

Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering (MSME): Student Progress Checklist

Dear OSU MSME Students:

To ensure timely and successful completion of your graduate program, carefully review the items in the following checklist and be sure to complete them in the specified time frame. Other information related to degree completion is available at the following links:

- *OSU Graduate School Survival Guide*: http://oregonstate.edu/dept/grad_school/current.html
- *Mechanical Engineering Program Graduate Requirements*: <http://mime.oregonstate.edu/degree/graduate/>

Note: The School of Mechanical, Industrial, and Manufacturing Engineering expects graduate students to complete their degrees in a timely manner. A reasonable maximum amount of time for MS degree completion is two years. MSME students who extend their studies beyond this time limit are not eligible for graduate teaching assistantships.

At the beginning of your graduate studies:

1. ESTABLISH PRELIMINARY PLAN WITH SPECIALTY GROUP LEADER.

Meet with the group leader within your major area of study (Design, Mechanics, Materials, Thermal-Fluids, or Dynamics & Control) to establish a preliminary plan of study. (Alternatively, the group leader may assign another faculty member within your major area of study to assist you in establishing this plan.)

By the end of your second term of graduate studies:

2. IDENTIFY A MAJOR PROFESSOR AND SELECT RESEARCH TOPIC.

As soon as possible, you must identify a major professor to help develop your program of study and to guide your thesis or project research. If a major professor has not previously been assigned, contact professors working in your field of interest to discuss potential MSME research topics. Determination of major professor and research topic requires mutual agreement between the student and the professor.

3. DEVELOP PRELIMINARY PROGRAM WITH MAJOR PROFESSOR.

See "Degree Requirements" on the [Masters of Science in Mechanical Engineering Web page](#).

If you are doing an out-of-department minor, be sure to check for any prerequisite requirements.

(A minor is not required.) If you are on a financial aid appointment (GTA or GRA), you must register for a minimum of 12 credit hours per term.

4. SELECT THESIS OR NON-THESIS (PROJECT) OPTION.

In discussion with your major professor, determine whether you will complete the thesis or non-thesis (project) research option. The major difference between the two is that a thesis *must* conform to the Graduate School's thesis format guidelines (for page layout, print style, etc.), whereas project reports, while preferably conforming to the same standards, are not reviewed and approved by the Graduate School. Individual professors may also have different requirements for thesis and project options.

5. IDENTIFY THESIS/PROJECT COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

In consultation with your major professor, identify three other professors to serve on your committee. A total of three are required. If an out-of-department minor is declared, select two from within the ME program and the third from your minor program. Your major professor must approve selection of additional committee members.

The TERM in which your oral defense takes place:

6. COMPLETE DEGREE COURSEWORK.

All coursework specified on the Program of Study must be completed by the end of the term in which the oral defense takes place.

Approximately TWO MONTHS PRIOR to your oral defense:

7. COMPLETE RESEARCH AND PREPARE THESIS/REPORT.

Complete your thesis research and prepare your thesis or report. Confer with your major professor about document format and organization. Additional information is located on the Graduate School web site at http://oregonstate.edu/dept/grad_school/admitted/thesis.html

8. REVISE THESIS/REPORT.

Review comments with your major professor. Revise your thesis or report until your major professor is satisfied.

9. PREPARE FOR ORAL DEFENSE QUESTIONS.

As well as presenting on your thesis or project research, your oral defense is a venue for demonstrating to your committee that you have a solid understanding of basic mechanical engineering concepts and principles. Thus, during the second phase of your oral defense (a private, closed-door session with your committee members following the public research presentation), you should expect to field 1–3 “general” questions from each committee member. To prepare for these questions, begin reviewing your course work, both on your own and with your major professor, well ahead of your planned defense date.

At least TWO WEEKS PRIOR to your oral defense:

10. SCHEDULE ORAL DEFENSE.

Upon acceptance of your thesis/report by your major professor, contact all of your committee members to find an appropriate date and time for your oral defense. The oral defense must be at least 2 hours, but a 3 hour time slot is preferred. Note: This step is a scheduling challenge—*allow plenty of time to accomplish it!*

11. COMPLETE GRADUATE SCHOOL SCHEDULE FORM.

Once the date and time for the oral defense have been agreed upon, contact the Graduate School office and complete the official Schedule Form for the oral defense. *The Graduate School requires at least 10 days prior notice of your defense, so watch your dates carefully.*

12. BEGIN PRACTICING PRESENTATION WITH MAJOR PROFESSOR.

Several weeks before the oral defense, begin practice presentations with your major professor. These practice sessions will help you refine both your visual materials and your presentation skills. Practice presentations to other students are also encouraged. For additional preparation, be sure to solicit questions about your work from your practice audiences and thesis/report reviewers.

At least 10 DAYS PRIOR to your oral defense:

13. SCHEDULE ROOM AND EQUIPMENT.

Schedule the room and any equipment needed for your oral defense through the MIME Graduate Student Services office in Rogers 204. *Make your reservations early to ensure availability.*

14. PROVIDE DEFENSE ANNOUNCEMENT INFORMATION TO GRADUATE RECORDS SPECIALIST

Your oral defense is a public event. A defense announcement must therefore be prepared and posted for at least a week prior to the event. Provide the Graduate Records Specialist (located in Rogers 204) with the date, time, and location of your oral defense and your thesis title and presentation abstract.

At least ONE WEEK PRIOR to your oral defense:

- 15. PROVIDE REVIEW COPIES OF THESIS/REPORT TO COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

With approval from your major professor, send out review copies of your thesis or report to all committee members.

The DAY BEFORE your oral defense:

- 16. REMIND COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF DEFENSE TIME AND LOCATION.

The day before your oral defense, send verbal or email reminders to all committee members to make sure they are aware of the time and location.

- 17. DOUBLE-CHECK PRESENTATION LOGISTICS.

With the appropriate parties, confirm the defense room reservation, audio/video equipment reservations, and any other presentation arrangements and logistics (handouts, refreshments, etc.)

The DAY OF your oral defense:

- 18. GIVE YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME FOR ROOM AND AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT SET-UP/TROUBLE-SHOOTING PRIOR TO SCHEDULED DEFENSE START TIME.

Then, relax and enjoy (as much as possible!) this opportunity to publicly contribute to the knowledge base of the mechanical engineering community. You are the expert on your thesis/project topic and this is an opportunity to share your expertise with MIME faculty, graduate school colleagues, and other interested parties.

Remember, your oral defense includes two phases:

(1) The defense begins with a public presentation of your research work, including a public question-and-answer session (about 1 hour). (2) Following the public presentation, the general audience will be excused and you'll continue the defense in private conversation with your committee, responding to further questions about your research as well as general questions about your course work (see item 10).

Upon successful completion of your oral defense:

- 19. Make any required corrections to your thesis/report.

- 20. Your major professor and the school head must sign the final corrected copies of your thesis/report.

- 21. With your major professor's approval, provide a final signed copy of your thesis/report to the MIME Student Services office.

- 22. *If you completed a thesis:* As well as providing a final signed copy to the MIME Student Services office, you must also provide a final signed copy to the Graduate School.

- 23. Obtain the Graduate Student Check-off List from the MIME Student Services office. Complete the sheet and obtain the required signatures, and then return the form to the office.