

Annual Student Reviews

All doctoral and master's students admitted to the Department of Biomedical Engineering (BME) are expected to maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree as determined by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and the student's supervisor. Satisfactory progress is defined as:

- fulfilling conditions placed on admission.
- maintaining an overall graduate grade point average of at least 3.00.
- meeting requirements of the Graduate Studies Committee.
- making satisfactory progress in research.

The BME GSC formally reviews each student's progress toward their degree and provides the outcome of its review in writing to the student and their supervisor. Reviews may happen in the form of established milestones, such as the qualifying exam at the end of year one, the proposal at the end of year two or three, and the final oral defense at the end of year four or five. Since BME allows flexibility with regard to each student's milestone completion timeline, additional procedures are in place to ensure each student is reviewed at least annually.

Mechanisms of Review

Year 1 Students will be reviewed by the end of the first year via the qualifying exam.

Year 2 Students will be reviewed via the dissertation proposal, satisfactory progress in research, or independent GSC review at the end of the second year.

Year 3 Students will be reviewed via the dissertation proposal, completion of required, formal coursework, satisfactory progress of research, or independent GSC review at the end of the third year.

Year 4 and 5 Students will be reviewed via completion of required, formal coursework, the dissertation proposal, final oral defense, satisfactory progress of research, or independent GSC review at the end of the fourth and fifth year.

Milestones Agreement

The BME Milestones Agreement is reviewed and signed by all incoming graduate doctoral students and is one of the ways students' progress is determined. Failure to meet the expected time of achievement for each milestone may be considered failure to meet satisfactory progress, as determined by the GSC and the student's supervisor.

UT Austin Milestone	Expected Time of Achievement
Review degree requirements and milestones agreement with graduate advisor	1 st semester
Successful completion of the qualifying exam	End of 1 st year
Advancement to candidacy	End of 2 nd year
Complete all required, formal coursework	End of 3 rd year
IRB (human testing) approvals (if needed)	Variable
IACUC (animal testing) approvals (if needed)	Variable
Dissertation completed, successfully defended, and approved by committee	End of 5 th year
Exit interview completed and submitted to Survey of Earned Doctorates	End of 5 th year

Teaching Assistant Requirement

All BME doctoral students are required to complete Teaching Assistant (TA) service to the department. Students who entered the program before fall 2019 are required to complete two semesters and students who entered the program in fall 2019 or later are required to complete one semester. This requirement can be petitioned and waived by the Graduate Advisor but is approved in rare circumstances.

Satisfactory completion of the TA requirement counts toward satisfactory progress toward the degree. As a TA, students are expected to:

- follow instructions provided by the instructor of the course with regard to course management and lecture and lab attendance.
- complete tasks on time and accurately, otherwise notifying the instructor if tasks will not be completed on time.
- earn acceptable ratings via course-instructor surveys.

Failure to satisfactorily complete TA requirements can serve as grounds for a negative annual review, whether in conjunction with other circumstances (i. e., low GPA) or as a standalone issue.

Dismissal from Doctoral Study

Students who fail to meet established expectations may be recommended to the Graduate School for dismissal. Prior to dismissal, the BME GSC will provide to the student:

- written notice that includes specific reasons for lack of satisfactory progress and failure to meet the GSC's expectations.
- a reasonable timeline that outlines specific deadlines and tasks that must be met in order to address the issues identified and remain in the program.
- in-person meetings to assess progress toward meeting the stated expectations and deadlines.
- written notice of any decisions made by the GSC or its representative regarding plans to continue or terminate the student.
- a copy of the grievance procedure (<http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school>).

Responsibilities of the Student

1. Review, be aware of, and meet all requirements and conditions for earning a degree.
2. Adhere to any conditions, requirements, and timelines established by the GSC regarding progress toward earning a degree.
3. Initiate meetings and/or provide updates to appropriate faculty and/or GSC members regarding progress toward meeting expectations and requirements outlined by the GSC.

When to Expect Your Annual Review

Annual reviews may be communicated to you via email by the GSC Chair or their delegate, or via outcome forms such as the qualifying exam or proposal outcome forms. You will not necessarily receive a separate communication from the department about your progress if you've completed a program milestone within a given academic year. If you have questions about progress toward your degree, speak to the Graduate Advisor.