

Important Info for Faculty About Graduate Programs

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Information for Faculty

All Graduate Programs information, including relevant timelines and mentoring forms, are in a handbook (PDF) and published online, and updated each summer for the start of the new academic year.

Please review this annually and suggest useful revisions or questions for the Graduate Committee and Graduate Programs Office to address.

Information for Faculty

Qualifying Exam – required for all PhD students by the end of first year, Spring semester.

- This two-hour written and oral exam is intended to evaluate each PhD student's progress, strengths and weaknesses in the academic scholarship, research preparedness (at this early stage), and pathway for their career.
- At the end of the exam, the qual exam committee completes a digital evaluation and feedback form.
- New for 2023-24 - This form includes a mastery and relevance ratings scale for the common knowledge breath areas evaluation.

Information for Faculty

Preliminary Exam – expected in year two; required for all PhD students by the end of Fall semester in year three.

- Requests for exceptions to this timing should use the Graduate Committee petition process.
- At the end of the exam, the committee completes a digital evaluation and feedback form.
- The digital form is similar to the Qual Exam, has smart logic, and used also for mentoring meetings; same link for all exams.

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Information for Faculty

Committee mentoring/advising meetings – required annually (by May 15)

- A qual or prelim exam during that year meets the requirement.
- If between qual and prelim, the student can use either the qual committee or the new prelim committee (if they have already selected them).
- The chair/thesis advisor can identify the committee members involved when completing the digital survey feedback form at the end of the mentoring meeting.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

1. Approved – Beginning Fall 2024, Qualifying Exam committees will have 3 faculty members (min and max), at least one member must be from a different research area, and the third member does not need to be from the Graduate Committee.

Requests for exceptions should use the petition process.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

2. Approved – Beginning Fall 2024, if a student does not submit the required completed and signed PhD Qualifying Exam Registration Form by the applicable published deadline result is an automatic failure of the Qualifying Exam.

The new qualifying process allows students a second chance to take the qualifier, so failing students will need to complete the registration process to take the exam in the next academic year.

Requests for exceptions should use the petition process.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

3. Approved – A Policy statement about use of Generative AI in Graduate Program Milestone Exams (Qualifying, Preliminary, and Final Thesis Defense Exams)

This policy (see handout) can be applied also to any documents prepared for mentoring meetings.

Evaluation and enforcement is up to the student's committee to apply as they see best.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

4. Approved – Beginning Fall 2024, A policy that a student who is being dismissed from another grad program (failed qual/area exam/prelim, low GPA, e.g.) or who is otherwise not in good standing will not be allowed to transfer to the BME grad program.

To be considered for an exception, both the student and the BME faculty member involved in recruiting the student would be required to present a joint petition to the BME Graduate Committee.

This policy was previously only informally accepted.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

5. Approved – Beginning Fall 2024, Implementation of the Research Seminar milestone for Third-year PhD students

The Research Seminar will be a course in the Fall Semester with the Director of Grad Programs as the Instructor of record.

The Graduate Programs Office with assistance from BME GSA will begin organizing the schedule this summer.

Faculty attendance for evaluation and mentoring will be essential for success of this PhD training milestone.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

6. Approved – Planning for developing a professional - technical writing course for BME graduate students will begin in the fall.

Feedback and suggestions are welcome now through the fall semester.

New Actions by Graduate Committee

7. Approved – A draft policy on co-advising expectations for courtesy and adjunct faculty

This is a working draft policy statement (see handout), and the Grad Committee would like feedback from BME faculty members before the final GC meeting (April 23) where they hope to vote to approve a final version.

The goal is to distribute the final approved policy to all faculty, especially to courtesy and adjunct members, before mentoring of new graduate students begins in the fall semester.