

Mechanical Engineering Department Graduate Student Survival Guide



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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide information to graduate students in the Mechanical Engineering program on the various policies and procedures that need to be followed from admission through graduation. Topics addressed include academic advising, paperwork and deadlines, and thesis/project preparation instructions.

In the following instructions in this document, it is assumed that the admission process is complete. If your admittance was conditional for any reason, you must satisfy those conditions as soon as possible to avoid graduation delays.

The *Department Graduate Advisor* is a full-time ME faculty member who is responsible for administration of the Masters Degree programs in mechanical engineering. The best time to consult in-person with the Graduate Advisor is during the office hours. Phone and email can also be used (email is your best option for a quick response). Note that the Graduate Advisor is not required to be in the office during breaks (spring, winter and summer), so try to take care of any business involving the Graduate Advisor during the regular semester sessions to avoid processing delays.

Also, be aware that you must coordinate much of your paperwork through the Graduate Studies and Research Office (GSRO), located in the Student Services Center (SSC) on the first floor of the 10th street Parking Garage. Their phone number is 408-924-2480 and the website at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/Prospective/Index.html> The website contains information you should read regarding general policies and procedures. This site also contains on-line forms you will be able to use, as described below.

Classified and Conditional Admittance Status

Each student must achieve “Classified” standing, as soon as possible and before exceeding a total of 12 units. If you were initially admitted as Conditionally Classified, you will need to achieve ‘Classified’ standing by satisfying all the requirements listed on your notification of admittance that was mailed to you. You must then notify the Graduate Advisor when you have met all the conditions by filling out the Change of Status Form, so that the necessary form can be sent to the GSRO for upgrading your standing to Classified.

English Requirement

Each graduate student at San José State University must satisfy the University-mandated Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR). This is in *addition* to the TOEFL exam that most international students must take as part of their admission process. The Writing requirement must be satisfied before registering for the Thesis/Project course. The Writing requirement can be satisfied in the following ways:

- By passing E100W or E200W (either as a graduate student or as an undergraduate student). Students who obtained their B.S. degree from a California State University (CSU) institution automatically satisfy the English requirement. Note that in order to take E100W or E200W, you must take the Writing Skills Test (WST) the semester *before* you enroll in E100W or E200W. More information on the WST exam can be obtained in the Testing Office and at the website: <http://testing.sjsu.edu/wst/>
- By passing the WST exam with a sufficiently high score – see the website <http://testing.sjsu.edu/wst/wstscores/> for the required scores.
- By approval of a petition to waive the Writing Assessment requirement. There are generally two circumstances in which such a petition might be approved:
 1. By passing an upper-division technical writing course (similar to E100W and not an English course) while obtaining your BS degree. To initiate a petition in this area, you must submit a course description, course syllabus, transcript, and sample course materials to the GSRO. If approved there, your Writing requirement then becomes satisfied.
 2. By being the sole author of a published refereed technical paper. Technical papers published in archival journals are best; however, work reports that are professionally prepared and exhibit depth and skill in technical report writing may suffice (very rare). Reports done as part of your undergraduate studies (e.g., a senior design project report), or simple, job related reports will not be sufficient. To initiate a petition in this case, contact the Graduate Studies and Research Office, your Writing Assessment requirement then becomes satisfied.
- By Passing ME 265.

Contact the Graduate Studies Office if you qualify for the waiver.

Note: The ME Graduate Advisor is not authorized to approve a waiver.

GRE Requirement

All applicants who have graduated from non-US institutions or an unaccredited institution are required to take the GRE exam. A combined score of 1,000 is required for the sum of scores on the Verbal and Quantitative sections, and a minimum score of 2.5 in the Analytical Writing Test.

New Test: The minimum combined score must be 312 or better.

TOEFL Requirement

All students applying from non-English speaking countries, where the medium of instruction was not English, must complete the TOEFL exam. The university minimum entrance score for the TOEFL is 550 (paper based), 213 (computer based), or 80 (internet based).

Advising

Each semester, a computer-generated “hold” is placed on your record. In order to register, you must have the hold removed by being advised by the Graduate Advisor. For continuing students, absolutely no advising is available during final exam week, winter break, or summer break! Advising form is available from the department office. (See pages 6 for a sample of the form.)

An important note about course load and grades: In order to graduate, two grade constraints must be met. First, your overall GPA (including all 100- and 200-level courses taken at SJSU, while enrolled in the MS program) must be 3.0 or higher. Second, your GPA for *just* the thirty units that you use on your Candidacy form (described below) must also be 3.0 or higher. If at any time your overall GPA drops below 3.0, you are placed on *Academic Probation*, until your overall GPA is back to the 3.0 or higher. Reinstatement from Disqualification requires a minimum of one semester in which you must take six units of 100-level course work that will *not* be applicable to your graduate degree! Therefore, consult with the Graduate advisor and select your course load carefully to insure good grades and avoid Probation/Disqualification!

Paperwork and Deadlines

The Graduate Studies and Research Office website maintains a summary of important deadlines you must meet at: http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/deadlines/index.html be sure to consult this page occasionally to ensure you meet all deadlines. It is *your* responsibility to see that these deadlines are met!

Candidacy Form

When you have achieved Classified standing, satisfied the Competency in Written English requirement, and completed at least 9 graduate units, you should file your **Candidacy** form. You can access this form on-line at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/docs/candidacy.pdf> You should first print a blank copy of the form and fill it out by hand. You must list only 30 credit units (no more no less) that satisfy the MSME program requirements. Then take this draft version to the Graduate Advisor during his office hours for his review. Noting any corrections, return to the web page and carefully fill in the Candidacy form (note you cannot save it – so make sure there are no mistakes or you will have to re-enter it!). Print a final copy and take it to the Graduate Advisor for approval and signature. See page 7 for a sample of the completed Candidacy form. The Graduate Advisor will then submit it to the Graduate Admission and Program Evaluation office (GAPE) for you. **Note the deadlines: the Candidacy form must be submitted by October 1 for May graduation and March 1 for December graduation.**

Sometime later (typically two or three months), you should receive a letter from the GSRO admitting you to Candidacy. This means your form was approved. If there is a problem with your form, the GSRO will send you a letter describing the problem and advising you to consult with the Graduate Advisor, which you should do immediately. If you do not receive any notification regarding your Candidacy form by the end of the semester in which you submit it, you should contact the GSRO to determine its status.

Culminating Experience Require

When you have completed all your coursework, you need to satisfy the Culminating Experience requirement by demonstrating your competence in advanced engineering courses. This can be done by:

1. Completing the Graduate Project or thesis course.
2. Passing the Comprehensive Exam.

Graduate Project/Thesis

If you opt for the Graduate project/Thesis, you are required to complete the project work in two consecutive semesters. Before you register for your thesis/project course, you should discuss your project ideas with one of the full-time faculty members and then prepare a project proposal. With the help of your committee chair, select two additional committee members, have the proposal evaluated and signed by all the committee members. The Project Evaluation Form can be found at: http://www.sjsu.edu/me/programs/msme/me295/MSMEProj_ThesisProposalEvalForm_F14.pdf

Attach the Project Evaluation Form, approved by all committee members, along with the Project/Thesis Proposal form, available from the department web site. (See page 8 for a sample of the form). Submit all the forms to the Graduate Advisor for his approval. The Graduate Advisor will sign the form and then forward it to the department Chair for approval so that you can enroll in the Project/Thesis course. More details on completing your project/thesis are provided below.

Comprehensive Exam

Comprehensive exam is offered every semester. If you opt for this option, you need to fill out the Comprehensive Exam application, which is posted on the department web site. The deadline for application is the same as the one listed for adding a course for that semester. The exam is normally scheduled for the first Friday of April and November. More details can be found on the application form.

Application for Award of Master's Degree

The semester you are scheduled to graduate, you must submit an **Application for Award of Master's Degree** form by the date specified by the GSRO (usually around the fourth or fifth week of the semester). You can print a copy of this form from the website:

<http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/current-students/graduation-application-process-and-forms/application-form>

The completed form should be submitted to GAPE, as instructed on the form.

And, as detailed below, you must carefully schedule the completion of your thesis/project to allow sufficient time for your oral defense and for submitting your thesis/project report.

Completing Thesis/Project Requirements

Introduction

The culminating experience for the MSME degrees requires either passing the Comprehensive Exam or successful completion of the thesis/project requirement. The thesis/project options entail six units of credit and either may be selected depending on the nature of the work used to fulfill the requirement. The thesis option (Plan A) is selected by taking ME 299 *after admission to Candidacy*. The project option (Plan B) is selected by taking ME 295A followed by ME 295B.

Selecting an Advisor, Option, and Topic

Refer to the *MS Thesis/Project Guidebook* for details.

http://www.sjsu.edu/me/programs/msme/MSME_Guidebook_2014_2015.pdf

Mechanical Engineering Department MSME Program of Study Checklist

Name: _____
(Last Name, First Name, MI)

Student ID #: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Advising for Semester: _____

Today's Date: _____

	Course	Units	Semester Completed	Grade
Required Courses (6 Units)	ME 230	3		
	ME 270 or ME 273	3		
Approved Courses				
Thesis/Project (6 Units)	ME 295A or ME 299	3		
	ME 295B or ME 299	3		
Prerequisite Courses for students with non BSME degree	CE 112	3		
	ME 101	3		
	ME 114	3		
	ME 147	3		
	ME 154	3		
	ME 157 or 182 or 190	3		
English Competency Requirement Course		3		

*English Competency Requirement could be met by taking E100W, E200W, or any other course approved by the Graduate Studies Office

*My admission to SJSU/ MAE/ MS program was: Classified Conditional

*Conditions for classified admission are satisfied: No Yes, on: _____

*Undergraduate Institution: _____

*Undergraduate Major: _____ U/G GPA: _____


NOTE:

- 1. If you are conditionally classified, you cannot exceed a total of 12 units.**
- 2. You must satisfy the Competency in English requirement before starting your MS Thesis/Project**

Approved by Graduate Advisor: _____ **Date:** _____

Candidacy Form Sample: The Graduate Program and Admission Office requires that you complete the form exactly as the sample shown here. Forms filled out differently may cause delay in processing your Candidacy form.

[Print Form](#)



San José State UNIVERSITY
San Jose State University
Graduate Admissions &
Program Evaluations
(GAPE) Extended Zip 0017

Last Name _____
First Name, M.L. _____
Student ID _____
Previous Name, if any _____
Home Street Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____
Daytime Phone _____
Email Address _____

Complete this section

Complete I hereby certify the accuracy of the information provided

Complete Student Signature _____
Date _____

The signatures below indicate approval

Project or Thesis Advisor, if required (print) _____
Project or Thesis Advisor, if required (signature) _____
Date _____

Department Grad Advisor (print) _____
Department Grad Advisor (signature) _____
Date _____

Approved _____ Denied _____
D

GAPE Evaluator _____
Date _____

Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy

Date: Month / Day / Year		Competency in Written English (Course and Semester Completed): List Approved Course & Semester Completed				
Degree: Select from pull down menu		Degree of Classification, if applicable (Date Effective)				
Degree Major: Your Major		Advisor should not sign form until conditions of conditional status have been met and student has become classified.				
Concentration: Leave Blank						
Plan: Select from pull down menu		Previous College Degree				
		Date of Degree Award (Month, Year)				
Proposed Graduate Degree Program						
A Courses Within the Department						
Dept. and Number	Title	Semester Units	Grade	Semester/Year Completed		
ME 230	Advanced Mech Eng Analysis			Select from pull down menu		
ME 260	Title					
ME 280	Title					
ME 295A	Graduate Project Only list first semester of ME 295			All columns must be completed, except for grade if course has not been taken		
There should be 9 approved courses listed in Section A						
B Culminating Experience						
Department: MAE	Check box below if applicable		Total Units	Grade		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 299 Thesis (Plan A) / Creative Work (Plan C)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ME 295B as Completed Project Course (Plan B)					
OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Culminating Experiences (specify and/or select up to two)					
C Courses in Other Departments						
Dept. and Number	Title	Semester Units	Grade	Semester/Year Completed		
Complete only if Applicable						
D Transfer Courses (including Open Univ & SJSU graduate courses taken under graduate)						
Indicate SJSU course for which transfer course is substituted, if applicable. If transfer course is an Open University or SJSU undergraduate course (SJSU UG), indicate in space for "University"						
University (fill in below)	Dept	Course Number	Title	Semester Units	Grade	Semester/Year Completed
Substituted for:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Substituted for:	-----	-----	Complete only if Applicable	-----	-----	-----
Substituted for:	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Units	A:	B:	C:	D:	Total: 0	
Comments						

Candidacy rev 04/2011

**Mechanical Engineering Department
Graduate Project/Thesis Proposal**

Name: _____ SID#: _____

Phone No: _____ Email address: _____

I wish to register for (select one): ME 295A/B (Project) ME299 (Thesis)

Project/Thesis Title:

List of Committee Members:
(Obtain oral approval from each before listing)

<u>Project</u>	<u>Thesis</u>
1. _____ (Chair)	1. _____ (Chair)
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. <u>Thesis/Project Proposal:</u>

Attach a project proposal. Include a description of the current state of your topic, how you will advance that state, what you plan to produce or deliver to justify your effort and a schedule for your work. The objective and the procedure for achieving the objecting must be clear and clearly stated. See the *MS Thesis Project Guidebook* for details.

Estimated Graduation Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved:

Committee Chair: _____ Date: _____ Graduate

Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Department Chair: _____ Date: _____

Useful Links

1. All about Admission and applying for MSME:

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/prospective_students/

2. If you are enrolled in the program, Steps for completing your degree:

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/completing_masters/index.html

3. Candidacy and Graduation Deadlines:

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/deadlines/index.html

4. Forms you will need for graduation:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>

5. Fees and Financial Assistance:

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/financial_information/