Graduate Student Handbook
MS-Plan A, MS-Plan B
2015-2016

Department of Biomedical Engineering

University of Minnesota

Graduate Program Office:
7-104 Nils Hasselmo Hall
Phone: 612-624-8396
E-mail: bmengp@umn.edu
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Location and Contact Information .................................................. 3

Lab Access, Safety Training .......................................................... 4

BME Graduate Student (BMEGS)Intranet ........................................ 5

Advising Information ................................................................. 5
   General Advising ........................................................................ 5
   Choosing an Advisor ................................................................... 5

Course Registration ........................................................................ 6
   Holds ..................................................................................... 6
   Course Numbering System ...................................................... 6
   Approvals/Permissions .......................................................... 7
   Student Fees and Payment ...................................................... 7

Graduate Education Policies and Requirements .............................. 7

Master’s-Plan A (thesis) Degree Requirements ............................. 8
   Coursework ........................................................................... 8
   Industrial Internship .............................................................. 8
   8000-Level Requirement ....................................................... 8
   Completing a Master’s Minor (optional) .................................... 8
   Thesis Credits ...................................................................... 9
   Advanced Master’s Status ..................................................... 9
   Thesis Committee and Defense/Final Examination .................. 9
   Electronic Thesis Submission ............................................... 10
   Graduation and Commencement ......................................... 10
**Master’s-Plan B (non-thesis) Degree Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coursework</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Internship</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8000-Level Requirement</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing a Master’s Minor (optional)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan B Project</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Plan B Project, or “Plan B+”</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Committee and Defense/Final Examination</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation and Commencement</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Satisfactory Progress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Combined BBmE/MS and MD/MS (Plans A and B)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time MS-Plan A</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time MS-Plan B</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time MS-Plan A</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time MS-Plan B</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduate Fellowships, Assistantships, and Financial Support**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellowships</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistantships</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistantships</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students: English Language Proficiency for Teaching Assistants</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Benefits</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Status for Graduate Assistants/Fellows</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall/Spring</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending a TA/RA Appointment</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Location and Contact Information**

**Department Mailing Address**
Department of Biomedical Engineering  
University of Minnesota  
7-105 Nils Hasselmo Hall (NHH)  
312 Church St. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

**Graduate Student Mailboxes**
Every full-time PhD student on a paid assistantship or fellowship has a mailbox in the main BME office area on the 7th floor. It is your responsibility to check your mailbox regularly!

**Director of Graduate Studies**
Victor Barocas  
Professor of Biomedical Engineering  
7-115 NHH | 612-626-5572 | baroc001@umn.edu

**Graduate Program Coordinator**
Rachel Jorgenson  
7-104 NHH | 612-624-8396 | bmengp@umn.edu

**Other Office Staff**
Corinne Komor  
Department Administrator  
7-110 NHH | 612-626-6226 | komo0012@umn.edu

Ashlee Haluptzok  
Undergraduate Program Coordinator  
7-106 NHH | 612-626-3446 | bmedus@umn.edu

Zhac Rahkonen  
Grants Pre-Award Coordinator  
7-108 NHH | 612-625-6141 | rahko023@umn.edu

Sheila Jurgens  
Accountant II  
7-112 NHH | 612-626-3332 | jurge031@umn.edu

Kalyn Horsch  
Accountant I/Payroll Coordinator  
7-112 NHH | 612-626-5483 | bmepayhr@umn.edu

Sarah Schmidt  
Front Desk Assistant/Purchasing Coordinator  
7-105 NHH | 612-624-4507 | bmepurch@umn.edu

**Google Apps, E-mail, and Wireless Accounts**

Through a partnership with Google, University of Minnesota students, faculty, and staff can access a suite of Google-powered communication and collaboration tools designed to enhance our ability to work together. The suite includes email, calendar, document sharing, instant messaging, and Web site publishing tools. See [http://it.umn.edu/email-services](http://it.umn.edu/email-services) for details.

E-mail is the University’s official means of communication with students, and the Office of Student Finance (OSF) uses e-mail as the means of sending tuition bills to all University of Minnesota-Twin Cities students. Those who primarily use a different e-mail account (e.g., hotmail, personal Gmail, etc.) are encouraged to forward their University-assigned e-mails to another preferred account. See [http://it.umn.edu/using-gmail](http://it.umn.edu/using-gmail) for more information. **Students are responsible for all information sent to their umn.edu email account, including attachments.**

Students who choose to use their personal computers on campus can find wireless network information and setup instructions at [http://it.umn.edu/wifi-network](http://it.umn.edu/wifi-network).
**Responsible Conduct of Research**

Program policy requires that all graduate students receive the equivalent of eight hours of instruction in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). All graduate students in BME are required to attend RCR instruction as follows:

- Complete online RCR training through the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) by September 21, 2015 (instructions provided with orientation materials)
- Attend one Center for Bioethics Seminar presentation during each semester in which you take the BME Graduate Seminar (BMEn 8601/8602)

Contact the Graduate Program Coordinator (bmengp@umn.edu) with any questions about the Responsible Conduct of Research requirements.

**Lab Access, Safety Training**

Not all MS students will require lab access. Only authorized personnel will be granted access to lab areas, at the discretion of the advisor.

In the event that access is eventually required, it is highly advisable for all students to complete the access training during the first semester of the program.

- Introduction to Research Safety
- Bloodborne Pathogens and Infectious Agents
- Chemical Safety
- Chemical Waste Management
- Radiation Safety

These online training modules are all accessible from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety website at [http://www.dehs.umn.edu/training_new_empl.htm](http://www.dehs.umn.edu/training_new_empl.htm). Students will be required to log in with their UMN internet ID and password to access each module and to have successful completion noted on their training records.

Additional training modules may be required for different lab facilities, so students should check with their advisors for a complete list of requirements in the event that lab access is necessary.

*Lab access will not be granted until after all required training modules are complete AND the advisor has submitted an access request to the appropriate building/facility management office.*
BME Graduate Student (BMEGS) Intranet

The Graduate Program Coordinator has developed a BME Graduate Student (BMEGS) Intranet through Google Sites at https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/. All new and current students have been granted access to the BMEGS Intranet. The site was designed to provide students with detailed, helpful information for each stage of their graduate careers. It includes an events/deadlines calendar, announcements, policies, advisor selection and degree planning tools, registration information, job and internship postings, forms, and more.

Students should bookmark the BMEGS Intranet site and check it frequently for updates!

Advising Information

General Advising
At the start of graduate study in the Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program (BMEGP), students will be able to consult as necessary with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

The DGS serves as the initial advisor for all incoming graduate students and can assist with course planning, advisor selection, etc.

The Graduate Program Coordinator can assist students with most administrative matters, such as degree planning paperwork, departmental policies, BMEn course permission numbers, etc.

Links to Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) and BME Department forms are available on the BMEGS Intranet at https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms.

Students are responsible for keeping their BME Graduate Program Handbook until they have graduated from the program, since the handbook contains the particular degree requirements that pertain to each entering class. All editions of the handbook are made available on the BMEGS Intranet at https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/handbooks.

Students are also responsible for knowing and adhering to the Graduate Education policies outlined in the University-wide Policy Library (http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/index.htm#ctgeducation), and the relevant rules and procedures on One Stop (http://onestop.umn.edu/).

Choosing an Advisor
All students must eventually identify a permanent advisor, who will guide advisees in choosing their remaining coursework, thesis/project research, and examination committees.

There is no formal advisor pairing or selection process for MS students. The BMEGS Intranet has an advisor selection tool that may be of use to MS students at
https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/first-years/advisor-selection-ms.
Students are responsible for narrowing down their potential advisors, contacting their top choices, and ultimately securing approval from the faculty member to serve as the advisor. Upon identifying an advisor, students must notify the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will submit the Advisor Update/Change form to GSSP.

All MS students must have an advisor assigned before the start of the semester in which they will register for the thesis/project credits. Until that time, the DGS will continue to serve as the advisor.

**Course Registration**


Registration for each semester begins approximately one month prior to the end of the previous term. Each student is required to register every fall and spring semester to maintain active graduate student status. Students must re-apply for admission to the Graduate School if their student status becomes inactive. For more information see the policy at [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAPHDOBJECTIVES.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAPHDOBJECTIVES.html).

The deadline for Fall 2015 registration is Monday, September 7, 2015 (the day before classes start). Students who are not yet registered for any credits after this date will be assessed a late fee upon initial registration.

**Holds**

Students must clear all registration holds each semester before they will be permitted to register. Students can monitor their holds in MyU by clicking on the Holds tab at the bottom of the page. Click the “more...” link for information about how to resolve/remove the hold. Only the office/department that placed the hold will be able to update or clear it.

**Course Numbering System**

The University of Minnesota uses a four-digit course numbering system. Graduate students must fulfill their course requirements by registering for courses at the 5000 and 8000 levels. In some cases (e.g., research-related coursework in a field/department that is outside the student’s previous experience), and with pre-approval of the advisor and DGS, a 4000-level course may be used toward degree course requirements. DGS pre-approval may be granted occasionally for a course at the 6000 or 7000 levels.

**Transferring Courses**

University policy states that MS students must complete at least 60% of the course credits for their degree while formally enrolled in a University of Minnesota graduate program. See [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADCREDITDEGREE.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADCREDITDEGREE.html) for policy details.
Students interested in counting transfer credits toward their degree requirements should schedule an appointment to discuss transfer options with the DGS during the first semester in the program.

**Approvals/Permissions**
Registration for some courses may require approval in the form of a permission number. The BME Graduate Program Coordinator can only issue permission numbers for courses with the BMEn designator, and only with direct authorization of the instructor. Outside the BMEn designator, students must contact the department/instructor offering the course.

**Student Fees and Payment**
Students are responsible for paying all fees by the due dates defined on the original account statement. Account statements are sent to each student’s University email address shortly after registration. Statements can be viewed and paid in MyU. Students who are financially supported by the department will typically have fall and spring tuition covered by their fellowships or graduate assistantships. Various student services fees and related fees, however, are assessed to all students registered each semester and are not covered by any departmental funding. Billing and payment information can be found online at http://onestop.umn.edu/finances.

**Graduate Education Policies and Requirements**

In addition to the program requirements listed on the following pages, students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policies and procedures set forth by the Graduate School. The following resources will be of use to students:

- [http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/masters](http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/masters)
  Information for Current Master’s Students from the Graduate Student Services and Progress office (GSSP) - Includes links to forms, timelines, checklists, completion and graduation procedures, thesis submission guidelines, and other information that is essential for timely completion of the degree.

- [http://www.grad.umn.edu/about/policiesgovernance/](http://www.grad.umn.edu/about/policiesgovernance/)
  Graduate Student Education Policies - Provides links to and information on policies related to graduate education. Additional policies will be posted as they are approved.
**Master’s-Plan A (thesis) Degree Requirements**

Degree Planning Tools - [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/degree-planning](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/degree-planning)

Course Lists - [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/course-lists](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/course-lists)

**Coursework**
The MS-Plan A requires completion of at least 20 credits of classroom work, which must include the following:

- **BMEn Core** - 6 credits selected from the BMEn 5000-Level Core and/or BMEn 8000-Level Core lists
- **BME Graduate Seminars** - 2 credits of BMEn 8601 and/or BMEn 8602 (seminars are 1 credit per semester and may be repeated for credit)
- **Biology Electives** - 6 credits of coursework with a primarily biological emphasis
- **Technical Electives** - 6 credits of engineering/physical science/mathematics coursework offered in the College of Science and Engineering
- **Math-Stat-Intensive** - INCLUDED in the Core and/or Technical coursework must be at least 3 credits that have been approved by the DGS as Math-/Stat-Intensive. These are **not additional credits - they will overlap with other course requirements**.

All core/elective courses must be at the 5000 level or higher, unless pre-approved by the DGS. Electives may include coursework that is also being counted toward an optional Master’s minor (see below).

**Industrial Internship**
With the consent of the DGS, a Plan A student may arrange an industrial internship (BMEn 8720), which requires a minimum of 3 hours per week per credit of supervised lab or industrial experience unrelated to the student’s normal employment. Students must submit the BMEn 8720 Internship Form (available from [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms)) for approval before they will be allowed to register. A maximum of 3 credits of BMEn 8720 may be counted toward the degree requirements as a Technical Elective.

**8000-Level Requirement**
All Plan A students must complete at least one 3-credit course at the 8000 level as part of their core or elective coursework. Credits of seminar (BMEn 8601/8602), directed research (BMEn 8710), internship (BMEn 8720), thesis (BMEn 8777), and independent study (BMEn 8910) CANNOT be used to fulfill this requirement.

**Completing a Master’s Minor (optional)**
Plan A students may complete a Master’s minor in another program if they wish. See the Graduate Education Catalog ([http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/](http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/)) for more information about available minor programs and requirements.
Students are permitted to use elective coursework (Biology and/or Technical) toward both major and minor requirements when appropriate. The minor must be approved by the DGS of the program granting the minor. Students are advised to determine suitable courses for fulfillment of minor requirements early in their graduate careers. If a minor is successfully completed, it will be included on the student’s official transcript.

**Thesis Credits**

In addition to the 20 credits of coursework, MS-Plan A students must complete 10 credits of BME Master’s Thesis (BMEn 8777). The thesis must be based on research done by the student in collaboration with his/her advisor. Thesis credits cannot be transferred from other institutions and cannot be used towards the minimum course requirements for the degree. An MS student may register for thesis credits during any semester, with the advisor’s approval.

**Advanced Master’s Status**

Upon completion of all MS coursework and thesis credits, students may be eligible for Advanced Master’s Status. Students whose applications are approved by the advisor, DGS, and GSSP can maintain their full-time student status by registering for just one credit of BMEn 8333 (FTE: Master’s). This registration category is intended only for advanced MS students who have completed all their program coursework and required thesis credits, but are still working full-time on the research or writing of the thesis. These credits cannot be used to meet specific program course or credit requirements. Advanced Master’s Status applications are available at [http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr194.pdf](http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr194.pdf).

_Students must re-apply for Advanced Master’s Status prior to the posted deadlines for each semester in which they intend to register for BMEn 8333._

**Thesis Committee and Defense/Final Examination**

Upon completion of the thesis and with the approval of the committee, all MS-Plan A students must perform a Final Oral Examination in defense of the thesis.

At least one month prior to the Thesis Defense/Final Examination, students must assign their examination committee members online by following the instructions at [http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-masters/assignmasterscommittee](http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-masters/assignmasterscommittee). Requirements for the Master’s committee are posted at [http://www.grad.umn.edu/masters/masters-committee](http://www.grad.umn.edu/masters/masters-committee).

At least two weeks prior to the Defense/Final Examination, students must distribute a copy of the thesis to each committee member for review. All committee members must certify that the thesis is ready for defense before the final examination may take place.

The Master’s defense must be closed to the public; only the degree candidate and committee members may be present. The defense will consist of a presentation of the thesis (approximately 30-40 minutes), followed by questions from committee members (approximately 15-20 minutes). After the Q&A portion is complete, the student will be excused from the room while the committee members discuss the student’s performance and vote on
the outcome. A majority vote is required for the student to pass the exam. After the decision is made, the student will be invited back into the room and informed of the result.

**Electronic Thesis Submission**
The Master’s thesis must be submitted online to GSSP for degree requirements to be considered complete and for the degree to be conferred. Complete formatting and submission instructions are available at [http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/thesis-submission](http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/thesis-submission).

The thesis must be a well-written manuscript that is free from error and ready in its final version before submission to GSSP. Any revisions required after the final defense by the examination committee must be made and approved by the advisor (as confirmed by the advisor’s signature on the signature page) prior to submission to GSSP. Changes cannot be made to the thesis once accepted by GSSP.

**Graduation and Commencement**
Graduate degrees are awarded on the last working day of the month in which the candidate completes all requirements. The degree award will appear on the candidate's transcript approximately 3 weeks following the official conferral date. Diplomas are mailed within 4-6 weeks of the official conferral date.

The Arts, Sciences, and Engineering Graduate Commencement is held each spring. Students wishing to participate in the commencement ceremony must apply to do so by the posted deadlines. See [http://gradcommencement.umn.edu/](http://gradcommencement.umn.edu/) for information, eligibility requirements, cap and gown information, and additional details. BME does not have program-specific eligibility requirements for participation in the commencement ceremony.
**Master's-Plan B (non-thesis) Degree Requirements**

Degree Planning Tools - [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/degree-planning](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/degree-planning)

Course Lists - [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/course-lists](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/course-lists)

**Coursework**
The MS-Plan B requires completion of at least 30 credits of coursework, which must include the following:

- **BMEn Core** - 6 credits selected from the BMEn 5000-Level Core and/or BMEn 8000-Level Core lists
- **BME Graduate Seminars** - 2 credits of BMEn 8601 and/or BMEn 8602 (seminars are 1 credit per semester and may be repeated for credit)
- **Biology Electives** - 6 credits of coursework with a primarily biological emphasis
- **Technical Electives** - 9 credits of engineering/physical science/mathematics coursework offered in the College of Science and Engineering
- **Free Science/Technical Electives** - 5 credits of coursework in a field of science or engineering; up to 3 credits of coursework relevant to science and technology, such as public policy, ethical/historical aspects, etc., may be counted toward this requirement with prior approval from the DGS
- **Math-/Stat-Intensive** - INCLUDED in the Core, Technical, and/or Free coursework must be at least 3 credits that have been approved by the DGS as Math-/Stat-Intensive. *These are not additional credits - they will overlap with other course requirements.*
- **BMEn 8820 Plan B Project** - 2-3 credits (see *Plan B Project* section below)

All core/elective courses must be at the 5000 level or higher, unless pre-approved by the DGS.

**Industrial Internship**
With the consent of the DGS, a Plan B student may arrange an industrial internship (BMEn 8720), which requires a minimum of 3 hours per week per credit of supervised lab or industrial experience unrelated to the student’s normal employment. Students must submit the BMEn 8720 Tracking Form (available from [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms)) for approval before they will be allowed to register. A maximum of 6 credits of BMEn 8720 may be counted toward the degree requirements (up to 3 Tech + up to 3 Free).

**8000-Level Requirement**
All Plan B students must complete at least one 3-credit course at the 8000 level as part of their core or elective coursework. Credits of seminar (BMEn 8601/8602), directed research (BMEn 8710), internship (BMEn 8720), Plan B Project (BMEn 8820), and independent study (BMEn 8910) CANNOT be used to fulfill this requirement.
Completing a Master’s Minor (optional)
Plan B students may complete a Master’s minor in another program if they wish. See the Graduate Education Catalog (http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/) for more information about available minor programs and requirements.

Students are permitted to use elective coursework (Biology, Technical, and/or Free) toward both major and minor requirements when appropriate. The minor must be approved by the DGS of the program granting the minor. Students are advised to determine suitable courses for fulfillment of minor requirements early in their graduate careers. If a minor is successfully completed, it will be included on the student’s official transcript.

Plan B Project
As part of the required 30 credits for the MS-Plan B degree, students must complete 2-3 credits of BMeN 8820 Plan B Project. The project should entail approximately 50-75 hours of work per credit, performed in collaboration with a faculty advisor. Students must submit a written report of approximately 10 double-spaced pages per credit to the advisor, who will assign a letter grade for BMeN 8820 based on the report. In order to earn the BMeN 8820 grade, students must submit a final copy of the paper, with the BMeN 8820 Coversheet signed by the advisor, to the Graduate Program Coordinator (the coversheet is available on the BMEGS Intranet site at https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms). MS-Plan B students may register for Plan B Project credits during any semester, with the advisor's approval.

Extended Plan B Project, or “Plan B+”
Plan B students who wish to do a more in-depth research project may, with approval of the advisor, combine up to 3 credits of BMeN 8710 Directed Research with 2-3 credits of BMeN 8820 Plan B Project, for a total project of 5-6 credits (also known as Plan B+). The following policies apply to all students pursuing this option:

- Students should not enroll in both BMeN 8710 and BMeN 8820 during the same semester.
- By default, BMeN 8710 credits will be counted toward the Free Elective requirement only.
- A permission number is required for BMeN 8710 registration. The form and instructions are available at https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms. In the accompanying project description, students should indicate that they are enrolling in BMeN 8710 as part of the Plan B+ option.
- In order to earn the BMeN 8710 grade, students must submit a final copy of the paper, with the BMeN 8710 Coversheet signed by the advisor, to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
- The BMeN 8710 paper must be separate from the BMeN 8820 paper. Obviously the two will be very closely related, but work done for BMeN 8710 should be distinct from that done for BMeN 8820.

Project Committee and Defense/Final Examination
Upon completion of the project report, all MS-Plan B students must perform a Final Oral Examination in defense of the project.

At least one month prior to the Thesis Defense/Final Examination, students must assign their examination committee members online by following the instructions at http://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress-
masters/assignmasterscommittee. Requirements for the Master’s committee are posted at http://www.grad.umn.edu/masters/masters-committee.

At least two weeks prior to the Defense/Final Examination, students should distribute the project report to all their committee members so that they can read it and prepare questions before the examination. It should be clearly indicated whether the distributed report is the final version or a late-stage draft, as may be necessary if the defense is scheduled to take place shortly after the end of the semester. Committee members do NOT need to certify that the paper is acceptable for defense prior to the examination.

The Master's defense must be closed to the public; only the degree candidate and committee members may be present. The defense will consist of a presentation of the project paper (approximately 20-30 minutes), followed by questions from committee members (approximately 15-20 minutes). After the Q&A portion is complete, the student will be excused from the room while the committee members discuss the student’s performance and vote on the outcome. A majority vote is required for the student to pass the exam. After the decision is made, the student will be invited back into the room and informed of the result.

**Graduation and Commencement**

Graduate degrees are awarded on the last working day of the month in which the candidate completes all requirements. The degree award will appear on the candidate's transcript approximately 3 weeks following the official conferral date. Diplomas are mailed within 4-6 weeks of the official conferral date.

The Arts, Sciences, and Engineering Graduate Commencement is held each spring. Students wishing to participate in the commencement ceremony must apply to do so by the posted deadlines. See http://gradcommencement.umn.edu/ for information, eligibility requirements, cap and gown information, and additional details. BME does not have program-specific eligibility requirements for participation in the commencement ceremony.
**Satisfactory Progress**

The Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program requires a minimum grade of B- for any course to be counted toward the MS degree. Non-seminar/-internship classes taken S-N may be included on the degree plan only if the student provides written confirmation from the instructor that the grade would have been at least a B- on the A-F scale. In addition, the overall GPA of degree coursework must be at least 2.8.

All BME students are required to demonstrate their satisfactory progress by completing the Annual Progress Report (APR), which will be distributed by the BME Graduate Program Coordinator each summer. The student’s advisor must review the APR, evaluate the student’s progress, and discuss the APR with the student. After the advisor and student sign the form, it must be submitted to the program office for review by the DGS.

It is crucial that all MS students frequently consult the Degree Planning section of the BMEGS Intranet (https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/degree-planning), paying special attention to deadlines in order to ensure timely completion of the degree.

In addition to these general requirements, students must also meet the satisfactory progress requirements specific to their MS degree type, listed in the following sections. A summary table is also included on page 17.

*Failure to meet the requirements for satisfactory progress as described in this document is grounds for dismissal from the program.*

**Full-Time Combined BBmE/MS and MD/MS (Plans A and B)**

Full-time students in the Combined BBmE/MS or MD/MS programs must take at least 10 credits in the first semester of their Master’s year. Before the start of the second semester, students must identify an advisor and submit the Graduate Degree Plan (http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf) and the MS-Plan A/MS-Plan B Course Planner (available from https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms).

All coursework and project/thesis credits must be completed within 2 semesters. Students must defend the project/thesis and graduate within 1 year (12 months) of matriculation in the MS program.

**Full-Time MS-Plan A**

Full-time students in the freestanding MS-Plan A program (i.e., not part of the combined BBmE/MS or MD/MS programs) must take at least 10 credits in their first semester. By the end of the second semester, students should identify an advisor and submit the Graduate Degree Plan (http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf) and the MS-Plan A Course Planner (available from https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms). All course credits must be completed within 2 semesters.

Thesis research should be initiated by the end of the second semester. Students must complete their thesis credits, defend and submit the thesis, and graduate with the MS degree
within 3 semesters (not including summer), or 1.3 years from initial enrollment in the program.

**Full-Time MS-Plan B**

Full-time students in the freestanding MS-Plan B program (i.e., *not* part of the combined BBmE/MS or MD/MS programs) must take at least 10 credits in their first semester. By the end of the second semester, students should identify an advisor and submit the Graduate Degree Plan ([http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf](http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf)) and the MS-Plan B Course Planner (available from [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms)).

Students must complete all course and project credits, defend the Plan B Project, and graduate with the MS degree within 3 semesters (not including summer), or 1.3 years from initial enrollment in the program.

**Part-Time MS-Plan A**

Part-time students in the Plan A program must take 3-6 credits per fall and spring semester in order to maintain satisfactory progress. Students who plan to take fewer than 3 credits in a given semester should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator at least two weeks before the semester begins. All coursework should be completed within 3 years.

Students should identify an advisor and initiate their thesis research in or before their 4th year in the program. The Graduate Degree Plan ([http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf](http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf)) and MS-Plan A Course Planner (available from [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms)) must be submitted and approved at least one semester prior to the thesis defense.

All MS students must graduate within 5 years from initial enrollment, per University policy ([http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MASTERSPERFORMANCE.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MASTERSPERFORMANCE.html), Section III-b).

**Part-Time MS-Plan B**

Part-time students in the Plan B program must take 3-6 credits per fall and spring semester in order to maintain satisfactory progress. Students who plan to take fewer than 3 credits in a given semester should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator at least two weeks before the semester begins. All coursework should be completed within 4 years.

Students should identify an advisor and initiate their project research in or before their 4th year in the program. The Graduate Degree Plan ([http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf](http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr198.pdf)) and MS-Plan B Course Planner (available from [https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms](https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/bme-grad-students/current/forms)) must be submitted and approved at least one semester prior to the thesis defense.

All MS students must graduate within 5 years from initial enrollment, per University policy ([http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MASTERSPERFORMANCE.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MASTERSPERFORMANCE.html), Section III-b).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BME Satisfactory Progress Requirements - MS Degrees</th>
<th>Min Credits in 1st Semester</th>
<th>Identify Advisor; Submit Graduate Degree Plan and Degree Supplement</th>
<th>Complete Coursework Within</th>
<th>Initiate Thesis/Project Research By Start Of</th>
<th>Graduate Within</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBmE/MS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Between 1st and 2nd semesters</td>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>2nd semester</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD/MS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Between 1st and 2nd semesters</td>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>2nd semester</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS-A</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>End of 2nd semester</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>3rd semester</td>
<td>1.3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS-B</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>End of 2nd semester</td>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>3rd semester</td>
<td>1.3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Combined (Plans A and B)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 semester before thesis defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Regular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 semester before project defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 semester before thesis defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 semester before project defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS-A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4th year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS-B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4th year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 semester before thesis defense
1 semester before project defense
Graduate Fellowships, Assistantships, and Financial Support

Please note that this section applies only to students who were offered financial support from the department in their letters of admission.

All students holding graduate assistant/fellowship positions at the University of Minnesota should be familiar with the policies governing graduate student employment as outlined by the Office of Human Resources at http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae. Any questions about payroll, health benefits, or tuition benefits should be directed to the BME Payroll Coordinator at bmepayhr@umn.edu.

Financial support for students in Biomedical Engineering is broken down into three categories: Fellowships, Research Assistantships, and Teaching Assistantships.

Fellowships
Students who have been awarded service-free fellowships (e.g., MD/MS students on the Augustine Scholarship) or external fellowships (e.g., NSF GRFP) must abide by the terms and conditions of their awards, as outlined in their fellowship offer letters.

Research Assistantships
Students who are admitted with financial support directly into a research lab will be paid almost entirely from the advisor’s research grant(s) as a Research Assistant (RA). This is a service-based assistantship requiring students to perform research related to the advisor’s grant-funded projects while also completing coursework for the degree.

Teaching Assistantships
Normally Master’s students do not serve as TAs, unless the advisor specifically requests it. At the beginning of summer, students who have been identified for the TA pool are asked to indicate the course(s) for which they would like to TA during the next academic year. Final TA appointments are assigned by the Department Head. An attempt is made to balance the TA service among all students during their residence, within the constraints created by certain fellowships and traineeships. Depending on the TA assignment, students will be expected to spend an average of 7-27 hours per week on instruction-related duties.

International Students: English Language Proficiency for Teaching Assistants
University policy states, “All nonnative English speaking graduate and undergraduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) will demonstrate proficiency in spoken English appropriate to the demands of their teaching assistantship.”
(http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Performance/LANGUAGE.html)

To serve as a BME TA, students must achieve an English Language Proficiency (ELP) rating of ‘1.’ Those who get a lower score will be required to enroll in supplemental English language skills coursework until they get the required score. (Students must cover their own tuition for English skills coursework if registration for those credits will delay completion of program requirements and progression to Advanced Status beyond the timeline stipulated in the Satisfactory Progress section of this handbook.) For more information on ELP testing, see http://cei.umn.edu/courses-programs/international-teaching-assistant-program/testing-
eligibility, or contact the Center for Educational Innovation (612-625-3041; teachlrn@umn.edu).

Those who do not fulfill the departmental requirements for TA eligibility jeopardize their continued graduate assistantship funding, so achieving the necessary ELP rating is extremely important.

**Compensation**
The first paycheck of the fall semester will be issued September 16, 2015, and will be for one week of pay only. After that, paychecks will be issued every other Wednesday and will be for two weeks of pay. The pay period/pay day schedule is available online at http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/pay/statement/paydays. Students should complete a Direct Deposit Authorization Form to have their pay deposited directly into a bank account. Direct Deposit authorization and online pay statements can be accessed in MyU > My Pay.

**Health Benefits**
All new and continuing students holding a University of Minnesota fellowship or at least a 25% graduate assistantship are eligible for coverage on the Graduate Assistant Health Plan. See the Graduate Program Coordinator for an enrollment packet. Submit the Enrollment Form as soon as possible to the Graduate Program Coordinator (bmengp@umn.edu, 7-104 Hasselmo Hall). The deadline to submit an enrollment form for fall semester coverage for most students is Tuesday, September 15, 2015. All graduate assistants who are enrolled in the GA Health Plan will be charged a fee on their student account at the start of each fall and spring semester.

The University will contribute to the summer premium for graduate assistants who were enrolled in the plan during the spring semester, unless they fill out a Change or Cancellation of Coverage form (http://www.shb.umn.edu/twincities/graduate-assistants/gahp/change-or-cancel-coverage.htm). All BME graduate students are required to pay their portion of the graduate assistant health care plan premium costs.

Complete information regarding the graduate assistant health plan and dental coverage is available at http://www.shb.umn.edu/twincities/graduate-assistants. For information regarding enrollment, eligibility requirements, or general questions, contact the Office of Student Health Benefits (N323 Boynton Health Service, 612-624-0627, umgahbo@umn.edu).

Should a student suffer an injury while performing duties as a graduate assistant, s/he must notify the supervisor as soon as physically possible following the injury. The supervisor will assess the situation, assist with arranging proper medical care, and begin the injury reporting process. Further information on the U’s Workers Compensation policy is available at http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Benefits/WORKERSCOMP.html.

**Full-Time Status for Graduate Assistants/Fellows**
Students who hold graduate assistantships/fellowships must be registered as full-time students during each fall and spring semester in order to maintain their eligibility, tuition benefits, health benefits, etc. The registration requirements for maintaining full-time student status in BME are as follows:
Fall/Spring
Before they have completed their thesis/project credits, students must register for 6-14 credits each fall and spring semester. The graduate assistant tuition benefit is capped at 14 credits per semester, so **those who register for more than 14 credits will be responsible for paying the additional tuition themselves.**

After finishing all required course and thesis credits, students are eligible for Advanced Master’s Status (BMEn 8333). Those approved for Advanced Status need only register for 1 credit of BMEn 8333 each fall and spring in order to be considered full-time students. Additional information on Advanced Status is located in the **MS-Plan A Degree Requirements** section of this handbook.

Summer
Students who are supported on graduate assistantships or fellowships **SHOULD NOT register for any summer credits** without the explicit, written instruction of the Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Program Coordinator. Students do not need to register for any credits over the summer in order to remain eligible for financial support; their assistantships, health benefits, wages, etc., will continue through the summer. Those who do register for summer classes will need to pay for those credits themselves—**the department does not cover summer tuition**. There are exceptions, but a student (or advisor) who has questions about summer tuition should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator **before** registering!

Ending a TA/RA Appointment
Students who end their graduate assistant appointments in the middle of the semester for any reason other than graduation may be responsible for a portion of their tuition and/or health insurance coverage. Advisors may choose to cover these charges, but they are not required to do so. Students should be sure to discuss their graduation and appointment termination plans with their advisors well in advance. Questions about the impact of mid-semester graduation and/or appointment termination on student benefits may be directed to the Graduate Program Coordinator.