

Graduate Student Handbook

2024 - 2025

Master of Engineering (MEng) | Civil Engineering

Master of Science (MS) | Civil Engineering

Doctorate (PhD) | Civil Engineering

WELCOME

Welcome to the College of Engineering's (COE) School of Civil and Construction Engineering (CCE) at Oregon State University (OSU). This handbook is intended to answer questions you might have as a new graduate student in our school and serve as a resource for your graduate career. If, after reading the contents, you have unanswered questions, please feel free to ask for help. The staff and faculty in the School are available and willing to help solve any issues as they arise. Additional information on deadlines, procedures, and requirements is provided by the current Oregon State University Graduate Catalog and Guide to Success which may be obtained from the Graduate School: <https://catalog.oregonstate.edu/college-departments/graduate-school/>.

Graduate students in CCE are responsible for complying with the rules of the University, the Graduate School, the COE, and the School. In some instances, the requirements of the School are more restrictive than those of the Graduate School. In such cases, the School requirements specified in this document will apply.

The faculty and staff of CCE hopes that your time at OSU will be rewarding, memorable, and fruitful.

Whitney Korthauer, Graduate Program Coordinator (whitney.korthauer@oregonstate.edu)

Dr. Shane Brown, Professor and Associate Head of Graduate Affairs (shane.brown@oregonstate.edu)

Information contained in this handbook can also be at cce.oregonstate.edu/graduate-academics

Contact Information:

GTA assignments: shane.brown@oregonstate.edu

Travel reimbursement and expenses: evelyn.garcia@oregonstate.edu

Course overrides: whitney.korthauer@oregonstate.edu

Employee/HR questions: Kathy.westberg@oregonstate.edu

Official program requirements are available in the catalog. If there is a conflict between what is stated here and what is presented in the catalog, the catalog requirements take precedent.

GETTING SETTLED

CCE resides in Kearney Hall with satellite facilities in Graf, Merrifield, and Owen Halls.

Graduate Orientation Program

CCE holds an annual orientation in September. Orientation will draw attention to some of the major components of this manual and is required for all incoming students.

ONID Accounts

ONID is your OSU Network ID. Every student is assigned an ONID account. **You must activate your ONID account to register for classes.**

To activate your ONID account, go to onid.oregonstate.edu

ONID Email is the official communication link that the university uses to communicate with students.

Use your ONID username and password to access email, online course materials, grades, and financial accounts, etc.

OSU ID Card

All OSU students may obtain a student identification card. <https://publicsafety.oregonstate.edu/id-center>

Desk Space

Who is eligible for a desk?

Funded Graduate students conducting research are eligible for a desk in one of the Civil and Construction Engineering (CCE) designated office spaces. Space is limited. CCE strives to provide desk spaces as they become available. Master of Engineering (MEng) students are not eligible for desk space.

How are desks assigned?

Desk space is assigned by the Graduate Program Coordinator at the request of the student's advisor, typically prior to the start of the student's first term. Switching desk space without permission of the Graduate Program Coordinator is prohibited.

Purpose

Your grad desk provides you with a dedicated space to complete tasks related to your research. It is not intended for:

- Conducting personal business matters via phone or computer
- Entertainment (watching movies or playing games) Computing

Your major professor/advisor makes decisions regarding the computer resources that are provided to you. It can take up to a week to get the correct computing resources in place at your desk. Please do not move or otherwise tamper with any equipment that is on your desk when you arrive. If you have questions or need assistance with computing please contact coe.support@oregonstate.edu.

Safety

Do not share your key (if applicable) with anyone.

Grad Desk Office doors are NEVER to be propped open. These doors are designed for fire safety and the School will be fined by the fire marshal if doors are found propped open.

Maintenance

Cleaning desk space is the occupant's responsibility. Please maintain a clean work environment and leave the desk cleaner than when you arrived. Cleaning supplies are available in Kearney 101 if needed. All occupants of the grad desk space are expected to help keep common areas and shared equipment clean (e.g., microwaves, refrigerators, whiteboards, study tables, etc).

Etiquette

When working in a shared office space, you can create a friendly environment by being conscientious of the other occupants of the space. Please make it a priority to adopt the following practices:

- Practice "leaving no traces" – in common areas especially, make it a goal to leave the space as if nobody used it.
- Keep a pleasant and quiet voice and take personal phone calls outside the room
- Be friendly and courteous – extend common courtesy by greeting your fellow students, listening patiently, and treating others how you would like to be treated.
- Be aware of scents – some people are sensitive to smells so try to keep the items you use (perfume, cologne, air freshener) subtle or skip them altogether.

- Be a courteous eater – when eating in your office space, try to choose mild foods that do not leave strong odors. Practice “leaving no traces” when you are done eating by disposing of trash and taking care of your dishes immediately.
- Only use your allowed space – keep personal items confined to your desk space only. Avoid using common areas to store excess items.

Questions?

Questions/concerns related to facilities or safety should be directed to the School Operations Manager – Kathy Westberg – kathy.westberg@oregonstate.edu

Questions/concerns related to desk assignments should be directed to the Graduate Program Coordinator, Whitney Korthauer – whitney.korthauer@oregonstate.edu

Security

The security of your fob and/or keys is quite important for everyone’s safety. It is imperative that any loss of fobs and/or keys be reported immediately to the Main Office. You are requested to exercise the utmost care in the use of your fobs and/or keys. Under no circumstances should you lend your fob and/or keys to other students or visitors.

After-Hours Passes

After-hours passes are made available to all currently enrolled students each academic year. The pass, accompanied by your student ID, provides you the right to occupy campus buildings after their regularly scheduled closure time. Passes must be obtained from the CCE Office Coordinator (KEAR 101). An After Hours Pass allows students to remain inside a building after it closes. It does not grant access to a building after it has been closed.

Do not let anyone into the building after hours. Anyone abusing this system will have his/her After- Hours Work Permit revoked. Passes change color at the beginning of each academic year. You must obtain a new pass each year or risk being escorted from the buildings.

Mailboxes

Please check-in with the Office Coordinator in KEAR 101 regularly for mail, package notifications, and other information.

An email notification will be sent alerting you to the arrival of a package. Office hours are 0800 – 1700, Monday-Friday.

Please be sure that all packages and correspondence are addressed properly. The correct address for all mailing or shipping to CCE is the following:

<YOUR NAME>

School of Civil and Construction Engineering 1491 SW Campus Way

Oregon State University Corvallis, OR 97331

Tuition Bills

Students are sent an email to their ONID email account when their statement is ready to view, and they can then view their eBill statement online at mybill.oregonstate.edu. Students are financially responsible for all courses for which they register. Students are responsible for paying fees by the deadline even if they do not receive a bill.

Please direct any questions about tuition, fees, and financial aid to the [Business Affairs Office](#) – 541- 737-3031

Employment/Payroll New Hires

If a student is offered employment either via hourly work or an assistantship, new hire paperwork must be completed in order to receive payment for your services. The following steps must be taken:

1. Supervisor must contact the Operations Manager with job specifics, and
2. Student must report immediately to the Operations Manager to receive a new hire employment packet.

All employees must have a social security number in order to work. International students should report to the Operations Manager immediately to obtain instructions on applying for a social security number if you do not have one.

Timesheets

Timesheets are found online at mytime.oregonstate.edu. Hourly students (e.g., graders, lab workers, etc.) must clock in/out for each shift. Timesheets are submitted on the 15th of each month. GRA/GTA appointments also have a timesheet. These timesheets are for recording sick leave taken or to record time when filling in for another

GA who is sick. If there is no sick leave or fill in leave then you simply submit a blank timesheet that verifies just that. Please confirm with the Director of Operations if you are unsure about submitting your timesheet.

Paychecks

Payment is distributed on the last non-holiday business day of the month. Direct deposits are available and will take place on the same day. Paycheck stubs for direct deposit recipients are available via the Online Services portal. Payroll checks are distributed to the department via the daily mail delivery at approximately 0900. If you have opted for a paper check, it will be placed in your mailbox upon arrival.

Health Insurance

All Graduate Assistants are required to carry [health insurance](#). Insurance may be provided by the university at a low premium cost to you as bargained by the [Graduate Employee Union](#). University provided insurance may be waived as long as the student supplies documentation that the outside coverage is equal to or greater than the coverage provided by the University. For more information, enrollment forms, and premium rates, visit the Student Health Services website.

Other student health and wellness resources on campus include:

- OSU Student Health Services (studenthealth.oregonstate.edu/, 541-737-9355)
- OSU Counseling & Psychological Services (<https://counseling.oregonstate.edu/>, 541-737-2131)
- International Student Support Program (<https://internationalservices.oregonstate.edu/students/contact-ois>)

Fax Machine

A fax machine (541-737-3052) is available for student or work-related purposes. Long distance numbers require an authorization code. The fax machine is located in Kearney 101. Please see the Main Office staff for assistance.

Xerox, Office Supplied, & Scanner

The School provides copiers and document scanners, intended for research or teaching purposes only, in Kearney 101, and 111. Anyone desiring to make personal copies will need to use resources available on the main floor of the Valley Library. Maintaining the cleanliness and organization of the copy room is important; please do your part.

Graduate Teaching assistants can make copies for class or official use in Kearney 101 which is open M- F, 8am to 12pm & 1pm to 5pm.

Office supplies are for the use of **faculty and staff members only**. A stapler and hole-punch are available in both Kearney 111, and 101 for student use.

Computer Use

Computer labs are available in most engineering buildings. They require an engineering account to log in. These computers maintain software for word processing, spreadsheet, and Internet connectivity applications. Options are available for remotely accessing research and other database or modeling software.

School computers are supplied on most graduate student office desks to allow you to perform your research activities and course work, and they should not be used for games or other personal uses during normal business hours (0800 - 1700, Monday – Friday). After hours personal use, within reason (as described by University policy), is allowed as long as others do not need the computers for their research or class activities. Computer use supporting funded research takes priority over use for non- funded research or personal activities. If you are assigned a desk without a computer, please contact your research advisor about acquiring a computer.

Do not copy **ANY** software onto the School’s computer hard disks without approval from the Network Administrator. Software licensing and disk space availability are two issues that must be considered.

The installation of your own personal copies of software on the School’s machines without permission exposes the School to an unacceptable potential liability and therefore cannot be allowed. Please ask permission for the installation and use of your personal software if it is important to your research or course work. Also, please do not copy any software from the School’s computers without permission. This action, again, violates software licensing agreements.

Computer Use Policy

OSU computer systems must not be used for any illegal activity, or for storage or distribution of copyrighted material (e.g., music, videos, e-books, etc.).

If you have any general questions about using University computers, please e-mail

coe.support@oregonstate.edu for assistance.

Templates

Civil and Construction Engineering embraces a [University-wide brand](#) that captures the impact of our teaching, innovation, and service in ways that are distinctive, consistent, and authentic. This is accomplished through the consistent application of the brand guidelines and templates. Graduate students communicate their work in many formats and are expected, whenever possible, to follow OSU brand guidelines. Templates for everything from posters to presentations are available for download on the [Oregon State Brand](#) website.

Parking and Shuttles

Except in the open or pay lots, all motor vehicles parked on campus from 0700 to 1700, Monday through Friday, must display a valid parking permit. On-street parking is available for up to 2 hours/day in the neighborhoods surrounding the OSU campus, and metered parking is available on Monroe St.

(parking in these areas is enforced by Corvallis Police). All parking rules are enforced during posted hours, and citations will be given for unauthorized parking on or around campus.

For more information contact [Parking Services](#) at 541-737-2583, or visit their web site at transportation.oregonstate.edu/parking.

OSU offers a free campus shuttle service for the convenience of students, staff, and visitors.

The [OSU Beaver Bus](#) provides shuttle services to transport people from outer parking areas to and around campus.

Smoking Policy

OSU's Corvallis campus is smoke-free. This policy includes quads, parking lots, and all other foot space within the confines of campus. Please consult the map on the following webpage for the campus boundary

oregonstate.edu/smokefree/map.

University Emergency Contacts

OSU is dedicated to providing a safe and secure learning and living environment for its community members. [The Department of Public Safety](#) provides resources, information, emergency phone numbers, and protocols for maintaining personal safety. Sign up for [OSU Alerts](#) to get timely messages delivered right to your phone or inbox regarding university closures and other emergency situations.

Graduate School

What is the [Graduate School](#)?

- The Graduate School at OSU assures quality and consistent interpretation of Graduate Council policies related to graduate education across all programs. The [OSU Catalog](#) is the official source for information regarding OSU graduate education policy and procedures. It is the student's responsibility to refer to the catalog for this information.
- The Graduate School supports students throughout the academic [lifecycle](#), from admissions to degree completion.

- The Graduate Schools offers an array of [professional development opportunities](#) specific to the success of graduate students. Topics covered in these offerings include: research and ethics, teaching and facilitation, writing and communication, leadership and management, career skills, grad life and wellness. Please visit the Graduate School links to browse our student success offerings.

ACADEMICS

Civil and Construction Engineering Graduate Programs

At CCE our mission is to provide a comprehensive, state-of-the-art education to prepare students for professional and responsible engineering and constructor positions. The School works in a collaborative approach – with other academic units, local and federal government, and industry – to positively influence the environment and to tackle local and global challenges. CCE offers a wide range of courses and research opportunities that allow students to choose a focus area and a variety of other topics to explore. Students are encouraged to pursue an interdisciplinary approach to their research and many programs permit students to take up to 15 credit hours of courses in a minor area of their choice.

Basic Requirements for all Graduate Degrees

CE 507 - Graduate Seminar: All newly-enrolled MEng, MS and PhD graduate students are required to take the School seminar course CE 507 during fall term. Subsequent offerings of the course may also be required, please check with your faculty advisor. This course is intended to develop your understanding of the profession, to introduce the research activities that take place in this School, and to develop professional skills including literature searching and citations, communication skills, ethics, and navigating graduate school.

Graduate Minor: OSU does not require graduate students in engineering to pursue a minor. However, if desired, a minor may be selected. The minor may be a recognized school minor, a recognized integrated minor, or a student-designed/committee-approved minor. Minors appear on your transcript but will not be listed on your diploma. Speak with your major professor for more details on minors.

Program of Study: All students are required to complete a Program of Study outlining the courses that they will take to complete their degree requirements. The Program of Study is a contract between the student, the School, and the University (Graduate School). For the Masters Programs (MEng, MS), signatures are required from your major professor, your minor professor (if applicable), and the remaining members of your committee. In the case of Doctoral Program (Ph.D.), students must conduct a Program Meeting with all committee members, including the Graduate Council Representative (GCR), who must approve the Program of Study.

****NOTE**** The preliminary Program of Study completed during the CE 507 seminar course is not a binding/final Program. It **does not** require signatures nor is it turned in to the Graduate School. This is simply an exercise to introduce you to the Program form, get you thinking about the courses you will take to complete your degree, and stress the importance of the Program form itself.

Role of Advisor/Major Professor

The responsibilities of major professors regarding student advising are varied and differ somewhat from a regular graduate department. Although professor-student dynamics are highly variable depending upon the personalities involved, all major professors are expected to:

- Help students define their interests and choose appropriate course work. Work with the student and program committee to see that all requirements are met.
- Help the student select and set up their committee.
- Provide specific suggestions on designing and carrying out thesis research, particularly at the M.S. level.
- Provide or help students find funding for graduate studies. In addition, promptly advise students of duration and conditions related to employment or other support offered (e.g., how long it is likely to last, what level of performance is required for continued support). If available funds are insufficient to support the student through completion of the degree, provide counsel about alternative funding sources.

- Alert students to job opportunities after graduation, and help them make the necessary professional acquaintances to enhance their chances of success.
- When appropriate, guide and mentor students regarding additional resources and career and personal decisions affecting their professional development.

Advisor selection

To file an MS or PhD graduate study program, a student must find a research advisor. The respective program Graduate Committee Chairperson will act as or appoint an advisor for all incoming graduate students until a major professor is selected.

The choice of a major professor should be given considerable thought, since you will have a close working relationship with this individual for the duration of your degree program, and close professional and personal contacts thereafter. You are expected to complete your degree program under your assigned advisor's supervision (unless exceptional circumstances prevent it). Your major professor will guide your research efforts to completion and oversee all aspects of your graduate studies. The student is also responsible for actively seeking information about individual research projects. Good sources of information are the professors themselves or their graduate students. Before reaching out to potential advisors, reflect on the following questions:

1. What are my objectives in entering graduate school?
2. What type of training do I desire?
3. What are my strengths and weaknesses?
4. What skills do I need to develop?
5. What kinds of research or creative projects will engage me?
6. How much independent versus team work do I want to do?
7. What type of career do I want to pursue?

Once you have assessed your goals and needs to determine qualities that you are seeking in an advisor, begin to explore your options by doing one or more of the following:

1. Familiarize yourself with faculty member's work to gain a sense of their past and current interests and methodologies.
2. Immerse yourself in academic and social activities in the school to see how faculty interact with colleagues and graduate students.

3. Enroll in classes taught by faculty who most interest you; also be sure to attend their public presentations.
4. Ask advanced graduate students about their advisors and mentors. Share your interests and ask them for suggestions about whom you should meet.
5. Avoid limiting your options – keep an open mind!

Students are encouraged to make individual appointments with faculty they are interested in working with. Be sure to learn as much as possible about the faculty member before your interview including review of their published work. Develop a list of questions to ask the faculty member that can include some or all of the following:

1. How did you first get involved in your field?
2. What experiences were important in your decision to pursue graduate work and an academic career?
3. What is your mentorship style?
4. What mode of communication to prefer and how often to meet with your current graduate students?
5. What skills and competencies constitute a successful graduate career in your field of study?

Changing Major Professor

If a student believes a change of advisor is warranted they are encouraged to talk with the Graduate Program Coordinator or the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs. Other resources include the

University Ombudsman (ombuds.oregonstate.edu/) and the Student Success Coordinator at the Graduate School (gradschool.oregonstate.edu/graduate-student-success/grad-student-success-center).

Make an initial appointment to see your advisor prior to registering. Your advisor will help you plan your schedule and make sure requirements are fulfilled. **You are, however, ultimately responsible for seeing that you have fulfilled all the requirements necessary for graduation.**

Degrees and Program Requirement Overview

The School of Civil and Construction Engineering offers three graduate degree programs, [Master of Engineering \(MEng\)](#), [Master of Science in Civil Engineering \(MS\)](#), and [Doctorate in Civil Engineering \(PhD\)](#).

	MEng	MS	PhD
Total Credits Required	45	45	108
Total Credits for the Major	30 min	30 min	18 min (Can use up to 45 credits from Master's Degree)
Total Blanket Course Credits Allowed (CE 50X)	6 max	6 max	6 max
Total 500 level, non-blanket cr. Required	15 min	15 min	18 min
Project Credits Required (CE 506)	None	3 min- 6 max if non-thesis	None
Thesis Credits Required	None	6 min-12 max if thesis	36 min – 45 max
Minor Credits Required *Optional	15 min	15 min	18 min
Required Exam	Final Oral Exam (1 hour) or ENGR 599 *Structures must complete Oral Exam	Final Presentation & Oral Exam (2 hours)	Qualifying Exam, Preliminary Exam, Final Oral Exam

Thesis	Not Required	Thesis or Project	Thesis
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COMPLETION OF MILESTONES	TIME LINE
Master's Degree	
Establish Graduate Committee	Second quarter
(Program of Study Meeting)	Second quarter
Program of Study submitted to the Grad School	By 18 credits
Schedule final defense	One quarter before event
Ph.D. Degree	
Establish Graduate Committee	End of first year
Qualifying Exam	End of first year
Program of Study Meeting / Submit POS	By end of 5 th term
Preliminary Exam	End of 2 nd year or after approval of Program of Study and completion of most of course work
Passed the Preliminary Exam	
Schedule final defense	One quarter before event

Master's Process and Requirements

Non-Thesis Comprehensive Oral Exam (MEng Students) - The Final Examination for the M. Eng. degree consists of an oral examination conducted by the three members of the student's M. Eng.

Committee. The oral exam should be a maximum of one-hour duration and may be in the form of a traditional technical exam or a Portfolio Presentation. The topic of the exam is to be decided by the Committee and communicated to the student well in advance of the exam. This exam should take place during the last term of the student's M. Eng. program. There is no written exam component for the M. Eng. Final Examination.

Forming a Graduate Committee - Each student must form a graduate committee which will oversee and approve the student's graduate program of study. Committee members should be selected based on mutual agreement between the student and major professor. The committee must have at least three

members: two members from the student's area of study including the major professor; and an outside member chosen based on the relevance to the student's coursework. **A Graduate Council Representative is not required on the committee.** The committee should be formed in time to review the student's program of study.

Master's Thesis - The thesis demonstrates the student's mastery of professional knowledge in a particular subject area of their chosen field. It must present innovative research or a novel application of a known methodology to appropriate problems. A conscientious survey of pertinent literature is a prerequisite to an acceptable thesis. The research topic must be approved by the major professor, and the research title must be registered with the Graduate School. Since the thesis results from a significant body of work, the student is encouraged to publish the results of the thesis in open literature.

Committee Composition

A thesis committee must have at least four faculty members: two members from the student's area of study including the major professor; minimum of two members from their area of concentration; an outside member may be chosen based on the relevance to the student's research and coursework; and a Graduate Council Representative (GCR).

Graduate Council Representative (GCR)

The GCR is selected from a list of faculty members prepared by the Graduate School who are qualified to act as GCR's. Your GCR represents the OSU Graduate Council and ensures that all rules governing committee procedures are followed. Your GCR must be present at your formal exam(s), and will be responsible for some of the paperwork that the Graduate School requires. Per Graduate School guidelines, the GCR will also lead your committee's roundtable discussion following your final oral exam. Your GCR must be a graduate faculty member outside your major and minor area.

The GCR is a full voting member of your graduate committee. Many students select a GCR who can also add disciplinary expertise. Select your GCR using the online GCR list generation tool (gradschool.oregonstate.edu/forms#gcr) and be sure to allow ample time for this selection process. If you run into difficulty finding a GCR to serve on your committee, you can re-generate the list until you find someone who is willing to serve.

If a member of your committee is not a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#) or is not approved for the role proposed, your major department/program will need to nominate the proposed member to act in those roles using the [Nomination to Graduate Faculty form](#). Committee structure is evaluated when your program of study is received by the Graduate School and when you schedule your formal examination(s).

Final Oral Examinations (MS Defense)

All MS degree examinations will be two hours in duration, whether thesis or non-thesis (project) option. The thesis or technical project report will be presented during the first hour of the examination. The first hour of the examination will be open to the public and must be advertised at least one week prior to the examination. The second hour of the examination will be devoted to examination on research with only the student graduate committee members present.

It is highly recommended that theses be distributed to all committee members for review two weeks in advance of the examination date. In the case of non-thesis options, the project must be distributed to each member of the examination committee at least one week prior to the examination.

Students may be re-examined only once. Re-examinations may not be given sooner than one month after the original examination. Those who fail to pass their final oral examination twice will be terminated from graduate study in CCE and will not be given additional examinations.

Non-Thesis Option

The Master's Thesis is an option in some programs within CCE, subject to the approval of the student's major professor. In lieu of a thesis, a non-thesis, technical project report must be prepared. The non-thesis option will normally involve 3 to 6 credits of CE 506 (Project), culminating in a technical report.

Non-Thesis, Technical Project Report Requirements

Students who do not pursue the thesis option are required to prepare a technical report on an engineering problem or project of a substantial nature. The scope of the project should be consistent with the credit hours awarded for the project (maximum of 6 credit hours). The general requirement for the report is that it treats some significant engineering problem or project in sufficient depth to contribute to engineering knowledge. The engineering report should be conducted and prepared in a manner that is suitable for publication in a national journal. In general, the report shall follow the guidelines for authors of publications in American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) division journals. The title page and signature page shall be similar in format to those used for the MS thesis (omitting the signature block for the Graduate Dean). Other styles may be approved by the student's graduate committee.

Technical Report Committee

The committee must have at least three members: two members from the student's area of study including the major professor; and a third member chosen based on the relevance to the student's research and coursework. A Graduate Council Representative is not required on the committee.

If a member of your committee is not a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#) or is not approved for the role proposed, your major department/program will need to nominate the proposed member to act in those roles using the [Nomination to Graduate Faculty form](#). Committee structure is evaluated when your program of study is received by the Graduate School and when you schedule your formal examination(s).

Procedures leading to a Master's Degree

Below is an outline of the steps required to obtain the Master's degree. You should become familiar with the specific and detailed information contained in the Graduate School Catalog, as well as School requirements. Final oral exams must take place before the first day of the following term to be considered for the current term (late exams will require registration for 3 credits in the following term if not completed).

* MEng students can complete ENGR 521 portfolio course (structures must complete oral exam)

Find all requirements and steps to graduation here:

https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/current-students/masters_students#deadlines

MS Thesis/Project Oral Defense Rubric

Criteria	Does Not Pass	Passes Exam	
	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Goal and Objectives	Research/project goal is not clearly stated and not organized into well-defined objectives and outcomes.	Research/project goal is adequately stated and organized into well-defined objectives.	Research/project goal is clearly stated and organized into objectives with well-defined outcomes.
Literature Review /Background	Disorganized and too brief review; widely known references are missing or not germane to the topic at hand.	Logically crafted review that adequately explores the topic; some references known to experts may be missing.	Well-synthesized exploration of the topic and illustration of the state of the knowledge in the field; references are complete.
Ability to Conduct Research or Produce Creative Work	Proposed work is not novel or creative.	Work is derivative/incremental in nature.	Work is novel or creative.
Application of Engineering / Mathematics / Science (ESM)	Student incorrectly applies many ESM principles to the research. Many	Student incorrectly applies some but not all ESM concepts to the research. Some	Student correctly and effectively applies ESM concepts to the research.

Concepts and Theories	calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.	calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.	No calculation/logic errors are present in analysis.
Results and Conclusions	Conclusions do not flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is minimal.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is satisfactory.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; significance and impact of work is expertly conveyed.
Quality of Written Communication	Writing style is laborious to read with several errors, poor sentence construction and/or poor document structuring.	Writing style is academic and presents information in a concise organized manner; minor grammatical and spelling errors.	Writing style is scholarly, precise, and flows naturally; voice is active and devoid of bias; no grammatical or spelling errors.
Quality of Oral Communication	Disorganized and low-quality presentation; poor communication skills; answers show lack of knowledge and poor critical thinking skills.	Adequately organized presentation; good communication skills; answers show adequate knowledge and critical thinking skills.	Highly engaging conference quality presentation; excellent communication skills; answers show expertise and well-developed critical thinking.

Doctoral Process and Requirements

Doctoral Dissertation - All Ph.D. candidates must submit a thesis embodying the results of research and presenting evidence of originality and ability in independent investigation. The thesis must constitute a valid contribution to knowledge in the field of study and must be based on the candidate's own investigation, including one or more of the following elements: -

- Contribution to theory,
- Development of new method for scientific investigation,
- Generation of new scientific data which clearly contribute to the development of sciences, and
- Development and/or novel implementation of a numerical model.

The thesis must reflect a mastery of the literature of the subject and be written in scientific format. The preparation of an acceptable thesis will require at least one full-time academic year. The booklet, Thesis Guide: Preparing a Thesis or Dissertation at OSU, is available electronically on the Web at gradschool.oregonstate.edu/success/thesis-guide.

Forming a PhD Committee: In addition to a major professor, the student will select a PhD committee whose programs, research, and professional interests lie in the same area as those of the student. The PhD graduate committee is formed to guide the student in the conduct of their research, to review and approve the student's program of study, and to conduct the PhD degree examinations. The assignment of the PhD graduate committee will be by mutual agreement by the major professor, the faculty members, the student, and CCE. Normally, PhD students will arrange for the members of their PhD graduate committee during the first year in residence at OSU. Declaration of the PhD graduate committee members will be filed in the CCE office and in the Graduate School.

A minimum of five members of the Graduate Faculty, including two members of CCE who hold graduate faculty appointments, one from each declared minor field, and a Graduate Council Representative (GCR) are required. The major professor is one of the two members representing the major department/program. The student will meet with this committee at least three times during the course of the PhD degree program, as follows:

1. to review and approve the student's PhD program of study,
2. for the preliminary examination, and
3. for the final oral examination (Thesis Defense).

The GCR is selected from a list of faculty members prepared by the Graduate School who are qualified to act as GCR's. Your GCR represents the OSU Graduate Council and ensures that all rules governing committee procedures are followed. Your GCR must be present at your formal exam(s), and will be responsible for some of the paperwork that the Graduate School requires. Per Graduate School guidelines, the GCR will also lead your committee's roundtable discussion following your final oral exam. Your GCR must be a graduate faculty member outside your major and minor area.

The GCR is a full voting member of your graduate committee. Many students select a GCRs who can also add disciplinary expertise. Select your GCR using the online GCR list generation tool

(gradschool.oregonstate.edu/forms#gcr) and be sure to allow ample time for this selection process. If you run into difficulty finding a GCR to serve on your committee, you can re-generate the list until you find someone who is willing to serve.

If a member of your committee is not a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#) or is not approved for the role proposed, your major department/program will need to nominate the proposed member to act in those roles using the [Nomination to Graduate Faculty form](#). Committee structure is evaluated when your program of study is received by the Graduate School and when you schedule your formal examination(s).

Examinations for Doctoral Students

Qualifying Examination

CCE requires that each student satisfactorily complete a comprehensive written examination (the Qualifying Exam). This written examination must be completed no later than one week prior to the Oral Preliminary Examination that meets the OSU Graduate School requirements. The graded Qualifying Exam will become a part of CCE's file on the student. Students who fail the Qualifying Examination twice will be terminated from graduate study in CCE and will not be given an additional examination. Some disciplines may require an additional oral component to the Qualifying Exam.

Preliminary Examination

Before being advanced to candidacy for the PhD degree, each student must also satisfactorily complete an oral examination conducted by the student's PhD graduate committee (the Oral Preliminary Exam). It is expected that the Preliminary Exam will be held within the first three years of the start of PhD studies. When the student and major professor agree that the student is ready for the oral Preliminary Examination, the student will contact the other PhD graduate committee members and schedule the oral Preliminary Examination with the Graduate School. A portion of the Preliminary Examination will include a short presentation by the student on the status and future plans for the student's PhD research. The oral Preliminary Examination is intended to cover both fundamental knowledge and the proposed thesis research. Students who fail the preliminary examination twice will be terminated from graduate study in CCE and will not be given an additional examination.

Final Oral Examination (PhD Defense)

All PhD students will defend their research in a final oral examination in front of their PhD graduate committee. The PhD examination will be two hours in duration. The thesis will be presented during the first hour of the examination. The first hour of the examination will be open to the public and must be advertised at least one week prior to the examination. The second hour

of the examination will be devoted to examination on research with only the student’s graduate committee members present.

Theses must be distributed to all committee members for review well in advance of the examination date (at least two weeks).

Students may be re-examined only once. Re-examinations may not be given sooner than one month after the original defense. Those who fail to pass their final defense twice will be terminated from graduate study in CCE and will not be given additional examinations.

We remind students that there is no expectation that food and drink will be provided at the Final Defense. In fact, we discourage students who are preparing to defend from spending any effort arranging for food and drink at their defense. Your time is best spent preparing for your defense-only.

Find all requirements and steps to graduation here:

<https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/current-students/doctoral-students#deadlines>

PhD Defense Rubric

Criteria	Does Not Pass Exam	Passes Exam	
	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Research Goal and Objectives	Research goal is not clearly stated and not organized into well-defined objectives and outcomes.	Research goal is clearly stated and organized into well-defined objectives.	Research goal is clearly stated and organized into objectives with well-defined outcomes.
Literature Review	Disorganized and too brief review; widely known references are missing or	Logically crafted review that adequately explores the topic; some	Well-synthesized exploration of the topic and illustration of the state of the

	not germane to the topic at hand.	references known to experts may be missing.	knowledge in the field; references are complete.
Ability to Demonstrate a Creative and Sound Solution to the Problem	Work is not based on sound science and engineering principles, and not creative; lack of awareness of assumptions.	Work is based on sound science and engineering principles but derivative/incremental; major assumptions are stated.	Work is based on sound science and engineering principles and creative; assumptions are clearly stated.
Results and Conclusions	Conclusions do not flow logically from analysis performed; novelty, significance, and impact of work is minimal; does not propose future research questions.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; novelty, significance, and impact of work is satisfactory; propose future research questions.	Conclusions flow logically from analysis performed; novelty, significance, and impact of work is expertly conveyed; clearly and convincingly propose future research questions.
Quality of Written Communication	Writing style is laborious to read with several errors, poor sentence construction and/or poor document structuring.	Writing style is academic and presents information in a concise organized manner; minor grammatical and spelling errors.	Writing style is scholarly, precise, and flows naturally; voice is active and devoid of bias; no grammatical or spelling errors.
Quality of Oral Communication	Disorganized and low-quality presentation; poor communication skills; answers show lack of knowledge and poor critical thinking skills.	Adequately organized presentation; good communication skills; answers show adequate knowledge and critical thinking skills.	Highly engaging conference quality presentation; excellent communication skills; answers show expertise and well-developed critical thinking.

Areas of Concentration and Requirements

Students must choose to focus their work in one of the 10 different areas of civil engineering. Each area of concentration has specific course requirements for each degree program in addition to general university degree requirements.

<https://engineering.oregonstate.edu/Academics/Degrees/civil-engineering#toc-graduate-information>

Graduate Assistantships

All graduate assistants are required to carry out the duties assigned by their faculty supervisor to justify their stipend.

University policy dictates that a graduate assistant (GRA/GTA) must be enrolled for no less than 12 credit hours in any term in which he or she is supported, except for summer term which requires a minimum of 3 credit hours.

Students planning to take a short break (5 days or less) or be away from work must notify their supervisors in writing in advance of their plans. The plans must be approved by the supervisor.

Assistantships are not provided to students who have outside employment or whose educational costs are supported outside the institution.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS A graduate assistantship is an employment position at OSU. In exchange for service, an assistantship provides a monthly salary (stipend), tuition remission, and an institutional contribution toward mandatory fees and the graduate assistant-only health insurance premium. Graduate assistants are required to carry out the duties assigned by their faculty supervisor to justify their stipend. Assistantships are 13-week long appointments that roughly align with the 11-week academic quarters of OSU. Consequently, assistantship duties start before the academic term each quarter, and students are expected to begin their work assignments when their appointment begins. Additionally, students who hold multiple jobs on campus may not work more than a total of 19.9 hours per week (or 255 hours per term) in total for all positions held while enrolled in at least 3 credits (6 during summer). Maintaining a GPA of 3.00 or better is required for continued financial support. Students planning to take a short break (5 days or less) or be away from work, must request from their supervisor. The request should be in writing and well in advance of their plans.

CCE follows the OSU Graduate School's Grievance Procedures and Policies which can be found here - gradschool.oregonstate.edu/progress/grievance-procedures.

Academic Standards

General Information

Graduate students are expected to read the academic policies governing graduate students listed on the University website, which include but are not limited to the Graduate Catalog on the Graduate School's website and the Student Conduct Regulations. The information in this manual addresses only a few topics within those policies.

Academic Performance

A grade-point average of 3.00 (a B average) is required: for all courses taken as a degree-seeking graduate student, and for courses included in the graduate degree or graduate certificate program of study. Grades below C (2.00) cannot be used on a graduate program of study. A grade-point average of 3.00 is required before the preliminary, final oral, or written exams may be undertaken. Enforced graduate-level prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade defined by the field of study.

Incomplete Grades

An “I” (incomplete) grade is granted only at the discretion of the instructor. The [incomplete](#) that is filed by the instructor at the end of the term must include an alternate/default grade to which the incomplete grade defaults at the end of the specified time period. The time allocated to complete the required tasks for the course may be extended by petition to the University Academic Requirements Committee. You can obtain the form from the Registrar’s Office. It is

the student’s responsibility to see that “I” grades are removed within the allotted time.

Student Conduct and Community Standards

Graduate students enrolled at Oregon State University are expected to conform to basic regulations and policies developed to govern the behavior of students as members of the university community. The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) is the central coordinating office for student conduct-related matters at Oregon State University.

Choosing to join the Oregon State University community obligates each member to a code of responsible behavior which is outlined in the [Student Conduct Code](#). The assumption upon which this Code is based is that all persons must treat one another with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive.

Violations of the regulations subject a student to appropriate disciplinary action.

Review Student Conduct Regulations: <https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/conduct-processes>

All CCE Students are expected to read and understand the documents that outline [CCE Honor Codes and Codes of Conduct](#).

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another. It includes:

- **CHEATING** — use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
- **FABRICATION** — falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.
- **ASSISTING** — helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
- **TAMPERING** — altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents
- **PLAGIARISM** — representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Student Records

Both federal and state laws permit Oregon State University staff to release directory information (e.g. name, address, degree program, birth date) to the general public without your consent. You can prohibit the release of directory information to the public by signing the Confidentiality Restriction form available from the Office of the Registrar. It will not prohibit the release of directory information to entities of Oregon State University that have a "need to know" to accomplish their required tasks. It further will not prohibit Oregon State University

departments from including your name on mailing lists for distribution of materials that are essential to your enrollment at Oregon State University.

Registration

The OSU Schedule of Classes is available online and contains academic regulations and registration procedures that apply to all students in the university, as well as the final examination week schedule. The online [catalog](#) is the source for up-to-date changes for the current and immediately upcoming term. It is your responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for any funding eligibility and/or to meet the requirements of the continuous enrollment policy. Problems arising from registration procedures, such as late registration, adding or withdrawing from courses after deadlines, or late changes from letter or S/U grading are resolved through the [petition for late change in registration](#) filed with the Graduate School. A late registration fee may be applied.

Students are responsible for staying current on registration requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran's).

Minimum Course Loads

The minimum credits per term below constitute “full-time” enrollment.

	Domestic	International*	Domestic – Funded	International - Funded
Min. Credits Required in Fall, Winter, Spring	9	9	12	12-16
Min. Credits Required in Summer	0	0	3 or 5**	3 or 5**

***Graduate students in their final term or who have completed all required coursework on their program of study and the minimum number of credits hours required for their specific graduate program may be eligible for a reduced enrollment.**

****Graduate students who register for at least three credits in the summer will remain in compliance with minimum registration requirements but will have FICA taxes (Social Security and Medicare) taxes withheld from their paycheck. Graduate students who register for 5 credits or more will avoid having FICA taxes withheld.**

Course load requirements for graduate students are established by the Registrar and the Graduate School. You are considered a “full-time” graduate student if you are registered for 9–16 credits in a given academic term. You are considered a “part-time” graduate student if you have less than nine credits. If you are a degree-seeking student, you must be registered for a minimum of three graduate credits in any term you wish to be enrolled and access university resources, including the term of the final defense.

Students are responsible for staying current on course load requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran’s)

Continuous Graduate Enrollment

All graduate students enrolled in a degree program must register continuously for a minimum of 3 graduate credits each term (fall, winter, and spring terms) until all degree requirements are met, regardless of student’s location. Students on approved leave are exempt from the continuous enrollment policy for the term(s) they are on leave.

Graduate students who use facilities or faculty/staff time during summer session are required to register for a minimum of 3 credits during the summer session. Students defending in the summer term are required to register for a minimum of 3 graduate credits.

Students may appeal the provisions of the continuous graduate enrollment policy if extraordinary circumstances arise by submitting a detailed request in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Scheduling difficulties related to the preliminary oral exam or the final oral exam are not considered an extraordinary circumstance.

Graduate assistantship eligibility requires enrollment levels that supersede those contained in this continuous enrollment policy. Various agencies and offices maintain their own registration requirements that also may exceed those specified by this continuous enrollment policy (e.g., those of the Veterans Administration, Immigration and Naturalization Service for international students, and those required for federal financial aid programs.) Therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for funding eligibility and/or compliance as outlined by specific agency regulations under which they are governed.

NOTE: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the continuous enrollment policy.

Annual Evaluation of Student Academic Success

The process for evaluating Academic Progress for graduate students in the School of Civil and Construction begins the first term of enrollment and occurs annually thereafter.

The process includes:

- The student completing the Table of Milestones and Expected Completion Dates, writing a Student Narrative, and providing comments on the Graduate Competency Table.
- The faculty advisor writing their Assessment Narrative, providing comments on the Graduate Competency Table, and completing the performance questions on the Progress Form.
- The student and faculty advisor meeting to discuss the completed forms and narratives.
- Both the student and faculty advisor signing the Progress Form. Signatures can be wet or any electronic signature option such as Adobe signing.
- The student submitting all completed forms to the Graduate Coordinator, Whitney Korthauer (whitney.korthauer@oregonstate.edu) by June 30th for the annual assessments.

Satisfactory progress toward completing a graduate degree in the CCE graduate programs requires:

- An annual written assessment showing adequate progress in coursework, development of thesis or writing project as evaluated by faculty advisor and the rest of the student's graduate committee,
- Maintaining a GPA of 3.00 or better for all courses taken as a graduate student,
- Successfully passing relevant exams outlined by the Graduate School (and the specific program if relevant),
- Timely* compliance with all Graduate School and programmatic requirements** for committee formation, committee meetings, project proposal, submission of forms and information, participation in seminars and other activities expected of a student, scholar and citizen.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence status is available to eligible students who need to suspend their program of study for good cause. The time the student spends on approved leave will be included in any time limits prescribed by the university relevant to degree completion. Students on approved leave may not a) use any university facilities, b) make demands upon faculty time, c) receive a fellowship or financial aid, or d) take course work of any kind at Oregon State University. [Leave of Absence/Intent to Resume Graduate Study Forms](#) must be received by the Graduate School at

least 15 working days prior to the first day of the term involved. Family Medical Leave (FML) may be granted at any point during a term. FML inquiries should be directed to medical.leave@oregonstate.edu. NOTE: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the Leave of Absence Policy.

Unauthorized Break in Registration

Degree seeking graduate students who take an unauthorized break in registration relinquish graduate standing at the University.

To have graduate standing reinstated after an unauthorized break, students are required to reapply to their program (complete the online graduate admission application, pay the application fee, and may be required to register for three graduate credits for each term of unauthorized break in registration). It is advisable that students in this situation state that they are applying for readmission in the application packet. A reapplication does not ensure admittance to the program.