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College of Engineering Graduate Programs

Engineering Graduate Programs Website

College of Engineering Mission and Vision

As one of the world’s top ranked engineering programs, our students, faculty, and alumni set the standard for excellence. We drive the economy, reimagine engineering education, and bring revolutionary ideas to the world. We solve the world’s greatest challenges. We look toward the future and find ways to make it a reality. We do the impossible every day: leading the innovation of virtual reality, designing electronic tattoos to treat seizure, building safer global water systems, converting algae to biofuel, exploring fusion energy.

History

The College of Engineering was established in 1868 and is considered one of the original colleges within the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Engineering at Illinois is consistently ranked among the top five engineering colleges in the U.S. by U.S. News and World Report and ranks among the top five in the world in Academic Rankings of World Universities. The college is well known for its great research efforts and is the third highest per dollar research expenditure in the nation - over $220 million spent every year. The college has over 30 research centers, major labs, and affiliated programs. The faculty within the college have earned many honors over the years and are very well known in their field of research – over 80 hold named chairs or professorships, over 30 are members of the National Academy of Engineering, over 14 are members of the National Academic Sciences, over 14 are members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, two are Nobel Laureates, one is a National Medal of Science recipient, and one is a National Medal of Technology recipient.

Community and Culture

The Engineering campus is located north of Green Street and has two different quads – Bardeen Quad and Beckman Quad. The Grainger Engineering Library, located on the Bardeen Quad, is one of the largest Engineering Libraries in the world with 135,000 square feet and over 260,000 physical and electronic books/journals/articles. In addition, there are several engineering student workstation labs throughout the engineering campus to allow students the ability to access the software and networks needed for their coursework and research. The graduate programs within the twelve departments are all highly ranked with Civil Engineering, Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering ranked among the top two programs in the disciplines. Mechanical Science and Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Computer Science, and Environmental Engineering are ranked among the top 5 and Aerospace Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Nuclear Engineering, and Physics are ranked among the top 10 in the nation.

The Engineering Graduate programs have over 3000 graduate students between the Professional Master’s program, Master’s with thesis program, and the doctoral program. The engineering graduate student community is comprised of approximately the following student demographics: 38% domestic, 62% international, 23% female, 77% male, and 11% under-represented (based on fall 2014 statistics). Graduate students in engineering have the best of both worlds – small research groups with lots of interactions with their advisor as well as a large network of talented colleagues to collaborate with on various projects and initiatives. In addition, students have many opportunities to engage in leadership activities, student organizations, intermural sports/clubs, to give them a balance between their graduate studies and personal interests.

Engineering Graduate Programs

The College of Engineering departments offer graduate students the opportunity to earn advanced degrees in the following areas.

Professional Master’s Degree

This is a non-thesis, non-research degree that is completed in one year. Students complete only coursework and then a capstone project. The professional master’s degree is designed for students who do not plan to pursue the Ph.D.
Master’s with thesis Degree
This is a research-based master’s degree that is usually completed in two years. Students complete coursework, research, and a master’s thesis. This degree can lead students into the Ph.D. degree.

Ph.D. Degree
This is a primarily research-centered degree that is usually completed within 5 to 6 years. Students will complete coursework, research, and a doctoral thesis.

More information about the degree options and the requirements are located on departments’ websites.

Graduate Student’s Responsibility
Graduate students within the College of Engineering are responsibility for fulfilling all the requirements for their graduate degree as outlined by their home department. In addition, they are responsible for complying with the regulations of the Graduate College, the College of Engineering, and their home department. Students should receive guidance from their faculty advisor, their home department’s graduate academic staff, and the Office of Engineering Graduate, Professional and Online Programs to help them successfully reach their educational goals within a timely fashion. Students should refer to the Graduate College Handbook, regarding the Graduate College policies, the Engineering Graduate Student Handbook, regarding the Engineering’s policies, and their home department’s regarding their policies and procedures for graduate students. All graduate programs within the university must follow the Graduate College policies and procedures as a minimum. The colleges’ within the university may implement higher standards for their graduate students as well as the departments. Therefore, it is very important for students to be aware of their department’s policies and their college’s in addition to the Graduate College.

College of Engineering Administration
Andreas Cangellaris is the current Dean of the College of Engineering. College administrative is housed in Engineering Hall (1308 West Green Street), which serves as the primary anchor point for the College of Engineering. To learn more about the administrators within the college, please visit the College of Engineering Administration Directory.

Engineering Graduate, Professional & Online (GPO) Programs
The Office of Graduate, Professional, and Online (GPO) Programs in Engineering is the graduate programs office within the College of Engineering. This office assists engineering departments with providing excellence in graduate education. In addition, the GPO Office is another resource for engineering graduate students. If students cannot find the answer within their home departments, have concerns about their home department, or have general questions about the College of Engineering student policies and procedures, they should contact the staff within this office for assistance. In addition, this office does facilitate the college wide graduate scholarship and fellowship programs as well as general seminars for all engineering graduate students. Staff is located in 400 and 401 Engineering Hall or can be reached at their individual contact information below.

- Bill Buttlar, Associate Dean of Graduate, Professional, and Online Programs, (217) 333-5966
- Rhonda McElroy, Director of Graduate and Professional Programs, (217) 333-6634
- Frank Hoskinson, Director, Office of Online and Professional Programs (O2PEP), (217) 244-2042
- Kathy Reeves, Office Administrator, (217) 265-4560

Graduate Student Contact Information by Department
Each department has a Director of Graduate Studies and a graduate contact person for graduate students to contact with questions about program requirements, degree milestones, department policies and procedures, degree progress, and much more. In addition, students who have concerns regarding their thesis advisor or performance in a particular course should contact the Director of Graduate Programs in their department for
guidance. See list below for appropriate contact information by department.

Aerospace Engineering
- John Lambros, Director of Graduate Studies
- Staci Tankersley, Coordinator of Academic Programs

Agricultural & Biological Engineering
- Joe Harper, Director of Graduate Studies
- Heather Crump, Office Support Specialist

Bioengineering
- Deborah Leckband, Director of Graduate Studies
- Krista Smith, Coordinator of Graduate Programs

Bioinstrumentation (MEng)
- Dipanjan Pan, Program Director
- Liezl Bowman, Program Coordinator

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
- Hong Yang, Director of Graduate Studies
- Maggie Metz, Coordinator of Graduate Programs

Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Jeff Roesler, Associate Head for Graduate Affairs
- Joan Christian, Graduate Program Coordinator
- Maxine (Mickey) Peyton, Graduate Admission Coordinator

Computer Science
- Chandra Chekuri, Director of Graduate Studies
- Viveka Perera Kudaligama, Coordinator of Graduate Programs
- Mary Beth Kelley, Academic Advisor
- Kara MacGregor, Academic Advisor

Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Steve Franke, Director of Graduate Studies
- Jennifer Carlson, Senior Academic Program Coordinators

Energy Systems (MEng)
- Cliff Singer, Program Advisor
- Becky Meline, Coordinator of Academic Programs

Financial Engineering
- Morton Lane, Program Director
- Emily Ziegler, Assistant Director

Industrial & Enterprise Systems Engineering
- R. S. Sreenivas, Associate Head Graduate Studies
Interdisciplinary Research

Engineering at Illinois takes great pride in creating a rich environment for interdisciplinary research. Research centers and labs have been established to foster interdisciplinary research and to drive innovation and ideas in important technological areas. The research centers provide graduate students with exciting research opportunities in the fundamental engineering sciences in collaborations with other units on campus, other universities outside of Illinois, industrial partners and governmental agencies. To learn more and connect with faculty, visit the Research Centers' websites.

Financial Aid

Professional Master's Program (Non-Thesis) – On Campus

Within the College of Engineering, the professional master's programs (non-thesis) are generally self-funded, which means students are not eligible for tuition-waiver generating assistantships. Students in these programs are eligible for graduate hourly positions on campus. There are a few professional master's programs that are a “Seek Reimbursement” program, which means students may hold an assistantship on campus and the department will seek tuition reimbursement from the hiring department. Please be sure to visit with your home department to learn more about the possible financial assistance.

Professional Master's Program (Non-Thesis) – Online

The Engineering Online Professional Master's programs are all self-funded programs, which means students are not eligible for tuition-waiver generating assistantships. Students in the online programs generally can receive financial assistance from their current employer.

Master’s Program (Thesis)

Graduate students in a master's with thesis program are usually not guaranteed financial assistance. Students who wish to be considered for a research or teaching assistantship should contact their home department to learn more about assistantship opportunities.

Doctoral Program

Most Ph.D. students will receive financial assistance at the time of admission in the following forms: fellowship, research assistantship, or a teaching assistantship. The number of financial aid offers depends on the
Graduate student’s available financial resources and are competitive. Most departments’ renewal of an assistantship or fellowship is based on the academic progress of the student, work performance of the student, and obligation by the department as determined by the original letter of admission recommendation. If students change degree program or transfer to another department, the original funding in the letter of admission recommendation is no longer in affect and funding under the new degree program is not a guarantee. Please visit with departments to learn more.

Employment at Illinois

Form I-9 and E-Verify Compliance
Graduate students may seek various employment opportunities at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Departments must comply with all federal and state laws regarding employment eligibility verification that includes completion of the Form I-9 and, in relevant cases, the E-Verify process.

There are no exceptions to these processes. Students must also contact the HR office PRIOR to working to complete the Form I-9. Per University policy, employees are also required to present their Social Security Number (SSN) Card to the HR official for name verification and IRS purposes. The name entered into the system must match that which is printed on the SSN card.

Both students and hiring managers who fail to contact HR to complete these procedures may cause delays in start dates and paychecks, as well as risk fines and penalties against the University.

Graduate Assistantship Assignments
There are four types of graduate assistantship opportunities per the Academic Human Resources (AHR) website.

Research Assistant (RA)
These positions primarily involve applying and mastering research concepts, practices, or methods of scholarship. Examples of typical responsibilities include: Conducting Experiments, Organizing or Analyzing Data; Presenting Findings in a Publication or Dissertation, Collaborating with Faculty in Preparing Publications, Overseeing Work of Other RA's, Other Research Activities.

Faculty members are responsible for confirming RA appointments with their appropriate HR office. Graduate students must contact faculty directly to inquire about any RA opportunities available to them.

Pre-Professional Graduate Assistant (PGA)
These positions are appointed to non-TA/non-RA assistantship positions, in which they primarily gain experience, practice, or guidance that is significantly connected to their fields of study and career preparation. Graduate students must contact the Business Office in their department to inquire about PGA opportunities.

Teaching Assistant (TA)
These positions primarily involve the support of instruction and include responsibilities such as: Teaching Classes, Grading student assignments, Leading Lab or Discussion Groups in a Course Setting, Developing Academic Instructional Materials, Accompanying/Coaching Musical or Vocal Performances, Providing Artistic Instruction, Proctoring Exams, Overseeing/Coordinating the Work of Other TAs, Holding Office Hours, Tutoring students. Teaching assistant positions are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO).

TA appointments are made at the discretion of each academic department within the College of Engineering. Graduate students are notified that they must contact the department’s Academic or Business Office to inquire about available teaching assistantships. The College is committed to maintaining a high level of quality with the TA appointments and program. Students have to meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for a TA appointment:

- Must have a passing SPEAK score: 24+ TOEFL iBT; 8+ IELTS; 5+ on EPI (University’s SPEAK Exam).
• Must be in good academic standing in their graduate program.

All first-time TAs at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign must complete the Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning (CITL) TA Orientation the week prior to start of the semester. Visit CITL website for more information on this training and for the dates.

**Graduate Assistant (Administrative) (GA)**

These positions are primarily in support of administrative functions and include such general functions and typical duties as providing technical/support services, advising students, etc. Graduate Assistants (Administrative) are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO). These positions are considered non-exempt per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and must keep record of actual hours worked via timesheets. Graduate students must contact the Business Office in their department to inquire about PGA opportunities.

**Graduate Assistantships within the College of Engineering**

Graduate students within the College of Engineering are most commonly offered research or teaching assistantships through individual departments and research centers. These appointments are typically awarded on a semester-by-semester basis with standard appointment dates of August 16-December 31 (fall semester) and January 1-May15 (spring semester). Contingent upon the degree programs in which a student is enrolled, students eligible for tuition waivers must be appointed between 25% and 67% full-time equivalent (FTE) for at least 91 days during the semester. All graduate assistants must have an accepted offer letter on file.

The acceptance of an appointment requires students to be present and available to their supervisor during the appointment dates outlined in the accepted offer letter. If students must be away from their responsibilities, they must receive prior approval from their supervisor and their home department. Failure to report to work may result in disciplinary action, termination, and/or non-reappointment of an assistantship. Applicable University benefits for graduate assistants are outlined in the “Summary of Benefits by Employment Category chart” on the AHR website. Additional information regarding the Graduate College and University guidelines on graduate assistantships is available at [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterviii/section01](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterviii/section01).

**For International Students Only:** Prior to international students securing a social security number (SSN), the university issued Temporary Control Number (TCN) will be needed to process the assistantship or graduate hourly appointments. International students who are on a fellowship will just need the TCN number to process their paperwork. They can secure their TCN number at the ID Production Office at the Illini Union Bookstore.

**Graduate Hourly Employment**

Graduate students may also seek Graduate Hourly appointments. These positions are appointed on an hourly basis for temporary, special projects. The positions do not carry tuition waivers and may not to be used as substitutions for waiver-generating assistantships. The hours are typically sporadic in nature and less than ten hours/week. Students must be registered in the Graduate College for the semester(s) of the hourly appointment.

**Graduate Assistant Benefit Overview**

Below is a high-level overview of the types of benefits available to graduate assistants. For detailed information, visit the [AHR website](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/) and click on the link to “Summary of Benefits by Employment Category Chart”.

**Insurance and Health Care**

Students are eligible to participate in the University Graduate Student health insurance plan. The university provides services at McKinley Health Center and Counseling Center. Coverage may also be purchased for spouses, dependents, and same-sex domestic partners. To review the student insurance policy and premiums, visit [http://www.si.illinois.edu/](http://www.si.illinois.edu/) or call 333-0165.

**Tuition and Fee Waiver**
Students who hold an assistantship appointment between 25-67% time for at least three-fourths of a term are eligible for a tuition and fee waiver. Students must be enrolled and in good academic standing during their appointment. For questions regarding this benefit, contact the department’s HR office. For questions regarding student’s bill, contact OBFS at 217-265-6363.

**University Holidays**

The following holidays will be observed by the university, which means students are not required to work on these days if on an appointment.

- Christmas Eve & Day
- New Year’s Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving & day after
- Other days determined by the President of the University
- Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday
- Fourth of July

**Sick Leave**

Can be accrued depending on appointment. Please visit the “Summary of Benefits by Employment Category Chart” for more information.

**Bereavement Leave**

Eligible for three days of paid leave for an immediate family member, same-sex domestic partner or household member, in-laws, grandchildren, and/or grandparents.

**Parental Leave**

Eligible for paid leave up to two calendar weeks per academic year immediately following the birth or adoption of the eligible academic staff member’s child. Assistant must have an active appointment at the time parental leave is taken. Complete information is available on the “Summary of Benefits by Employment Category Chart” as well as information related to Family and Medical Leave coverage if applicable.

**Unpaid Leave**

May be granted during the appointment upon request to and at the sole discretion of the Department and University.

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**Student Health Insurance**

All graduate students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign are required to carry health insurance coverage. This health insurance coverage is a means to assist with costs of health care whenever one needs medical attention through medical facilities that is not McKinley Health Center on campus. To learn more about the health insurance offered to students through the university, please visit [https://www.uhcsr.com/illinois](https://www.uhcsr.com/illinois). International students should visit the ISSS website for help on establishing health insurance.

The Health Service Fee that graduate students pay in the tuition and fees each semester allows them to use the McKinley Health Center for office visits with doctors, nurse practitioners, mental health therapists and health educators, as well as most x-rays and laboratory tests at no additional out-of-pocket expense. However, this fee does not pay for any care received outside the McKinley Health Center, immunizations required by the law prior to entrance to the university, travel immunizations, referrals, etc. To learn more about the coverage of the Health Service Fee, please visit McKinley’s website.

**Health Care and Wellness** is an excellent website for student to visit to get answers to their health and wellness related questions.

**Summer Health Coverage**

It is very important for graduate students who are not registered during the summer term to ensure they do have
health coverage from mid May to Mid August. When a student is not enrolled or does not hold an assistantship in the summer, their health insurance and access to McKinley is not active. To learn more about summer health insurance and to help guide graduate students, please visit [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowship/healthins](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowship/healthins).

**Fellowships**

**SURGE Fellowship**

The Support for Underrepresented Groups in Engineering (SURGE) Fellowship is awarded to incoming under-represented U.S. citizen students who plan to obtain a doctoral degree on a full-time basis. This fellowship was implemented by the College of Engineering in the early 1990’s to help increase the diversity of the engineering student body in the following under-represented groups: African Americans, Hispanic or Latino/as, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, women, persons with disabilities, or Native Pacific Islanders.

SURGE Fellows draw fellowship support from the College of Engineering in addition to the assistantship provided by their home department to provide fellows with financial support for five years. In the first year, fellows are on a full fellowship of $22,000, which is paid monthly over 11 months and provides a tuition waiver. In years 2-5, fellows receive a 50% assistantship by their home department that provides a tuition waiver, plus a $4,000 supplementary fellowship from the college. SURGE Fellowship support is for a maximum of five years, pending satisfactory academic progress toward the doctoral degree and satisfactory progress within the assistantship.

**GEM Fellowship**

The GEM Fellowship is an external fellowship administered by the National GEM Consortium. Many universities and companies actively participate in this program. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign does participate and the Office of Engineering Graduate, Professional, and Online (GPO) Programs is the primary contact and administrator for the GEM Consortium. The GPO Office works with the departments and incoming GEM Fellows to confirm the terms and conditions of the fellowship.

The GEM fellowship is for both incoming MS and Ph.D. recruits. Prospective students must apply to at least three GEM universities and are eligible for an application fee waiver at Illinois. The GEM fellowship is typically a one-year fellowship for Ph.D. students with a stipend of $16,000, plus tuition and fee waiver. In addition, departments may offer a Ph.D. GEM Fellow an assistantship in addition to their GEM Fellowship for the first year. In years 2-5 of the Ph.D. degree, the department must offer the GEM Fellow either a RA or TA assistantship. For MS students, their fellowship can range from one to two years, usually totaling a stipend of $16,000 across the two years.

For more information on the GEM Fellowship, please contact either Rhonda McElroy or Kathy Reeves.

**Carver Fellowship**

**Background Information**

The Carver Fellowships in Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign were established in 1999 by a gift from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust in memory of Roy J. Carver, Sr., a 1934 graduate of the University. The first class of Carver Fellows was named in fall 2000. A Carver Fellowship is the most competitive and sought-after honor open to graduate students throughout the College of Engineering. Students named as Carver Fellows are not only viewed as scholars and top researchers in both academia and industry, but also carry with them the legacy of a distinguished University of Illinois alumnus.

Roy J. Carver, Sr., graduated from the University of Illinois in 1934 with a BS in general engineering. He founded Carver Pump Company, launching this successful business enterprise during the depression. In 1942, he established Carver Foundry Products. While visiting Europe in 1956, he noted unusual-looking retreaded tires on a car. The following year, he purchased the North American rights to a method of top capping tires and founded Bandag, Incorporated. Today, Bandag is the world’s largest producer of tire retread materials and equipment of the transportation industry.

Representatives of the Carver Foundation typically meet with Fellows in the spring and it is important that current Fellows know the nature of the Carver Fellowship program, including information about Roy Carver.
Foundation is particularly interested in knowing that the Fellows are among the very best graduate students in the college.

Selection Process

The Carver Fellowship is for incoming graduate students in the following engineering departments: Aerospace Engineering, Bioengineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Industrial & Enterprise Systems Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, Mechanical Science and Engineering, Nuclear-Plasma-Radiological Engineering, and Physics. Department nominate the incoming graduate students for this fellowship based on their application materials. The Carver Fellowship is a $30,000 one-year fellowship and only awarded to first-year graduate students. First year graduate students receiving this fellowship may not receive other support, which includes summer jobs, internships, and teaching opportunities. An exception will be made for prizes awarded for academic achievement. Carver funds may not be used to augment teaching or research assistantships.

Yee Fellowship

Background Information

The Yee Fellowship was made possible by a generous endowment of Drs. Warren and Ming Ting Yee. Dr. Warren Yee received his Ph.D. degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois in 1943. Dr. Warren Yee was a partner in the Detroit firm of Harley, Ellington, Pierce & Yee Associates and later was the founder of Bio-Tech Research Laboratory, Inc. in Washington, D.C. He died in 1984.

Dr. Warren Yee was known for thinking of others, especially relatives in China, before he thought of himself. His wife has requested that income from the funds be used to support Chinese graduate students in the College of Engineering. Special consideration will be given to students from inner provinces or inner province universities (not coastal) in China and to those students who intend to return to China and become a faculty member and are in the following departments within the college: Aerospace Engineering, Bioengineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Industrial & Enterprise Systems Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, Mechanical Science and Engineering, Nuclear-Plasma-Radiological Engineering, and Physics. The amount of the fellowship is $5,000.

Application Process

Students applying for this fellowship must meet the following criteria.

- Must be a confirmed entering graduate student of Chinese national (who has accepted the offer of admission) or continuing graduate student of Chinese national within one of the engineering programs listed above.
- Must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Graduate students must work through their home department to submit an application. Each department may nominate up to two students. Departments must submit the following application materials to the Office of Engineering Graduate, Professional and Online Programs.

- Application cover sheet.
- Student’s vita or resume that outlines previous education, work experience, research experience, publications, presentations and relevant service.
- Student’s unofficial transcript with current GPA, and copy of GRE scores from admission file.
- One-page essay completed by the student that describes career goals and how they impact engineering education, research, service to the field of engineering, and how the doctoral program is helping accomplish these goals. If department nominates an incoming graduate student, the student must supply the department with a one-page essay in addition to their other application materials.
- Two letters of recommendation that address the student’s demonstrated contributions and/or potential for making significant contributions to engineering education, research and service. In particular, the letters should address how the Yee Fellowship will help the student meet his/her career goals. If department nominates an incoming graduate student, the letters of recommendation submitted with their application may be used.
Selection Criteria

The Yee Fellowship committee uses the following criteria when reviewing all applications.

- Special consideration is given to those students from inner provinces or inner province universities (not coastal) in China.
- Academic performance – performance in courses, overall GPA, letters of recommendations, and awards received, publications.
- Demonstrated interest in engineering education - teaching experience (TA or tutoring) or outreach teaching (K-12 schools, promoting technical awareness within the community, and other outreach activities promoting engineering education).
- Research accomplishments, ability or potential as evidenced by publications, presentations, letters of recommendation, and the student's essay.
- Assessment of the student's commitment to and potential for contributing to engineering education based on the student's essay, letters of recommendation, and previous performance.

LAM Award

Lam Research Corporation in Fremont, CA (http://lamrc.com/index.htm) started the Lam “Outstanding Graduate Student Award” in fall of 2013. This award is for Master’s with thesis or Ph.D. students in the departments of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, Mechanical Science and Engineering, Nuclear, Plasma & Radiological Engineering, and Physics. The amount of this award is up to $5,000 and may be awarded up to six students.

Graduate students applying for this award must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Students must work through their home department to submit an application. Each department may nominate up to two students. Departments must submit the following application materials to the Office of Engineering Graduate, Professional and Online Programs.

- Cover letter with Department signature indicating the two candidates.
- Student’s unofficial transcript (including current GPA).
- Student’s CV or resume.
- Student’s one-page statement describing his/her research thesis or dissertation topic.

Graduate College Fellowships

The Graduate College at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign offers fellowships for incoming and current graduate students. For incoming graduate students, the department usually submits the fellowship application on behalf of the student. These application deadlines occur usually in January and February. For current graduate students, students should work directly with the Graduate College and their home department to submit an application. Learn more about Engineering Fellowships offered through the Graduate College and explore their database to learn about all their fellowship opportunities.

In addition to internal fellowships, there are several external fellowships opportunities for engineering graduate students. Graduate College Fellowship Office is available to assist students with exploring these opportunities and providing guidance through the application process. Email the Graduate College Fellowship Office to learn more.

Fellowship Policies

Graduate students who are on a fellowship must have a rating form submitted to the Graduate College by their home department for the fellowship to be processed and for students to receive their monthly stipend and any tuition waiver if applicable to the fellowship received. Fellowship rating forms must be submitted before the start of the semester. Students who are on a full fellowship must be registered for 12 credit hours during the semester(s) they are receiving the fellowship. Please note that some fellowships do require students to register full-time during the summer as well.
SPEAK Requirement (International Students Only)

This section is for all students whose native language is not English, even if they are permanent residents of the United States (green card). Check for exemptions from this requirement based on country of citizenship. For Ph.D. students whose native language is not English, most engineering departments will require a passing speak score before graduation and some departments will require this before completing the qualifying exam. It is important to check with the department regarding their policies. In addition, any graduate students (Master’s or Ph.D.) must have a passing speak score to hold a TA appointment.

Students who do not have a passing SPEAK score on the TOEFL iBT (24) or IELTS (8) must complete the University of Illinois’ EPI exam or retake the TOEFL iBT or IELTS SPEAK exam. For Illinois’ EPI exam, students are allowed only three chances to pass (5 or higher). The EPI exam is administered through the Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning (CITL) and below is the general guidelines for the exam.

- Students must register for the EPI exam through their home department. Students cannot register for this exam on their own. If students do not show up for their scheduled appointment, this does count as one of their 3 chances to pass this exam.
- For all incoming students who have a TOEFL iBT speaking section score that is below 22 or an IELTS speaking section score that is below 6, CITL highly recommends that the student complete either 1) 10 hours of approved tutoring sessions or 2) ESL 504, 506, or 510 before taking the exam.
- For any student who fails the first attempt at the EPI exam, he/she must complete either 1) 10 hours of approved tutoring sessions or 2) complete ESL 504, 506, or 510 before they will be eligible to take the EPI a second time.
- For students who receive a “Conditional Pass” on the EPI exam, they must complete ESL 508 and receive a passing grade “S” in the course to earn a passing EPI score.

EPI Exam Procedure

The EPI is an English Oral proficiency interview administer by CITL. The format is conversational and not exam-like. The interviewer will ask questions on topics of interest to the student and/or related to university life in general. In addition, the student will be asked to explain or define some terms that are common in freshman level courses within their department.

EPI Scoring Process

The EPI assesses test takers’ speaking ability in terms of five features: Fluency, Linguistic Accuracy, Discourse Management, Question Handling and Listening, and Listener Effort.

- **Fluency**: smoothness in delivery and amount of hesitations and re-starts.
- **Linguistic Accuracy**: includes clear pronunciation, grammar without noticeable errors and sophisticated vocabulary.
- **Discourse Management**: the ability to develop ideas, rhetorical organization, and quantity of disclosure.
- **Question Handling and Listening**: the ability to give appropriate answers and negotiation skills for communication.
- **Listener Effort**: the ease or difficulty in understanding the test taker’s speech.

Description of Scoring Levels
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communication is always effective; speaker has sophisticated language skills appropriate for a teaching context.</td>
<td>Pass; student is permitted to be a TA with no restrictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Communication is generally effective; speaker has satisfactory language skills at ranges appropriate for a teaching context.</td>
<td>Conditional Pass; student is required to successfully complete ESL 508 before they can hold a TA appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4CP</td>
<td>Communication is generally effective; however, due to isolated weakness, communication is occasionally difficult. Further ESL coursework is required before the first semester of teaching in order to refine the speaker's language skills for a teaching context. (They can teach concurrently while taking the ESL course)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication is somewhat effective. Inconsistent performance indicates speaker is not ready to be a classroom instructor.</td>
<td>Non-passing; student is NOT permitted to be a TA and must retake the exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communication is somewhat effective. Inconsistent performance indicates speaker is not ready to be a classroom instructor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communication is marginally effective; speaker has limited language skills for a teaching context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication is generally not effective; speaker has unsatisfactory language for teaching context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For scores of 2, 3, 4, and 4CP (conditional pass): The raters determined that the following aspect(s) of the student’s oral English proficiency were of critical concern.

- Fluency (flow and smoothness of speech)
- Language form accuracy
  - Pronunciation
  - Grammar
  - Vocabulary
- Idea development and organization
- Question handling and listening skills
- All of the above factors were salient in the decision.

Visit the EPI exam website for more information. Visit the SPEAK policy for TAs for additional information.

### Limited Status

A student who does not meet one or more of the graduate admissions requirements may be approved for admission with “Limited Status”. Some of the most common reasons for limited status are

- course deficiencies, as determined by the department,
- low undergraduate GPA (below a 3.0),
- no comparable bachelor’s degree, or
- a lack of demonstrated English language proficiencies.

Students admitted with limited status must address deficiencies usually within the first year in the program in order to continue.

### English Deficiency (for international students only)

International students who have English deficiency may be placed on “Limited Status” by the Graduate College at the time of admissions. International students who are on limited status are required to take the ESL Placement Test (EPT) when they arrive on campus. The Division of English as an International Language (DEIL) administers the test. The results of the exam will determine whether the student will be required to enroll in English as a Second Language course(s), which may reduce the number of academic courses for that given term. Enrollment in an ELS course can only take place after the results are received. Students must meet all conditions, which include passing all ESL coursework, of their limited status within the first year of their graduate studies. Students are required to complete these requirements in order to earn a degree from Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Check out the EPT Test policy for more information and the test schedule to learn about the testing dates. Visit the ELS Courses website to learn more of the courses offered.
Finding a Thesis Advisor

Choosing a thesis advisor is one of the most critical decisions for a graduate student in the M.S. with thesis or Ph.D. program. The advisor-student relationship is fundamental to the success of both the student and advisor. The thesis advisor has great influence not only on the research direction, but also on promoting the career of the student. Most of the time, the student-thesis advisor relationship is one that will last a lifetime. It is important for students to find a thesis advisor that matches their research interests, work style, career goals, and even personality. Some students may find a thesis advisor within the first few weeks while other students may carefully explore and evaluate many options over the first year. Both scenarios are considered "normal". Students should secure their advisor no later than the end of their first academic year and complete their department's thesis advisor agreement form.

Graduate students need to realize that it is ok to change thesis advisors if research interests change or the advisor-student relationship is not good. This is more common for graduate students in the Ph.D. program. For students that need to change their thesis advisor, please visit the Graduate Academic Office within home department.

M.S. with Thesis Program

The M.S. program is a research-thesis based program and allows students the opportunity to apply to continue their education with the Ph.D. program. Most master's degrees require a total of 32 credit hours, which is a combination of coursework and thesis research. The average time to complete a master's degree within engineering is two years. Students are encouraged to visit with their home department to learn more about the policies and procedures for the master's program. Students are responsible for meeting all master's degree requirements as outlined by their home department.

In addition, students in a master's with thesis program are responsible for securing their thesis advisor within the first year. Students complete research under the direction of their thesis advisor and will deposit a master's thesis in order to earn their degree.

Ph.D. Program

The Ph.D. program is designed to guide students through the difficult process of becoming an independent researcher and educator. The goals of Ph.D. students should be

1) to become a scholar by absorbing large bodies of research literature and critically analyzing the state-of-the-art, including its shortcomings,
2) to become an effective communicator by learning how to express ideas clearly in writing, individual meetings, and public seminars, and
3) to become an innovator by creating new theories, technologies, or paradigms that advance the state-of-the-art.

By the end of the Ph.D. program, students have come an expert in a research field and a colleague of the faculty. Successful students are driven by a passion to develop creative ideas and make an impact through their intellectual contributions.

On average, it takes between 4 to 6 years for Ph.D. students to complete this degree. The Graduate College time to degree gives students who enter the program with

- an approved M.S. degree a maximum of six years to complete the program.
- a bachelor's degree and earn an M.S. from Illinois along the way to a Ph.D. a maximum of 7 year to complete the program.

The variation of time to degree is due to many factors, such as prior experience, career goals, and type of research. Students who are interested in a faculty position may take 6 years because of the substantial time required to develop a solid publication record and become known by other in the research community. Students, together with their advisor, will have to determine the appropriate pace for completing the Ph.D. degree.

An example of a 5-year timeline for a Ph.D. student entering with a bachelor's degree is shown below. This timeline assumes that coursework is being completed during years 1-3 as well as research throughout the entire degree.
Ph.D. Milestone

Qualifying Exam

Most Ph.D. programs within the College of Engineering have students complete a qualifying exam. The purpose of qualifying exam is for students to convince the faculty that they should be considered a Ph.D. candidate. Faculty evaluate whether the student has the knowledge, experience, perspective, and determination to complete the Ph.D. program. In addition, faculty will evaluate the student’s presentation and communications skills to ensure a mastery of English sufficient to teach in a U.S. institution can be achieved by the end of the program.

Guidance on How to Prepare for the Qualifying Exam: The format and content covered in the qualifying exam will vary by department; therefore, it is important for students to

- seek guidance from their advisor on how to prepare,
- visit with faculty within their research area,
- attend any study sessions or seminars offered by the department or research group,
- talk with students who have already taken the exam,
- study with other students taking the exam, and
- complete a practice exam with either senior level Ph.D. students or faculty.

In addition, it is highly recommended that students, especially international students, start to focus on their presentation and communication skills. Ph.D. students want to work towards a mastery of English that leads to excellence in presentation skills and effective communication, which will play an important role in the Preliminary and Final exams as well as their profession. Start to master these skills now and make a plan towards improving them before the Preliminary exam.

Ph.D. Committee

The role of the Ph.D. committee is to provide frequent feedback and advice to the student. The committee shares the responsibility of guiding the student’s research to successful completion. Ph.D. students should not view the committee members as obstacles, but rather as additional mentors and possible promoters of their thesis research. When applying for jobs, committee members are often the first choice for seeking recommendation letters. It is expected that the Ph.D. advisor work closely with the student in determining the most appropriate committee members. Usually the Ph.D. committee is formed after students pass the Qualifying Exam. The minimum guidelines that must be met when establishing a Ph.D. committee are located on the Graduate College website. It is important for students to also check with their department to see if there are any departmental guidelines that must be met.

Prelim Exam

Writing a good proposal is an important part of being a successful researcher. The prelim exam (thesis proposal) is viewed as an important milestone that helps students develop the skill of writing proposals. Ph.D. students write a
proposal that is submitted to their Ph.D. committee prior to the exam. The prelim exam presentation gives the Ph.D. committee a formal opportunity to evaluate the research progress and goals of the student. Thus, the two main purposes of the prelim exam are to develop proposal-writing skills and to obtain feedback on the research plan from the Ph.D. committee. Please note that students must be register in the semester they complete their prelim exam.

Guidance on How to Write the Proposal

- A balance must be struck between satisfying severe space limitations and providing the most critical details. The proposal is not a binding agreement between the student and the Ph.D. committee on the precise tasks that must be accomplished. Through frequent interactions with Ph.D. committee members, the student can adapt the specific thesis accomplishments as necessary.

- The thesis proposal should be between 15 and 25 pages (when in single-column, single-spaced format). Bibliographic references are not included in this page count (having more references is encouraged). There are no explicit page limits or formatting requirements. If proposals are much shorter or longer than the norm, the Ph.D. committee will question the reasons for this. If the proposal is too long, the committee may recommend rescheduling the exam after the proposal is rewritten.

- Three main criteria are usually applied in evaluating a proposal. The first two are similar to the National Science Foundation’s guidelines for evaluating research proposals.
  1. Intellectual merit: What is the importance of the activity to advancing knowledge or understanding?
  2. Expected impact: What impact can be expected in terms of particular research communities and on society in general?
  3. Feasibility: How likely are the stated goals to be achieved by the student?

- Based on these criteria, the Thesis Proposal should contain:
  - An overview of the state-of-the-art, which helps to show that the student has a good grasp of the relevant research fields.
  - A brief summary of research results obtained so far by the candidate. This includes citing prior publications and current submissions produced by the student.
  - A clear description of the remaining problems and goals.
  - Some details of the proposed technical approach.
  - Clear arguments as to why the work is interesting in terms of intellectual merit and expected impact.
  - An explanation of how the goals can be accomplished within the expected amount of time.

- The Thesis Proposal should not be
  - A preliminary draft of the thesis.
  - Particular chapters or parts of the thesis.
  - A survey of the student’s research field.
  - An existing publication or technical report.

Final Exam

The final exam represents the last significant opportunity for the Ph.D. committee to ask questions and provide comments on the thesis work. It also serves to disseminate the work to the public (including faculty, students, colleagues, friends, and family). In many ways it represents a celebration of the completion of the work. Unlike the prelim exam, which is closed, the final exam is open to the public and announced along with other public seminars. Please note that students must be register in the semester they complete their final exam.

Guidance on How to Prepare for the Final Exam

- A student should not rush to schedule a final exam if the work is not completely finished or the thesis is not completely written.

- It is common for the committee to suggest some minor improvements or corrections to the thesis; however, it is
usually not the case that substantial new work is expected. If there is any risk of the committee requesting further work, be prepared to allot the time necessary to make the recommended changes or enhancements to the thesis. Students should consult with their advisor on this point.

- It is important to attend other defenses to understand the whole Ph.D. process and to learn valuable skills from other students’ defenses.

**Mavis Future Faculty Fellows Program**

Mavis Future Faculty Fellows (MF3) Program is made possible by a generous bequest of Frederic T. and Edith F. Mavis. Dr. Mavis received his BS, MS, and Ph.D. degrees in civil engineering from the University of Illinois. He was a professor of civil engineering at several universities and was dean of engineering at the University of Maryland from 1957 until 1967. He died in 1983. The fund document directs that income from the fund shall be used for scholarships for Ph.D. students within the College of Engineering. It is the donors’ desire that preference is given to students who plan to pursue a career in academia.

The MF3 program has been established to provide Ph.D. students interested in a faculty/teaching position within the College of Engineering to gain experience in the focus areas of research, teaching, and mentoring. To learn more, visit the Mavis Future Faculty Fellow website.

Each year, the college is able to provide up to 12 first-year and 3-4 second-year awards for this program. Students selected to participate in this program receive a $5,000 fellowship. In addition, pending available funds, students may receive up to a $1000 to assist with the attendance of a specified educational conference. Students are eligible to receive this award a maximum of two times during their doctoral studies. First-year MF3 awardees agree to participate in a set of required activities designed to improve their knowledge of faculty responsibilities. Second-year awardees provide leadership and mentoring to first-year MF3 students.

To be eligible for a first-year award, students must have passed the qualifying examination. For a second-year award, students must have successfully completed the requirements of a first-year MF3 student. For either a first or second-year award, students must be enrolled as a full-time student for the entire academic year. Please review the application process to learn how to submit an application. Please note that all application materials must be submitted in a single PDF document.

**International Student CPT & OPT Process**

All international graduate students must follow the rules and regulations as outlined by the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS). This includes I-20 extensions, request for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT), employment during the academic year, registration, etc. It is recommended that international students work with the Graduate Coordinator in their home department to ensure all policies are followed. If an international student violates any of the policies or regulations, he/she may be asked to leave the country.

**Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

CPT is for graduate students who
1) are on an F-1 visa,
2) have completed one year of academic coursework, and
3) wish to complete an internship during the summer term.

**Students must work with their home department to have all CPT paperwork signed.** Full-time CPT is 40 hours a week and part-time is 20 hours per week. Students must also follow the rules and regulations outlined below.

- CPT requires course registration that is not an independent study course. If students register for ENG 510, they must complete the ECS form.
- Students who register for thesis credits must have their thesis topic and/or title on the CPT application form and an explanation why the CPT training is necessary for their research.
CPT cannot be backdated and cannot start until all approvals are granted and course registration is completed.

Students can only work on CPT for the dates listed on their new I-20 and cannot start their employment without having the I-20 in hand. The employment must also end on the date specified on the CPT I-20.

Students cannot change employers without completing a new CPT application form.

CPT authorization can only be given for one year at a time. Students who complete more than 12 months of CPT will not be eligible for OPT training once their degree is awarded.

For more information on rules and regulations, visit CPT Training website.

Occupational Practical Training (OPT)

International students who are ready to graduate with their degree may apply for Optional Practical Training, which allows international students to work in the U.S. up to one year after graduation. To apply, students must attend one of ISSS’s workshops or meet with one of their advisors. Students must meet the following to be eligible for OPT.

- Completed their degree.
- Have completed at least two semesters at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus.
- Have current F-1 status.
- Complied with all registration requirements for previous CPT(s).
- Have a valid passport.

For more information and to attend a workshop, visit OPT Requirements and Application Process website.

Thesis Deposit

Thesis deposits are required for the M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students. It is important for students to understand the Graduate College thesis requirements, which will help them prepare their document in the correct format. In addition, students need to be aware and follow the thesis process, which will help ensure everything is completed in the necessary order and all the correct forms are signed and submitted before the deadline. Please note it is the student’s responsibility to ensure all required forms are completed and signed, not the department’s responsibility.

The Graduate College Thesis deposit deadline is a hard deadline. Each semester has a deadline that all thesis deposit must be made to the Graduate College. This means that the Graduate College Thesis Office must receive all corrections and all required deposit materials by 5 pm on the day of the deadline. If the deadline is missed, then graduation will be delayed until the next semester. Therefore, it is highly recommended that all students begin their electronic deposit of their thesis at LEAST three days prior to the Thesis Office deadline. Students who wait until the last minute to deposit their thesis may not make the deadline. A thesis submitted electronically is placed in a queue once uploaded to the Thesis Office database and will be processed in the order in which it is received. Any theses that are still in the queue at 5 p.m. on the deadline or need additional changes will not be accepted for deposit and the student will not be able to confer their degree until the next conferral term. For more information, please visit the Graduate College Thesis Office website.

Professional Master’s Programs

The professional master’s program is a non-thesis, non-research program and is a terminal degree. It is designed to allow students to complete the program requirements in as little as one year or within three semesters for on campus students. These programs are all coursework programs with no research. Students usually register for 12+ credit hours a semester, depending on the department’s requirement for the program.

The professional master’s program is designed to allow students to again the advanced skills they will need for an industry position. The skills they gain from the master’s program help them compete for a higher salary and move into management level positions. A professional master’s program also requires students some business courses to help round out their technical skills and prepare them for management level positions.
It is important for students in a professional master’s program to work closely with the graduate coordinator in their department to ensure they are completing all the degree requirements and to learn what courses are offered each semester in order to graduate within the year. Students are responsible for completing the degree requirements in order to graduate as outlined on the their home department’s website.

Online Graduate Programs

Some of the engineering departments offer their professional master’s degree online to allow students who cannot come to campus to complete the degree completely online. The online degree is the exact same degree as the on campus degree and students complete the exact same courses as the on campus students during the same semester. Students will complete the same assignments, projects, and exams as the on campus students and have the same deadlines. Since online students work full-time and take courses part-time, they usually complete the degree in 2.5 to 3 years. The maximum time to complete all degree requirements is 5 years.

At this time, the college has 4 departments that offer a master’s degree online – Aerospace Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science, and Mechanical Engineering. To learn more, visit Engineering Online website.

Online Course-Program Policies and Procedures

Who Can Enroll in Online Courses

Online engineering courses are for students who are not on campus and do not have access to on campus courses. In order to register for an online course, students must be enrolled in one of the engineering online degree programs or register as an online non-degree student (this option is only for students who are not a current University of Illinois student). In addition, university employees are not eligible for engineering online courses at this time but they are welcome to complete the course on campus.

Who Can Access Recorded Lectures

All class recordings are password protected. Only online students registered for the course may access the recorded lecture during the semester they are registered. Once a semester has ended, the recorded lectures are no longer available to students. This access can only be provided during the time that the student is enrolled in the course.

Online Students Policies and Procedures

Online degree-seeking students are held to the same policies and procedures as the on campus degree-seeking students. Therefore, all policies and procedures that are outlined in the student’s home department handbook, the College of Engineering Graduate Student Handbook, and the Graduate College Student handbook must be followed.

Online Student Resources

Communication is key to the success of online students. It is important for students to understand where to find the information online that is important to their course and degree completion. The College of Engineering has developed a one-stop website to provide online students with the guidance they need. Online students are required to meet the same deadlines throughout the semester as on campus, such as adding/dropping of courses, withdrawing from the semester, paying tuition bills, etc. Below are important links for online students to visit to learn about processes, resources, and policies for the engineering online programs.

- Online Student Portal (access to course lectures)
- Troubleshooting Video Lectures

- Forms and Policies
- Student Resources
Graduate Student Annual Evaluation Process

All graduate students enrolled in a degree-seeking program that is more than a one-year program must have an annual evaluation by their home department. Students should complete a self-evaluation first, which is then used for the department to complete their evaluation. Students should receive feedback from their home department on their progress in a written format, which can be either in an electronic or paper format. Students should receive the feedback from their department on their overall degree progress and their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, students should have an opportunity to discuss their review in person with the appropriate faculty and administration within their home department.

Students who do not receive satisfactory reviews should have an academic plan developed by the department to help them gage their progress over the next six months to ensure they are making positive progress towards completing their degree. In addition, this document should address possible outcomes if progress is not made within the timeframe outlined on the plan.

Graduate students should consult with their home department to learn more about the graduate annual evaluation process and when this is completed each year.

Registration

Registration for the spring term begins in late October and early April for the summer and fall terms. The Office of Admissions and Records (OAR) website is where students can find their earliest registration time. Graduate students begin registering after several other student groups (e.g., graduating seniors, honors students, band, and other groups that have first priority registration times). The Banner application system (also known as “UI Integrate Self-Service”) is used for registration and any modifications to course schedules through the 10th day of instruction. Students can also print an unofficial transcript and add their name to the appropriate graduation list through this system.

Important Notice: All graduate students should be REGISTERED for fall and spring term BY the 10th day of classes. Failure to do so may result in late fees, loss of valid visa status for international students, loss of assistantship, and unapproved leave of absence. All graduate students, except those on an approved leave of absence, should be register for fall and spring term until they graduate.

Full-time Status

- All graduate students with no assistantship need to register for a minimum of 12 graduate credit hours to be considered a full-time student for fall and spring semesters. Students on an assistantship of 25% or more can register for a minimum of 8 graduate credit hours to be considered full-time. Students with outstanding student loans may also be required to be full-time to avoid having the loan called.
- All students awarded Fellowships and/or tuition and fee waivers not associated with an assistantship are required to be registered full-time, a minimum of 12 graduate credit hours.
- The maximum credit hours students can register for during fall and spring term is 20 credit hours. For summer term, it is 12 credit hours. Any overloads require a Graduate College petition to be submitted for approval.
- Students are not required to register for summer term unless they are on CPT or a fellowship. Summer registration for fellows is 4 graduate hours in an 8-week course. Students who hold a 25% or more assistantship may register for 4 credit hours to be considered full-time.
- Students who have less than 12 hours to complete the degree program only need to register for the number of hours required to graduate. However, students with undergraduate loans in deferment are strongly encouraged to consult with OAR regarding whether or not their enrollment constitutes full-time status for the purpose of keeping their loans from going into repayment. International students will need to complete a reduced course load form and have it approved to be below full-time status.
• Credit hours can be in the form of traditional coursework, independent study (under a faculty member), thesis research, or seminars.

• It is highly recommended all international students register as a full-time student no later than 10 calendar days into the semester. ISSS monitors all international students’ registration, as international students must be registered as a full-time student within the first few weeks of the semester. If they are not, ISSS is obligated by law to terminate the F-1 or J-1 immigration status for all students not registered.

• Graduate students on an assistantship that provides a tuition waiver need to be registered by the 10th day of the term or they may lose their assistantship.

Late Registration
Late registration begins at 5pm of the first day of classes. Students who are not registered at that time have approximately 2 weeks to complete registration. After the late registration period, students lose the ability to register themselves and must use the Late Registration and Late Course Change form. The student’s advisor and home department must approve this form prior to final approval by the Graduate College. There is a late penalty fee for late registration, which will be added to the student’s bill.

Adding/Dropping Courses
• Each semester has add/drop course deadlines for registered students. Students can find these early deadlines by checking the OAR website.

• The Office of Graduate, Professional, and Online Programs maintains an Academic Calendar, with these deadlines.

• The Late Registration and Late Course Change form is required to add or drop a course past the deadline. The Instructor, advisor, and home department must approve the change prior to submitting the form to the Graduate College. Note: Students must maintain full-time status throughout the semester.

• Courses cannot be dropped after a final exam has been completed.

Class Attendance
Regular class attendance is expected of all students at the university. The authority for an excused absence within a class rests with the course instructor, subject to the requirement to reasonably accommodate class absence as set for this the Student Code of Conduct section 1.501. Students who are absent due to a medical emergency or a family emergency need to follow the policy and procedure set in 1.501 of the Student Code of Conduct.

Withdrawing
Students should make sure they completely understand their home department’s policy and any consequences of withdrawing from the university prior to completing this process. The Banner application system will not allow students to drop all courses, as this constitutes a withdrawal. Students must complete the Withdrawal-Cancellation form to do a complete withdrawal from the semester. International students must have approval from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) to withdraw.

Credit/No-Credit
Electing credit/no-credit registration allows students to enroll in a course for a simple pass/fail grade, rather than the conventional letter grade. If a C- or higher is earned, the grade that is entered on the transcript is “S” (satisfactory). Graduate students must consult with their home department about any department policy on allowing credit/no-credit courses to count towards degree requirements.

Minimum Grade Requirement for Graduate Coursework
The Graduate College will allow any grade of D or higher to be counted as a passing grade for all graduate program degree requirements. Departments can hold a higher standard of what graduate students must earn in
their coursework for it to count towards their degree. Students must consult with their home department to learn about the grade policy for their degree program.

## Summer Registration

Students are not required to register during the summer in order to hold an assistantship. However, students should check with their department about departmental policies and with their thesis advisor. International students must register during the summer if it’s their first semester, last semester, or they are completing Curricular Practical Training (CPT). To learn more, visit ISSS website on registration policies.

In addition, some students may need to register full-time due to student loans, fellowships, etc. If a graduate student holds a 25-67% grad assistantship, 4 graduate hours is considered full-time. If students hold less than 25% assistantship, 6 graduate hours is considered full-time. To learn more, go to the summer full-time status requirement webpage. A summer tuition and fee waiver will cover the following fees: service fee, half of the health insurance fee; health service fee; AFMFA fee (if assessed), and half of the Library/IT fee (if accessed). Students who held a waiver-generating appointment during the spring term are eligible to receive a summer tuition waiver if they enroll in the summer term.

In addition, summer registration **does affect** a student’s ability to use campus services. If a student does not register for summer term or registers for less than 3 hours, this affects the following benefits.

- Student Health Insurance (see the “Student Health Insurance” section of handbook for more information).
- McKinley Health Center will require students to pay a fee to use McKinley, which is done through the McKinley Business Office.
- Campus Recreation Facilities will require students to pay a fee to use their facilities.
- Additional taxes of 5.65% (Medicare – 1.45% and Social Security – 4.2%) will be charged to the student if they are working on campus.

## Graduate Programs Grading System

The grading system at the University of Illinois is listed below. The chart outlines the points associated with a course grade, which is used in the computation of grade point averages for the semester and overall GPA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F by Rule</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Graduate College has no minimum grade policy. However, the departments within the College of Engineering do have minimum grade policies that graduate students must meet to have courses count towards the degree and an overall GPA that must be maintained to remain in the program. Please see department’s policy on grade and GPA requirements. When a graduate student repeats a course, all hours and grades count towards the cumulative graduate GPA. **There is no grade replacement at the graduate level.**

## Special Grades (I, DFR, ABS, NR)

- DFR (Deferred) grades are issued at the end of the term only for thesis credit (599). DFR grades will only be changed to an “S” grade once the thesis is deposited. The Graduate Academic Office with each department usually completes the grade changes for the 599 credit hours once thesis is deposited.
- I (Incomplete) grades are issued at the end of the term when students have not completed the required work for the course. The time limit for students to complete the work is no later than the last day of instruction for the term following the issuance of the I grade.
- The last day of fall term for an I grade issued in either spring or summer.
- The last day of spring term for an I grade issued in fall.

After the deadline, the Graduate College will automatically change the I grade to an “F by Rule”. This failing grade will be reflected in the student’s GPA until the instructor changes it.

- If a student fails to appear for the final exam in a course, the instructor must issue an ABS (Absent) grade no matter how well or poorly the student has done in the course. An ABS grade is failing. In some cases, as approved by the instructor, the student may be allowed to take a special exam and the ABS grade can then be changed.
- NR (no record) is the automatically assigned grade if an instructor enters no grade before the grade submission deadline.

**Probation (GPA)**

A minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA), corresponding to a grade of B, must be maintained to stay in all graduate programs and to graduate, unless a department has made a special arrangement with the Graduate College. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will receive a warning letter from the Graduate College stating that unless the GPA is raised to 3.0 after the subsequent semester, they will not be permitted to continue in the program. All courses taken while at University of Illinois as a graduate student affect the graduate GPA.

Students who are on probation will need to complete a Graduate College petition to hold an assistantship during that semester.

**Academic Leave & Re-Entry into a Graduate Program**

Visit the Graduate College’s Academic Leave policy for complete details.

Graduate students in degree-seeking programs are entitled to a total of two terms (fall and/or spring semesters) of academic leave in the course of a single degree program. Students must document their request for a leave and meet the eligibility requirements. All leave requests must be made and approved prior to the start of the semester by the student’s home department and the Graduate College by completing the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form. Students who are enrolled in summer only programs must apply for a Leave of Absence before taking a summer term off. There are two categories of Academic Leaves of Absence.

1. **Personal Academic Leave of Absence** may be requested for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to leave for health reasons, for personal reasons, for active military service, or to take care of dependents or family members. Students who are on an approved Personal Academic Leave of Absence use the leave for personal reasons and not to make progress on the degree. In addition, students on Personal Academic Leave of Absence should not expect faculty to provide feedback on academic work, including proposals or drafts of a thesis.

2. **Academic Progress Leave of Absence** may be requested for instances of academic activity such as Study Abroad when the student registers at another institution, or fieldwork when the student is not using university resources including faculty time, nor receiving financial support paid through the university. Students who are on an approved Academic Progress Leave of Absence use it to make progress toward completion of the degree, but must not use campus resources. Expectations of progress to be made during the leave should be documented in the student’s academic file.

A student’s status does not change during the period of an approved leave of absence. The standing that is in place at the time of leave will not change when the student returns. Also, students are responsible for knowing the potential consequences of taking an approved academic leave of absence on benefits and services dependent on an enrolled student. For example, a student’s NetID will be deactivated and the student will not have access to university email or the university library. Other examples include loss of health insurance, loss of graduate assistantships, potential fellowships, and lost of loan deferment, etc.

**Procedures to Request an Academic Leave**

Students must request a formal leave of absence by completing the process below. All requests must be approved by the department and then by the Graduate College prior to the start of the term.
• Complete the written Request for Academic Leave of Absence form.
• If necessary, complete a petition to request an extension of time to degree.
• International students must meet with an ISSS adviser and obtain a signature on the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form.
• Submit the written Request for Academic Leave of Absence form to student’s home department. It is important to meet with thesis advisor to review the request before turning the form into home department’s Graduate Coordinator or Director of Graduate Studies.

The department reviews the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form and completes the following steps.
• Review and document the student’s current academic progress in the program by recording the academic requirements that have been completed as well as the student’s academic status.
• Document the student’s remaining requirements for degree completion upon return.
• Document the length of the approved period of non-enrollment to be not more than 2 terms (spring or fall) during a student’s degree program. These may be consecutive terms or single terms approved individually.
• Document the potential financial support that may be available to the student upon return to the degree program, including current department policies on financial support that exist at the time the leave is approved.
• Place the original approved Request for Academic Leave of Absence form in student’s academic file and give the student a copy.
• An advising hold is place on the student’s record until he/she returns from approved academic leave.
• A copy of the approved form is forwarded to the Graduate College for inclusion in the student’s academic record within the Graduate College.

Return from approved Academic Leave of Absence

Domestic Students
Domestic students must notify their home department of their intent to return so that departments may review and confirm their academic status at the time of return. The department should remove any advising holds from the student’s record. If a domestic student has not been enrolled for three consecutive terms including summer, the student must complete the Application for Re-Entry form and receive approval from the Graduate College. The Approved Academic Leave of Absence form must be attached to the Application for Re-entry to document the approved leave terms and for the return to enrolled student status.

International Students
International students must notify their home department of their intent to return so that departments may review and confirm their academic status at the time of return. The department should remove any advising holds from the student’s record. In addition, all international students must submit the International Student Verification form and the Declaration & Certification of Finances Form or a letter from the department confirming any financial funding by the department. The Approved Academic Leave of Absence form must be attached to the Application for Re-entry to document the approved leave terms and for the return to enrolled student status. International students should begin the re-entry process at least three months in advance to allow the time required to process all visa documentation.

Non-Approved Leave of Absence
Graduate students in a degree-seeking program that do not request a formal leave of absence (fall and spring terms, not summer unless they are in a summer only program) may be subject to potentially negative consequences for failing to request a formal Academic Leave of Absence. Students who do not enroll and do not meet with their home department to document their status with an approved Academic Leave of Absence before the start of a term are considered Absent without Leave. The department will place an advising hold on the student’s record. A student who is Absent without Leave may be prevented from re-enrolling, may have additional degree requirements to complete if allowed to return, or may be subject to new degree requirements.
Graduate Petitions

To request exceptions to the Graduate College policies or deadlines, students are required to complete a Graduate Student Request form. Below are some examples of when students would request an exception:

- Transfer of credit
- A time extension
- In absentia registration
- A curriculum change

Graduate students should complete the online petition at the link above after seeking advice from either their thesis advisor, academic advisor, Coordinator of Graduate Programs, or Director of Graduate Studies. A Graduate College petition requires a minimum of two signatures (usually an advisor and authorized signatory within the department’s Graduate Academic Office). Sometimes certain petition, like change in curriculum, may require more signatures if the request involves more than the student’s home department. Petitions are sent to the Graduate College by the student’s home department for final review. The student and the department are notified via email of the Graduate College’s final decision on the petition. Petitions can take up to 3 weeks once it is received by the Graduate College. It is also important to note that just because the department has approved the exception does not mean that it will automatically be approved by the Graduate College.

Transfer of Coursework

Transfer of Courses Between Illinois Graduate Programs

Students are allowed to transfer graduate credit from one graduate degree to another graduate degree within the Graduate College at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Graduate College does not set a maximum on the number of credit hours that can be transferred between the two programs. However, each department can set a maximum number of credit hours that they allow to be transferred into their graduate program. Therefore, it is important for students to check with the department to understand their policy on the internal transfer of graduate credit hours for their program.

Transfer of Courses Outside of Illinois Graduate Programs

A graduate student may wish to transfer graduate credit completed at another accredited institution. A maximum of twelve credit hours of graduate coursework completed outside the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign may be counted toward a graduate degree. Coursework completed outside the University of Illinois Graduate College that can be transferred includes these three types:

1. Graduate level work taken as an undergraduate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but not used toward a degree.
2. Graduate level work taken at another accredited institution, but not used toward a degree.
3. Graduate level work done while enrolled as a non-degree student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Up to 12 hours of graduate credit taken while enrolled as a non-degree student, as described in point 3 above, may be petitioned to apply toward a student’s graduate degree, in addition to an additional 12 hours of credit taken at another institution as described above in point 2. Please note that transfer credit may only be applied to the M.S. degree (stage I). The Ph.D. degree requires 64 hours of residence credit on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus. Credit from outside the Graduate College may not be transferred to count toward Stage II or Stage III of a doctoral program. For more information, please visit the Student Code website and Graduate College website.

Transfer coursework must be less than 5 years old, equivalent to courses offered by the student’s home department at Illinois, received a grade of B or higher, and not applied to another degree. Students must complete a petition to request courses to be transferred and submit an official transcript (which can be sent to the student’s home department’s Graduate Coordinator) as well as a letter from the appropriate authority at the previous institution stating that the credit hours have not been used towards a prior degree. Student must complete one semester (at least 8 hours) at Illinois in their graduate program before petition can be submitted to request the
transfer of coursework. A student requesting to transfer courses under point 3 above can do so at the start of their program. Student requesting to transfer any other courses must wait until they have completed 8 credit hours within their program.

NOTE: All transfer of graduate credit is subject to the approval of the Department and of the Graduate College.

Code of Conduct Policy

The College of Engineering requires all students to act in a professional manner, which includes all written and verbal communications, with any faculty, staff, student, or any outside vendors or research partners. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group’s race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preferences are permitted. In addition, students are held accountable to the University of Illinois’ Code of Student Conduct. Violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the university.

Students who are accused of a violation have 8 days to appeal to their home department’s Grievance Committee. Failure to appeal within this time frame or if appeal is denied, charges will stand and disciplinary action will be enforced.

Student Ethics

The College of Engineering is strict about enforcing student ethics and will not tolerate cheating within a course or plagiarism on course related papers, published papers, or within their thesis. The college uses section 1-402 of the Student Code to define cheating/plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to read through this section carefully. Students who are accused of such a violation may face some or all of the consequences below:

1. Receive a grade of zero on the assignment or exam.
2. Receive a failing grade for the course.
3. Dismissal from their program.

All cases are documented within the student’s departmental file as well as documented at the College of Engineering and the Graduate College. A student who is accused of such a violation has 8 days to respond to the professor in writing (usually via email). In the meantime, the professor will alert their department of the accused violation. If the violation still holds after discussing the accusation with the professor, the student has the right to appeal to the College of Engineering within 15 days of notification. To learn about and how to file an appeal, students should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Coordinator in their home department. If the student does not appeal, the matter shall be closed and one or all of the above consequences will be applied. Students who receive penalties 2 or 3 above will not be allowed to drop the course. Students with repeated violations may result in automatically dismissed from the program, depending on the department’s policy.

Grievance and Policy Procedural Appeals

The faculty, staff, and students within the College of Engineering departments are a diverse group and from time to time conflicts or problems can arise. Most of these conflicts or problems that arise can be resolved informally between the two parties. However, there may be times that these conflicts cannot be resolved. In these cases, students can either elect to file a formal grievance with the department’s Director of Graduate Studies or file one directly with the Graduate College. Consult the Graduate College’s process for more information.

Graduation Process & Convocation

Students who are ready to confer their degree must place their name on the degree conferral list using the UI Integrate Self-Service before the deadline for that term. This alerts the student’s home department and the Graduate College that he/she plans to graduate within that semester. Students who fail to add their name by the deadline will have to wait until the next semester to graduate.

In addition, all graduate students are invited to participate in the College of Engineering and University convocations upon completion of their graduate degree. It is important that students sign up before the deadlines.
To learn more and sign up, visit the College of Engineering Convocation website and the University’s Convocation website.

Reminder: Ph.D. students must be registered for the term in which they complete their final exam. M.S. international students on an F-1 visa must be registered the term they deposit if they have a valid I-20. In addition, master’s students who wish to participate in the May Commencement but are not completing until end of summer term must have 8 hours or less to complete in the summer term. However, their name will not appear in the printed commencement program.

Graduating Ph.D. Students: Marketing Yourself for Academic Positions

The College of Engineering has a website for graduating Ph.D. students (must be graduating within 12 months) who are looking for academic positions. The site allows students to market themselves to peer institutions and government research labs, which is addition to the services provided by the Engineering Career Services and the Graduate College Career Services. Engineering Ph.D. students can opt to complete a profile that is advertised on the College of Engineering’s main website by creating their profile in My.Engineering Portal. The profile information is as follows:

- Name
- Department
- Photo (must upload and must be a professional photo)
- Contact Information (email and phone number)
- Thesis title and short abstract
- Thesis advisor name
- Areas of expertise (there are interdisciplinary fields to select as well)
- Link to resume (must upload resume in PDF format)
- Link to personal website (optional)
- Anticipated graduate date (must be 12 months or less)

The Office of Engineering Graduate, Professional, and Online Programs monitors this site along with Engineering Communications to ensure all content is professional. This site is public and is marketed to peer institutions by the College of Engineering Communications team.

When to Visit the Grad Academic Office in Home Department

Students should see the Grad Academic Office in their home department for all academic matters, including but not limited to the one listed below.

- Academic progress
- Graduate petitions
- Degree time extensions
- Degree audits
- Scheduling of Ph.D. exams
- Thesis format checks
- I-20 extensions or changes
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT) (for international students only)
- Submitting forms

A useful publication regarding academic matters for graduate students is the Graduate College Handbook.

Student Directory Information

Graduate students are added to the university directory. Students who wish to include their personal webpage should visit the Technology Services at Illinois (TSI) Electronic Directory Editor to enter their personal homepage URL in the WWW field. Graduate students may opt to withhold their home address and phone number from the University Student/Staff Directory. To suppress this information and learn more about the university directory
Disability Services

Students who have a medically documented disability may obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids through the Disability Resource and Educational Services (DRES). Students are responsible to contact their course instructors and provide them with their letter from DRES to receive academic adjustments. To contact DRES, visit their website, visit their office on 1207 S. Oak Street in Champaign, call them at 333-4603, or email them at disability@illinois.edu.

Counseling Services

All students at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign have access to the Counseling Center to assist them to reach a balanced Illinois experience. Their services range from various counseling services, educational programming initiatives, training programs, outreach and consultation activities, and self-help materials. The staff members have extensive training and experience with assisting graduate students. In addition, visits with a counselor are confidential and are not shared with student’s home department or faculty advisor. To learn more about their services, visit their website or call them at (217) 333-3704.

Career Services

College of Engineering Career Services

The College of Engineering Career Services offers a variety of services to help prepare graduate students for the job market. They offer assistance with identifying internships, resume writing, mock interviews, employment searches and much more. To learn about all the services available, either visit their website or visit their office at Suite 3270 in the Digital Computer Laboratory (DCL). In addition, the University Career Center holds various events and workshops.

Graduate College Career Development Services

Another resource for graduate students to take advantage of for career development is the Graduate College Career Development Services, which fosters personal growth and professional development for graduate students. Their office assists students with exploring careers, applying for jobs, faculty hiring, interviewing, negotiating offers, and much more. To learn more about their services and the seminars that are held throughout the year, visit their site.

Engineering IT Support, EDW Labs & Printers

The College of Engineering IT supports all departments and graduate students within the college with basic and advanced IT services necessary to support the leading edge educational and research missions of the college. To learn more about their support services for graduate students, visit their site. If students need technical support, they can submit a helpdesk ticket by emailing engrit-help@illinois.edu. It is important that students outline their problem in the email as well as put their contact information.

Printers

Graduate students can print within their department or research group. In addition to using departmental printers, graduate students are able to use the EDW lab printers at no charge, as this is a part of the student fees paid each semester. If engineering graduate students print at the Grainger Library using either the 4th floor's central computers or the lower level east side computers, they can print up to 300 pages with no charge. After this, there is a charge for each additional page. Students sign in with their NetID and password when using the library computers. The library automatically will charge a student’s account for any pages after 300. It is important for students not to share their NetID and password with other students or their account can be charged.

Importance of Excellent Communication Skills
Although there are no formal communication requirements as part of the engineering graduate programs, communication is an essential part of the program. Students have opportunities to communicate in:

- courses,
- group projects and presentations,
- seminars,
- attendance at conferences (poster sessions, presentation on research)
- job interviews, and
- Ph.D. exams.

There are not and should not be the only opportunities. The ability of a researcher to communicate well is as important as developing the research results. Students need to learn how to effectively persuade researchers by keeping their attention, arguing effectively, and explaining difficult concepts clearly.

Communication can be divided into oral and written forms. The most important form of written communication is an article published in conference proceedings and journals. Students need to develop good technical writing techniques, which can be learned by working closely with their advisor and other faculty, reading many research articles, obtaining feedback from fellow students, and by seeking outside help from the Internet, books, and writing workshops.

Several opportunities exist to develop good oral communication skills. Students should observe and evaluate presentation styles by attending research seminars in the department and around the university. Students have opportunities to give presentations or seminars as part of research group meetings or colloquia within the department.

While participating in conferences, workshops, and other research meetings, students need to learn how to meet people and express ideas. Most experienced researchers can give an impromptu explanation of their research in any time length (1 minute, 5 minutes, 12 minutes), while even customizing it for a particular audience. Hiring committees are much more enthusiastic when some of them know the candidate. It often takes years to build a good social network, so students should start early.

Teaching experience is another way to develop good communication skills. Teaching is a valuable art that can serve Ph.D. students well if they master it before taking positions in academia, government labs, or in industry. For students who seek careers in academia, acquiring good teaching experiences is highly recommended—one with the responsibility for an entire course or at least the development and delivery of substantial number of lectures for the course.

For some international students, development of oral communication and social skills may appear to be daunting. It is critical to seek advice and feedback on presentations. In addition, it is strongly advised to socialize with others students who are not of the same nationality to help improve communication skills and obtain a broader cultural perspective.

**Leadership Opportunities at Illinois**

**Engineering Graduate Student Advisory Committee (EGSAC)**

The purpose of the Engineering Graduate Student Advisory Committee (EGSAC) is to advise the College of Engineering on topics that are important to graduate education and that impact the graduate student experience on campus. The EGSAC meets regularly with the Office of Graduate, Professional, and Online Programs and with the Dean of Engineering at least once a semester to bring forward ideas and concerns facing engineering graduate students.

**Membership**

The board is made up of 12 to 14 engineering graduate students along with the Dean of Engineering, the Associate Dean of Graduate, Professional, and Online Programs, and the Director of Graduate and Professional Programs. Members of EGSAC should represent a mixture of departments and disciplines as well as students at various
stages of graduate education (M.S., Ph.D.) and be involved in both academic and extracurricular activities. Members will be expected to serve one-year, renewable terms that run August 16-August 15. Members for the new academic year are selected by the end of April of each year to allow current members to meet with new members in the May meeting before summer break.

Qualifications
To be a member of the EGSAC, graduate students must
- be a current, full-time graduate student for the term they are serving.
- have interest in representing the engineering graduate student voice.
- have a strong record of academic achievement (Graduate GPA 3.2 or above).
- be involved in academics (teaching, research) and extracurricular activities.

Meetings
The EGSAC will meet at least once per month during the academic year. The group determines regular meeting times in May, prior to summer break. Members are required to attend all scheduled meetings.

Application Process
To learn about the application process and the deadline, visit EGSAC website. The application process occurs during the month of April.

Graduate Student Senate (ISS):
Work with faculty, undergraduates, and staff to support the university. Students on this committee help address issues important to all students, including tuition, career readiness, prestige of the university, recreational facilities, and many others initiatives. To learn more and how to become involved, visit ISS website.

Graduate Office Student Advisory Board
Assist the Graduate College and Provost with reviewing and providing feedback regarding academic policies and process for graduate programs at Illinois. To learn more, contact the Graduate College at (217) 333-0035. To review the current membership, visit their website.

Engineering and University Student Organizations
There are several student organizations within the College of Engineering for both undergraduate and graduate students to be involved. Some key organizations are Grad SWE, GEDI, NSBE, SHPE, and many more. To learn about the 70+ professional and honorary engineering societies/organizations students, visit the Engineering Student Organization website.

In addition, there are 100+ student organizations within the university. To view a complete list of all the opportunities, visit the Graduate College Student-Groups site.

Important Websites
- Assistantship Clearinghouse
- NESSIE (University HR Employee Website)
- All Illinois Graduate Programs
Important Dates for the 2015-2016 Academic Year

Below are important academic deadlines set by the Graduate College and important deadlines/events that are internal to the College of Engineering. In addition to these dates, check out the Graduate Student Seminars and workshops hosted by the Graduate College for the academic year. Please also link or view
the Engineering Graduate, Professional, and Online Program academic calendar for seminar dates and additional event information.

### Fall 2015 Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 15, 2015</td>
<td>Lam Research Award Announcement sent to qualifying Departments</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 16, 2015</td>
<td>Fall TA and RA appointments begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 17-18, 2015</td>
<td>Graduate Academy for College Teaching Workshop (All brand new TA need to complete this training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 20, 2015</td>
<td>GradFest 2015 (event only for engineering new graduate students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 21, 2015</td>
<td>Deadline to cancel fall registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 24, 2015</td>
<td>First Day of fall term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4, 2015</td>
<td><strong>ALL</strong> Graduate Students <strong>Should</strong> be registered as <strong>full-time</strong> for fall term&lt;br&gt;Deadline for Graduate Students to submit form to elect to audit a semester course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7, 2015</td>
<td>Campus Closed – Labor Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 9, 2015</td>
<td>Fall Graduate Assistant Employee Orientation (TA, RA, GA, PGAs) sponsored by Academic Human Resources and the Graduate College (4:30 pm at Illini Union room 406)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17, 2015</td>
<td>Fall Graduate Assistant Employee Orientation (TA, RA, GA, PGAs) sponsored by Academic Human Resources and the Graduate College (10:30 am at Illini Union room 406)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2, 2015</td>
<td>Lam Research Award Application Due – 5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9-10, 2015</td>
<td>MERGE Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 16, 2015</td>
<td>Last day to drop a semester course on Web Self-Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30, 2015</td>
<td>Last day to add name to December Degree list through Web Self-Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2, 2015</td>
<td>Registration for spring term begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 13, 2015</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from fall term without a “W” grade&lt;br&gt;Last day to drop a semester course without a “W” grade&lt;br&gt;Last day to elect credit-no credit option for a semester course or to change from credit-no-credit to a regular grade&lt;br&gt;Last day to take the final exam for December doctoral degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 20, 2015</td>
<td>Deadline for Graduate College to receive the doctoral Final Exam Result form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 21-Nov 29, 2015</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 26-27, 2015</td>
<td>Campus Closed – Thanksgiving Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 30, 2015</td>
<td>Classes resume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4, 2015</td>
<td>Last day to deposit December doctoral thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9, 2015</td>
<td>Instruction ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10, 2015</td>
<td>Reading day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last day to add/drop a semester course with instructor and departmental approval (a “W” is recorded)&lt;br&gt;Last day to change a grade of DFR or I for the previous term to prevent it from being changed to an F by rule (this does not apply to CS 599)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11, 2015</td>
<td>Last day to deposit December master’s thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11-18, 2015</td>
<td>Final exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 18, 2015</td>
<td>Last date for receipt of petitions in the Graduate College for graduating students for the December conferral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 21, 2015</td>
<td>December degree conferral (no commencement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Spring 2016 Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 13-14, 2016</td>
<td>Graduate Academy for College Teaching Workshop (All brand new TA need to complete this training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15, 2016</td>
<td>Deadline to cancel spring registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 19, 2016</td>
<td>First day of spring term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| February 1, 2016    | **ALL** Graduate Students **Should** be registered as **full-time** for spring term  
|                     | Last day to add a semester course without permission                  |
|                     | Deadline to submit form to elect to audit a semester course           |
| February 8, 2016    | Yee Fellowship Announcement sent to Departments (due date Feb. 26th)   |
| February 26, 2016   | Yee Application Deadline – 5 pm                                      |
| March 1, 2016       | Mavis Fellowship Announcement sent to Departments and Grad Students (due date March 31st) |
| March 11, 2016      | Last day to drop a semester course on Web Self-Services              |
| March 19-27, 2016   | Spring break                                                         |
| March 28, 2016      | Classes resume                                                       |
| March 31, 2016      | Mavis Fellowship Application Deadline – 5 pm                          |
| April 1, 2016       | EGSAC Announcement sent to Grad Students (due date April 22nd)         |
|                     | Last day to add name to the May degree list (must use Web Self-Services) |
| April 4, 2016       | Registration for summer and fall terms begin                          |
| April 8, 2016       | Last day to take final exam for May doctoral degree                   |
| April 15, 2016      | Last day to withdraw from spring term without a “W” grade             |
|                     | Last day to drop a semester course without a “W” grade               |
|                     | Last day to elect credit-no credit option for a semester course or to change from credit-no-credit to a regular grade |
|                     | Deadline for Graduate College to receive Final Exam Result form       |
| April 22, 2016      | Last day to deposit May doctoral thesis                               |
|                     | EGSAC Application Deadline – 5 pm                                     |
| April 29, 2016      | Last day to deposit May master's thesis                               |
|                     | Announcement of ESGAC Members                                         |
| May 4, 2016         | Last day of instruction                                               |
| May 5, 2016         | Reading Day                                                          |
|                     | Last day to add/drop a semester course with instructor and departmental approval (a “W” is recorded) |
|                     | Last day to change a grade of DFR or I for the previous term to prevent it from being changed to an F by rule (this does not apply to CS 599) |
| May 6-13, 2016      | Final exams                                                           |
| May 15, 2016        | May degree conferral (commencement)                                   |
| May 20, 2016        | Last day for any Graduate petitions related to May degree conferrals   |

### Summer 2016 Term

Please see the [Summer 2016 Academic Calendar](http://engineering.illinois.edu/academics/graduate/) for the complete list of deadlines for both summer 1 and summer 2 sessions. For online students, please see the [Online Summer 2016 Calendar](http://engineering.illinois.edu/academics/graduate/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 30, 2016</td>
<td>Campus closed – Memorial Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31, 2016</td>
<td>First day of summer 10 week term (online courses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 2016</td>
<td>Last day to take final exam for August doctoral degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 4, 2016</td>
<td>Campus closed – Fourth of July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 8, 2016</td>
<td>Last day to add name to August degree list (must use Web Self-Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deadline for Graduate College to receive Final Exam Result form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15, 2016</td>
<td>Last day to deposit August doctoral thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22, 2016</td>
<td>Last day to deposit August master’s thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 4, 2016</td>
<td>Instructions end at noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading day begins at 1 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 5-6, 2016</td>
<td>Final exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 8, 2016</td>
<td>August degree conferral <em>(no commencement)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last day for any Graduate Petitions related to August degree conferrals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the College of Engineering Graduate Programs. Now that you have arrived safely to campus, there are items that are highly recommended to complete prior to the start of the term, August 24, 2015.

***International Students Only***

- **Office of International Student and Scholar Services** - All international students upon arrival should check in at the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office. Check in will begin on August 3 and through August 12 will be held at 610 E. John Street, Room 400 Student Services Building. August 13th they are CLOSED but from August 14 – August 21, check in will be at the Illini Union. For complete schedule, visit the [ISSS website](#). This should be one of the first stops upon arrival to campus for international students. A “hold” is placed on a student’s file until they check you in. This will keep students from being able to register for classes.

- **Social Security Number** – Students who hold an RA or TA MUST apply for a social security number as quickly as you can. You will be given instructions for this when you check in with ISSS. This only applies to new students with departmental financial aid offers.

***All Graduate Students***

- **Grad Academic Office** – All new students upon arrival should check in with the Grad Academic Office in their home department.

- **Payroll** – Students who have been awarded an assistantship should visit their home department’s Business Office to fill out an I-9 Employment Eligibility Form. Under federal law, students may not perform any duties associated with their assistantship appointment or be paid by the University until after these forms have been completed. Failure to complete these steps in a timely manner may result in reduction of your salary and could possibly affect any tuition waiver benefits received from the appointment.

  Other required employment forms will be completed on-line in a program called NESSIE. Once the Business Office has entered the student’s name into the payroll system, he/she will receive an email with further instructions. When completing these forms, please make sure and hit the “submit” button.

- **McKinley Health Center** – Submit health forms (by mail or in person upon arrival) to 1109 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801.

- **I-Card** – Each student is issued a permanent photo identification card, which must be retained by the student while registered at the University. [I-Card Office](#) is located on the first floor of the Illini Union Bookstore, 809 S. Wright Street (corner of Wright and John Street).

- **Parking** – Students should register their car or bicycle if applicable. Students’ semester fees do include a bus pass, which is highly recommended. Parking meters cost anywhere from 75 cents to more than one dollar per hour and can be difficult to find at certain times. The Parking Office is located at 1201 W. University Avenue, Urbana, IL.

- **UI-Integrate** – Register for classes. Students were sent an email from the Graduate Admissions Office finalizing their admission. When students log in to read this letter in Apply Yourself (application system) – at the bottom, they invite students to review the [Quick Guide to Graduate Life](#). This guide will give instructions on setting up students’ NetID and Enterprise ID needed for registration. Make sure and register before the university deadline - 5:00 p.m. of the first day of classes. After this date, students are charged a late fee to register.

- **Timetable** – Students can view the upcoming semester course offerings and course catalog with descriptions at this [link](#).

- **Housing** – Check out the [Champaign News-Gazette on-line](#). For on-campus housing, visit [University Housing Office](#).
Fall Teaching Assistant Orientation – Students who have a teaching assistantship are required to attend the Graduate Academy for College Teaching presented by the Center for Teaching Excellence scheduled usually for the Monday and Tuesday following the start of fall term. Please see calendar for exact dates. **Attendance at this orientation is mandatory for anyone holding a teaching assistantship on this campus.**

Final Credentials – Students need to ensure the Graduate Admissions Office (2nd Floor of Coble Hall) has a final copy of transcript as outlined in admission letter. If hand delivered, this must be in a sealed envelope.

New Grad Orientation/Welcome – Students must attend their home department’s new Grad Orientation/Welcome that usually takes place the week before classes or the week classes start.

Engineering GradFest - Attend the Engineering GradFest on August 20th from 3 to 6:30 pm to meet other new engineering graduate students and learn more about the college’s vision and resources.
## Who to Contact

**Engineering Graduate, Professional & Online Office**

**Quick Reference Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Buttlar</td>
<td>Associate Dean for Graduate, Professional &amp; Online Programs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:buttlar@illinois.edu">buttlar@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-5966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Reeves</td>
<td>Office Administrator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kreeves2@illinois.edu">kreeves2@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>265-4560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhonda McElroy</td>
<td>Director of Graduate &amp; Professional Programs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rmcelroy@illinois.edu">rmcelroy@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>244-2745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Hoskinson</td>
<td>Director, Office of Online &amp; Professional Programs (O2PEP)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fhoskins@illinois.edu">fhoskins@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>244-2042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Jenkins</td>
<td>Creative Specialist, Broadcasting</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kejenkin@illinois.edu">kejenkin@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>244-1629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Maduzia</td>
<td>Office Support Associate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:maduzia2@illinois.edu">maduzia2@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>300-5405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peg Pisel</td>
<td>Office Support Associate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ppisel@illinois.edu">ppisel@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-6634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritch Strom</td>
<td>Video Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rstrom@illinois.edu">rstrom@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>244-8565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Yahnke</td>
<td>Testing Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wyahnke@illinois.edu">wyahnke@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>244-2037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Frequently Contacted Departments Quick Reference Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate College</td>
<td><a href="mailto:grad@illinois.edu">grad@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-0035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student &amp; Scholar Services (ISSS)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:isss@illinois.edu">isss@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-1303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Insurance</td>
<td><a href="http://www.si.illinois.edu">www.si.illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-0165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services – Cashier Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:usfscohelp@uillinois.edu">usfscohelp@uillinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-1280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Police Department</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dpscomments@illinois.edu">dpscomments@illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-1216 (911 for emergencies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu">www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-3704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Admission &amp; Records</td>
<td><a href="http://www.registrar.illinois.edu">www.registrar.illinois.edu</a></td>
<td>333-0210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>