

Materials Science and Engineering, Ph.D.

The Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering requires a commitment on the part of the student to dedicated study and collaboration with the faculty. Ph.D. students are selected on the basis of outstanding demonstrated potential and scholarship. Applicants must hold the appropriate prerequisite degrees from recognized institutions of high standing. After substantial preparation, Ph.D. candidates work under the supervision of faculty advisors. The process involves extended immersion in a research atmosphere and culminates in the production of original research results presented in a dissertation. Milestones to be passed in the Ph.D. program in order to remain in good standing include the following: acceptance into a research group by the faculty advisor by or before the end of the student's first year of study; successful completion of the Ph.D. preliminary examination by the end of the second year; preparation for pursuing research and the development of a research proposal culminating in passing the Qualifying Examination by the end of the third year of the Ph.D. program. The Qualifying Examination includes faculty evaluation of a written research dossier and an oral presentation. Students must advance to candidacy in their third year (second year for students who entered with a master's degree).

Students applying with the objective of a Ph.D. are admitted to the M.S./Ph.D. program only if they are likely to successfully complete a Ph.D. program. These students do not formally re-apply to the Ph.D. program after completing the M.S. Students who apply to the M.S.-only program must petition for the Ph.D. program if they desire to continue on for a Ph.D. Financial support is usually reserved for those students who plan to complete the Ph.D. The normative time to complete M.S. and Ph.D. degrees is two and five years, respectively.

The core course requirements for the Ph.D. are the same as those for the M.S. degree options as listed under Required Courses (http://catalogue.uci.edu/thehenrysamuelischoolofengineering/departments/materialsscienceandengineering/materialsscienceandengineering_ms/#requirementstext). Students must also enroll in MSE 298 (Department Seminar) each quarter during their first year unless exempt by petition. Ph.D. students must take two additional elective courses each for 3-4 units or a combination approved by the graduate advisor beyond the M.S. requirements. These courses are to be taken after the first year of graduate work, should be relevant to the Ph.D. dissertation topic, and must be selected in consultation with the research advisor and approved by the MSE graduate advisor. The preliminary examination is based on the five required core courses for the MSE graduate degrees. Students who have completed an M.S. in MSE elsewhere must obtain a written approval by the graduate advisor to waive required MSE core courses, if they have taken the equivalent courses elsewhere.

Final examination involves the oral presentation and defense of an acceptable written dissertation in a seminar attended by students and faculty. The Ph.D. is granted upon the recommendation of the Doctoral Committee and the Dean of the Graduate Division. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. is five years (four years for students who entered with a master's degree). The maximum time permitted is seven years.

Expectations for the Ph.D. Dissertation

The Ph.D. dissertation is written documentation of original research that has impact on the field of study for the Ph.D. Impact in the field is measured by accepted or published peer-reviewed journal articles, peer-reviewed conference proceedings, patents, or analogous original documented adoption of innovative technology. Faculty research advisors are to provide in writing their specific expectations consistent with the above criteria.