis are figured roughly on the basis of a 40-hour work week. Thus, a half-time assistantship requires about 20 hours per week. The department will provide assistants with offices and equipment necessary for their work.

8.1.4 Resignation and Termination of Appointments
To resign an appointment, students must contact the College of Engineering Human Resources Shared Services Office in 203 Engineering Hall. If a student is resigning an appointment because he or she has defended and will be depositing a thesis, then the thesis must be deposited no more than seven calendar days after resignation; otherwise, the student will be charged for tuition. For more information on this policy, see http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chaptervii/section04.

A student who resigns an appointment or whose appointment is canceled before service is rendered for at least three-fourths of the term (91 days during the regular semester or 41 days during the summer term) is required to pay the full amount of appropriate tuition and fees for that term. Payment for tuition is not required if the student withdraws from the University on the same date or before the last day of the assistantship, or if degree requirements for graduation are completed within seven calendar days after the resignation date.

An appointment remains in effect only if the student maintains good academic standing, makes satisfactory academic progress, and provides satisfactory service.

An assistantship appointment may be terminated during the period of the appointment if the assistant is no longer a student, is no longer making satisfactory progress, or substantially fails to perform assigned responsibilities. The assistant will be provided with written notice and an
opportunity to respond to the Department Head prior to termination. For additional information about the appeals process, see chapter 9.

8.1.5 Leaves of Absence Involving Suspension of Registration
Graduate students who want to interrupt their programs and discontinue registering need to work closely with their advisors, the Graduate Program Director, and the Coordinator of Graduate Programs to make arrangements for the interruption, including but limited to completing the Request for Academic Leave of Absence Form:
http://www.grad.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/leaveofabsence-form.pdf.
With departmental approval, a student may re-enter at any time within one year of his or her last registration. Any lapse in registration may result in the loss of the full-tuition-waiver privileges that may have previously accompanied a particular student’s assistantship appointments. Whether leaving for one or more terms, a student with educational loans should consult the Financial Aid Office and/or the lender before terminating student status. International students leaving campus are required to secure clearance from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).

Graduate students wishing to return from a leave of absence within the time limit specified must first contact the Graduate Programs Coordinator. Graduate students who interrupt their program of study for more than one year must also petition for re-entry to the Graduate College.

8.1.6 Coverage Responsibility
When an assistant must be absent from work, it is the assistant’s responsibility to follow established departmental policies and procedures. This may include a responsibility to inform the assistant’s supervisor in advance of the absence, to explain to the supervisor the reason for the absence, to secure the supervisor’s approval of the absence, and to follow the employing unit’s policies concerning arranging for substitutes to perform the assistant’s duties.

8.2 Benefits

8.2.1 Tuition and Fee Waiver
Assistants with appointments between 25% and 67%, inclusive, for at least three-quarters of the semester are exempt from paying tuition and certain other fees. For assistants holding such appointments in the spring semester, the exemption extends through the summer session.

8.2.2 Vacation
Assistantships typically require services on a 9-month or semester-by-semester basis, and some students will have separate summer appointments for part or all of the summer. Students appointed in this way are not eligible for vacation benefits except for the official University holidays. The department permits teaching assistants on semester appointments to be absent during the fall and spring breaks or when classes are not in session between semesters, provided that their teaching duties have been completed and their advisor has been consulted. Students are not obligated to work during periods when they are not appointed; specifically, for students who are on 11-month appointments, they are not obligated to work one month during the summer. Generally, for teaching assistants, the non-service period occurs at the beginning of the summer, for research assistants, it occurs at the end.
8.2.3 Bereavement Leave
Assistants are eligible to receive up to three days of paid leave to travel to the funeral associated with the death of an assistant’s immediate family member, same-sex domestic partner or household member, in-laws, grandchild, or grandparent; and one day of paid leave for a relative other than the above who is not a member of the assistant’s household.

8.2.4 Personal Leaves Not Involving Suspension of Registration
An assistant may be granted an unpaid personal leave during the term of his/her appointment, upon request to and at the sole discretion of the employer (either the advisor or the Department, depending on the source of funds) and subject to such terms and conditions as the employer may establish.

With the consent of the employer, graduate students may “exchange” service days with days in a non-service period. The official periods of service and non-service, however, will not change. No loss of pay occurs when such an exchange occurs.

8.2.5 Sick Leave
Assistants are eligible for 13 non-cumulative workdays of sick leave at the percentage of their appointment for each appointment year, whether they are appointed on a nine-month or a twelve-month basis. Graduate students appointed to one-semester assistantships earn 6.5 days of sick leave at the percentage of their appointment.

8.2.6 Parental Leave
Eligible research and teaching assistants will be entitled to up to two weeks of parental leave without loss of salary immediately following the birth of a child, or upon either the initial placement or the legal adoption of a child less than 18 years of age. Eligible graduate assistants are those graduate students with a current assistantship appointment for at least one semester and who hold an active appointment at the time the parental leave is taken.

The requirement that academic staff members must have six months of service to receive this benefit does not apply to graduate assistants. Graduate students who hold only an hourly appointment are not eligible for parental leave. A graduate assistant who resigns the appointment before or at the expiration of the parental leave normally will be required to reimburse the University for the cost of the salary paid during the leave.

Parental leave for graduate assistants will be counted as part of the twelve-week entitlement accorded by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLS) for FMLA-eligible individuals and may be used in conjunction with other paid or unpaid leaves for which the individual is eligible. Students should consult section 1X-A-10 of http://www.cam.illinois.edu/ for more information about the FMLA policy.

There is no application form for parental leave other than that used for FMLA leave. As with any leave, graduate assistants should communicate as soon as is practical with their unit regarding the timing of the proposed leave. Arrangements for the leave are coordinated between the student and the research advisor in conjunction with the College of Engineering Shared Services Human Resources Office. Consistent with the FMLA policy, units may request documentation of the
birth or adoption. Parental leave should be taken in full at the time of birth or adoption and not on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule for a period lasting longer than two weeks.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of Academic Human Resources (217-333-6747 or 807 South Wright Street, Room 420).

8.2.7 On-Campus Health Care
The Health Services fee is paid on behalf of graduate students. Students are entitled to free office visits at the McKinley Health Center with doctors, nurse practitioners, mental health therapists, and health educators, along with free access to most X-rays, laboratory tests, and prescriptions.

The Health Service fee does not pay for care received outside McKinley Health Center (e.g., hospitalizations and referrals) or for immunizations required by law prior to entrance to the University or travel immunization.

Coverage extends, including breaks, from the first day of the semester to the first day of the following semester. When you discontinue enrollment at the University, you can extend your health care coverage for one additional semester if an extension is purchased by the semester deadline.

Health care at McKinley Health Center for spouses of graduate students is available for purchase. To purchase coverage for spouses, you need to bring the following items with you when you apply: 1) a copy of your marriage license; 2) proof of major medical health insurance, 3) immunization records that meet State of Illinois requirements.

Unfortunately, children of graduate students are not covered under the services provided by the Health Service fee.

For more information about health care at McKinley Health Center, call 217-333-2719, visit them at 1109 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana, or visit their website at http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu.

8.2.8 Off-Campus Health Insurance
The university provides and administers the Student Health Insurance Plan, which covers care that is not available at McKinley Health Center, such as hospitalization, specialty care, and care away from campus. This plan is mandatory for those students who have not provided proof of other equivalent health insurance coverage.

The health insurance fee is $370/semester. Coverage is worldwide and extends, including breaks, from the first day of the semester to the first day of the following semester. Insured students who do not plan to enroll for classes for the next consecutive semester may elect to extend coverage for themselves and for insured dependents for one semester beyond the last semester enrolled. Graduating students may elect to extend coverage for two semesters.

If you opt out of the Student Health Insurance Plan because you have your own health insurance, then you should be aware that there can be some unexpected consequences. For example, many
insurance plans require service to be provided in the home community, which may require you to travel home to see a specialist or receive other treatment.

Health insurance for spouses and children is available and must be applied for each semester, provided that the student is also insured. Coverage takes effect on the date of application and receipt of proper premium by the University of Illinois, or the appropriate semester start date, whichever is later. Dependents insured for the prior semester will have no lapse in coverage, provided that applications and premium are received by the appropriate semester deadline date.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign offers a dental insurance plan called Delta Dental Plan of Illinois to graduate students and their dependents. See http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current.dental.htm. There are more than twenty Delta Premier dental offices in the Champaign-Urbana area. A list of these dentists is available online at http://www.deltadentalil.com.

The University of Illinois also offers a vision plan called Vision Service Plan at no charge for graduate assistants and fellows whose appointments generate tuition waivers. When eligible students have been entered into the payroll system, they are eligible for coverage. A list of doctors is available online at http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current/vision.htm.

For more information about the Student Health Insurance Plan, dental plan, or vision plan, call the Student Insurance Office at 217-333.0165, or visit the websites listed above, or at www.si.illinois.edu.

8.3 Teaching Assistantships
Most students in the Bioengineering graduate program are funded through research assistantships or fellowships, but there are a limited amount of teaching assistant positions available, at either 25% FTE or 50% FTE. International students with a score less than 24 on the speaking portion of the TOEFL iBT must first pass the English Proficiency Interview (EPI) with a score of 4 Conditional Pass or higher. All students must have completed the Graduate Academy for College Teaching through the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Excellence. Incoming students needing financial support will be given first consideration for teaching assistantships. Any open positions that remain will be offered to current students needing financial support or who have an interest in teaching.

8.3.1 Teaching Assignments
The Department of Bioengineering will match students whose training and interests align with available assignments. Selection is made on the basis of ability, interest, availability, and need. All assignments are at the undergraduate level.

A few Teaching Assistants will serve as graders for undergraduate courses, but most have classroom or laboratory teaching assignments. All Teaching Assistants are provided with a faculty supervisor who will be responsible for setting policy, determining the syllabus, and assigning final grades.
8.3.2 Teaching Loads
A 50% FTE appointment corresponds to no more than 20 actual hours of work per week. A 50% Teaching Assistant (TA) appointment typically consists of approximately 3-4 hours teaching in a classroom or laboratory, 4 hours of grading, 1-2 office hours, and several hours of preparation per week. Students should expect that in the first semester they teach a particular course, more preparation time will be required than in subsequent semesters.

8.3.3 Campus Teaching Resources
In addition to being supervised by faculty in the department in which they teach, Teaching Assistants can obtain help from the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, a campus-wide unit responsible for assisting colleges, departments, faculty, and TAs in improving and facilitating instruction. The staff works closely with colleges and departments while working with TAs, but they may also work solely with TAs upon request. The staff also invites consultation and discussion on a wide variety of instructional issues including classroom pedagogy, classroom management, student achievement, assessment on issues related to instruction, teaching portfolios, academic integrity, creating an optimal learning environment, and active learning. All of these activities provide Teaching Assistants with many opportunities for follow-up consultation. Walk-ins are encouraged. The Center also provides formal and informal programs and workshops on these and other topics for faculty, staff, and student groups. The main office of the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning is located in the northeast corner of the Armory Building in room 249, 505 East Armory Avenue, Champaign, IL 61820. Their phone number is 217-333-3370 and their website is http://cte.illinois.edu.

8.3.4 Graduate Teacher Certificates
In order to encourage graduate students to develop their teaching skills while simultaneously documenting their teaching experience, the University has created the Certificate in Foundations of Teaching, Graduate Teacher Certificate, Teacher Scholar Certificate, Certificate in Technology – Enhanced Teaching, and Citizen Scholar Certificate programs. These certificates provide documentation of a graduate teacher’s involvement in teacher development, as well as in hands-on teaching activities such as instructional orientations, workshops, classroom teaching, classroom visitation by a peer, and videotaping of his or her teaching followed by consultative and student feedback. Additional information and the specific requirements for these programs can be obtained from the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, 249 Armory Building. See http://cte.illinois.edu/programs/teachcert.html.

8.4 Research Assistantships
Once students join a research group, and while they remain in good standing, they are typically supported by their research advisors on research assistantships. A student chooses an advisor based on the work done in the research group and how closely that matches the student’s own research goals. As their research progresses, students are making significant progress toward not only achieving their own goals, but toward adding to the collective scientific advancement of the group. The work of the group is supported primarily through grants secured by the faculty advisor, and each student is then paid by a grant that supports research in his or her area of interest.
In the event that a faculty advisor has insufficient funds to pay all members of his or her group as Research Assistants, students may inquire about teaching assistant opportunities through the Department of Bioengineering or in other related departments on campus.

8.5 Fellowships
The Department of Bioengineering has a strong history of securing fellowships for students. Opportunities exist in the College of Engineering, the Graduate College, and government agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. Students should consult the College of Engineering’s website (http://www.engineering.illinois.edu) and the Graduate College’s fellowships database (https://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowship/) for a full list of opportunities.

8.6 Conference Travel Awards
Conference travel grants are available from the Graduate College for graduate students. These grants are intended to support students who will be presenting papers or creative work at the conferences they attend. The deadline to submit an application to the Department of Bioengineering for the fall competition is in September. There is another competition in the spring and that deadline is in February. The conditions and eligibility requirements are available at http://www.grad.illinois.edu/general/travelaward. All applications must be delivered to the Graduate Programs Coordinator by the internal departmental deadline, which will be communicated to students via email.
9. Appeal and Grievance Policy

9.1 Introduction
All members of the University community are expected to observe high standards of professional conduct and ethical behavior in graduate education and in the supervision of graduate research and teaching (Guiding Standards for Faculty Supervision of Graduate Students, March 31, 1997). In a large and heterogeneous scholarly community, however, problems may arise. Therefore, the University articulates its policies and provides effective informal and formal procedures for resolving these problems when they involve graduate students.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the interests of all graduate students by providing informal and formal means of seeking resolution in case of an inappropriate action of a member of the faculty or administrative staff or an inappropriate application of a department policy. Any graduate student may informally pursue or formally file a grievance when he or she believes that a decision or behavior adversely affects his or her status as a graduate student.

The Department of Bioengineering abides by the Graduate College’s Policy and Procedures on Grievances by Graduate Students. This policy (which can be viewed in entirety at http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterix/section04#GraduateCollegePolicy) does not apply in cases involving challenges to Graduate College petition decisions, the exercise of professional judgment in evaluating student academic performance/progress, student-to-student conflicts, academic misconduct, employment specific issues, cases that arise under the Student Code, or cases involving alleged discrimination or sexual harassment.

9.2 Scope and Coverage
A grievance may arise when a graduate student believes that his/her status as a graduate student, or University appointment based on student status, has been adversely affected by an incorrect or inappropriate decision or behavior. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to follow a departmental or Graduate College policy in a manner that results in significant prejudice against the student
- Failure to follow departmental or Graduate College procedures for assessing degree milestones such as preliminary examinations
- Improper termination from a program
- Requiring personal services unrelated to academic studies
- Retaliation for exercising his/her rights under this policy

Practices or actions by a student’s supervisor, another faculty member, or another member of the University community that seriously deviate from ethical or responsible professional standards in the supervision of graduate student work may constitute professional misconduct in violation of University policy.
9.3 Description of the Grievance Procedure

9.3.1 Informal Resolution
A graduate student wishing to initiate the Graduate College grievance process must start with an Intake Dean. The student will meet with an Intake Dean who will review the matter and materials and attempt to assist the student in resolving the issue at the informal level through discussion or mediation. This process must be initiated within **60 business days** of the decision or behavior resulting in the grievance. The Intake Dean may attempt to mediate a resolution for matters that do not meet the deadline, but such matters will not be submitted for formal review.

9.3.2 Written Grievance
A student may file a written grievance if an informal resolution is unsuccessful, provided the written grievance is filed within **10 business days** of the date the Intake Dean advises the Grievant and the Subject that no further efforts will be made at the informal stage. The grievance should be delivered to the Dean of the Graduate College.

The written grievance should include at least the following:
- A statement by the student summarizing the concern(s)
- The name(s) of the University faculty, staff or administrators involved
- The date(s) of the alleged incident(s)
- A statement concerning what outcome or action the student would like to see result from the grievance

9.3.3 Potential Outcomes of Intake Dean’s Review
Once a written grievance has been submitted and reviewed, the Intake Dean will contact the student to arrange a meeting to discuss it. The Intake Dean will review the written grievance and supporting documentation provided by the Grievant and may conduct further inquiries and/or solicit additional information as warranted. The Intake Dean may also facilitate additional discussions between the Parties to try to resolve the matter at the administrative level. The potential outcomes of this review are the following:

- **Agreed Disposition.** If the Intake Dean is successful in resolving the matter by agreement, then the Intake Dean shall prepare a Report which includes the grievance(s), the response(s), the finding(s), and what efforts were taken or proposed to resolve the matter administratively.
- **Unresolved Grievance.** If the Intake Dean is unsuccessful in resolving the matter by agreement, then the Intake Dean shall prepare a Report which includes: the grievance(s), the response(s), the finding(s), and what efforts were taken or proposed to resolve the matter administratively.

The Intake Dean’s Report of Administrative Action will be submitted to the Dean with copies to the Grievant and Subject(s) of the Grievance.
9.3.4 Request for Panel Review
The Grievant or the Subject(s) may request a panel review of unresolved grievances by submitting a request for the Dean within 10 business days from the date of the Intake Dean’s Report of Administrative Action.

Upon receipt of a request for formal review, the Dean will review the request along with the Intake Dean’s Report of Administrative Action and other relevant materials to consider whether any issues merit further investigation and review. If the grievance is declined, the Dean will notify the person seeking review in writing and explain the decision.

If the Grievance is accepted, then the Dean shall appoint a panel of five people to investigate the matter and provide recommendations. The Panel shall consist of:

- One member of the Graduate College Executive Committee
- One faculty member from the unit in which the matter originated
- One faculty member at large
- Two active graduate students at large

The faculty member at large will chair the Panel.

The Dean shall define the subject matter of the review in a written charge. The charge may, but need not, address every allegation contained in the request for formal review. The charge may also include additional matters that, in the opinion of the Dean, warrant investigation.

9.3.5 Panel Report
The Panel shall submit a written report to the Dean as soon as practical that includes at least the following:

- A copy of the written charge from the Dean
- A statement of the relief sought by the Grievant
- The response of the Subject(s)
- A general description of the investigative process
- A citation of relevant policies
- Findings of fact that support the Panel’s conclusions
- A recommendation of appropriate redress for the Grievant(s), if applicable
- Any recommended changes in policies and procedures to minimize the probability of recurrence, if applicable. Both parties will have the opportunity to respond to the panel report and submit written comments to the Dean within 5 business days of receipt of the report.

9.3.6 Final Decision
As soon as practical following the receipt of the Report and all written comments concerning the report, the Dean shall determine what disposition to make of the case. The following are potential outcomes of the final decision:
• If the Dean concludes that the grievance has not been proved, then the grievance will be deemed **not sustained** and dismissed.
• If the Dean concludes that the grievance has been **sustained**, then the Dean will proceed in accordance with the University Statutes and relevant University rules and regulations. The Dean may prescribe redress for the grievant, recommend modification of policies, or recommend changes in the procedures for implementation of such policies, as appropriate.

**9.3.7 Appeal**
A party may file and appeal to the University’s Provost within **10 business days** from the date of the Dean’s Written Disposition. The sole grounds for appeal are material violations of these procedures that have resulted in significant prejudice against the party appealing. The appeal must be in writing and must specify the nature of the procedural error. The Provost’s decision on appeal shall be final.

**9.4 Confidentiality**
All persons involved in administering these procedures will make diligent efforts to protect the reputations, privacy, and positions of all involved persons. These persons include those who file grievances, persons who are alleged in a grievance to have taken inappropriate actions or activities, and department administrators. All of the procedures and the identity of those involved should be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, confidentiality regarding information other than the identity of the grievant need not be maintained if the grievance is found to be false and in particular if dissemination is necessary to protect the reputation of individuals or units falsely accused. Making public the fact that a grievance has been deemed false or unproved is not considered retaliation against the grievant. Protection of confidentiality does not preclude disclosures necessary to redress actions leading to a grievance.
10. Services to Graduate Students

10.1 Department of Bioengineering Advisory Council (BEACON)
The BEACON is an organization through which graduate students address academic and social issues as they pertain to the graduate student population. The BEACON is composed of second year Bioengineering graduate students, who fill its leadership roles. Additionally, one first year representative and one representative for advanced students (third year and above) are on the leadership board. There shall be at least one representative from each of the following groups: MS student, PhD student, and MD/PhD student.

10.2 GradBMES
The mission of GradBMES is to expand the current BMES community to include Bioengineering’s increasing number of graduate students. GradBMES seeks to build a close-knit and collaborative community of graduate students interested in bioengineering through activities designed to promote collaboration, communicate recent advances, and promote educational and professional development.

10.3 Engineering Career Services
Engineering Career Services (ECS) provides students and employers with expert and experienced career management services. ECS assists graduate students in developing a personalized career action plan from the beginning of his or her graduate studies. For more information, visit the ECS Office in 3270 Digital Computer Lab or visit their website at http://ecs.engineering.illinois.edu.

10.4 Counselors
Students sometimes experience difficulties that complicate and undermine success in their academic and personal lives. These problems might include academic difficulties, problems with family or friends, depression, problems resulting from an abusive childhood or sexual assault, anxiety, procrastination, eating disorders, low self-esteem, alcohol or substance abuse, anxiety about dating or sexuality, or career indecision. The University Counseling Center staff provides a variety of services to help students understand their problems and themselves, achieve satisfying relationships, improve their academic performance, and make effective and satisfying career and life choices.

The Counseling Center staff is aware of the special concerns of women, men, LGBTQA students, international students, students with disabilities, and students of color other ethnic minority groups, and they are committed to being sensitive to these issues. The Counseling Center is supported by the Health Service fee, and most services are available at no additional cost. For more information about any Counseling Center service or program, or to schedule a first-time appointment, please call 217-333-3704.

The Counseling Center is located in the Fred H. Turner Student Services Building, 610 E. John Street, Champaign, IL 61820. Their website is http://www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu.
10.5 GRADLINKS
The Graduate College distributes important announcements (e.g., deadlines, events, fellowship opportunities) each week to all graduate students through the GRADLINKS listserv. Each graduate student is automatically added to the listserv upon registration.

10.6 Graduate College Fellowship Database
The Graduate College maintains a database that contains over 1,100 graduate student funding opportunities. For more information, see https://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowship/.
Sources of Information

The information in this document is based in part on the following University of Illinois publications:

**The Graduate College Handbook:** [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/)

**The University of Illinois Student Code:** [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/)

**Programs of Study:** [http://provost.illinois.edu/ProgramsOfStudy/2013/fall/programs](http://provost.illinois.edu/ProgramsOfStudy/2013/fall/programs)

**Graduate College Website:** [http://www.grad.illinois.edu](http://www.grad.illinois.edu)

**Medical Scholars Program Website:** [https://www.med.illinois.edu/mdphd/](https://www.med.illinois.edu/mdphd/)

**University-GEO Contract for 2012-2017:** [http://www.ahr.illinois.edu/geo/pdf](http://www.ahr.illinois.edu/geo/pdf)

The *Graduate College Handbook* explains the privileges and responsibilities of a graduate student, describes many of the services provided to graduate students by the University, and summarizes the Graduate College regulations that apply to all graduate students. There are additional departmental requirements, which in some instances are more stringent than those of the Graduate College. Much of the *Handbook* deals with rules and regulations, but it also suggests ways in which exceptions can be requested for good reasons. All graduate students should carefully examine the *Handbook* online at [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/).

The *University of Illinois Student Code* applies to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. It provides information about regulations such as individual rights, affirmative action, registration, students conduct, etc.

The *Programs of Study* and the *Course Catalog* are both issued by the University and provide information about degree programs and courses offered.

The *Graduate College website* provides a wealth of information for all policies and procedures pertaining specifically to graduate students; including but not limited to thesis and dissertation requirements, petition policies, registration policies, and assistantship policies.

The *Medical Scholars Program website* is the source for all policies and procedures pertaining exclusively to the MD/PhD program.

**NOTE:** If conflicts exist between this Graduate Manual and the documents listed above, then the applicable Graduate College or University policies take precedence.
Index

Additional Checklist for PhD Students ................................................................. 32
Adding Courses ........................................................................................................ 18
Admission to PhD Program with Prior MS .......................................................... 13
Admissions Policy .................................................................................................... 13
Appeal and Grievance Policy .................................................................................. 46
Application Deadlines .............................................................................................. 13
Appointments and Salaries ...................................................................................... 38
Background Requirements ...................................................................................... 8
BEACON ..................................................................................................................... 50
Benefits ...................................................................................................................... 40
Bereavement Leave ................................................................................................. 41
Building and Lab Access ......................................................................................... 8
Certificate in Business Administration for Non-Business Graduate Students .......... 12
Changing Research Groups ..................................................................................... 25
Choosing a Thesis Committee ................................................................................. 29
Compliance with Research Policies ........................................................................ 22, 32
Concentration in Biomechanics ............................................................................. 11
Concentration in Cancer Nanotechnology ............................................................. 11
Conference Travel Awards ...................................................................................... 45
Contact Information, Bioengineering .................................................................... 6
Contact Information, College of Engineering ......................................................... 6
Contact Information, Graduate College ................................................................. 7
Copyrighting a Thesis ............................................................................................... 22, 32
Counselors ............................................................................................................... 50
Coursework Requirements for the PhD Degree ..................................................... 26
Coverage Responsibility .......................................................................................... 40
Credit ......................................................................................................................... 17
Degrees Offered ........................................................................................................ 10
Departmental Checklist ........................................................................................... 32
Departmental Governance ....................................................................................... 8
Departmental Requirements for PhD Degree ........................................................ 24
Depositing a Thesis .................................................................................................. 21, 31
Dismissal from MD/PhD Program .......................................................................... 36
Doctor of Philosophy Program ............................................................................... 10
Dropping Courses ................................................................................................... 18
Engineering Career Services ................................................................................... 50
English Proficiency ................................................................................................. 15, 24
Fellowships ............................................................................................................. 45
Final Exit Interview .................................................................................................. 32
Financial Support in Bioengineering ...................................................................... 38
General Information ............................................................................................... 8
Good Standing in the Department ......................................................................... 22, 26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GradBMES</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADLINKS</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate College Fellowship Database</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate College Requirements for PhD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Annual Reviews</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), Office of</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining a Research Group</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint MD/PhD</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves of Absence Involving Suspension of Registration</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Status</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Engineering in Bioinstrumentation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Thesis</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Academic Progress</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Admissions Policy</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Advisory Conference</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Annual Plan of Study</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Degree</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Program Professional Development</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Sequence of Studies</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Students Transferring from Bioengineering PhD Program</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Students Who Do Not Complete Bioengineering PhD</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/PhD Students Withdrawing from Bioengineering PhD Program</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission of Graduate Program</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS Thesis Deadlines</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-thesis MS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Exam</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Exam Outcomes</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Exam Paper Selection Guidelines</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Exam Pass/Fail Criteria</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying Exam Retake Procedure</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining Certification of Full-Time Student Status</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Campus Health Care</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Health Care</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Program</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Leave</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Leaves Not Involving Suspension of Registration</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD and MS Admissions Requirements</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Degree</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Thesis Deadlines</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary and Final Exams for PhD Degree</td>
<td>23, 29, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Ethics Training</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing Findings Before Degree Conferral</td>
<td>21, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing the Thesis</td>
<td>21, 32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>