ACCELERATED MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAM IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Program Description

This accelerated program gives outstanding bachelor’s degree students in Mechanical Engineering a “fast-track” option to pursue their master’s degree (Master of Science, M.S. or Master of Engineering, M.Eng.). Students accepted into the accelerated program will register for three graduate courses (i.e., 500 level) during the last two semesters of their bachelor’s degree program, all of which will apply towards master's degree requirements. Two of these graduate courses will count towards the three ME technical elective requirement to obtain a bachelor’s degree; one undergraduate technical elective will still be needed to satisfy the three ME technical elective requirement. Students have to meet all requirements for both the bachelor’s degree and master’s degree. A clear benefit of this program is that two graduate courses (6 credits) will count towards both bachelor’s and master’s degrees, and this gives students the flexibility to receive their master’s degree with one more year of study beyond their bachelor’s degree.

Students who wish to enroll in this program should submit a “fast-track” application the second semester of their junior year (there is no requirement on the number of years an applicant has been enrolled in undergraduate studies). Applicants are not required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) test.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Completion of at least 75 undergraduate credits applicable to the Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering program at the time of application.
2. Overall GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time of application.
3. Completion of ENGR 320, ENGR 330, ENGR 350, ME 320, ME 380, and ME 352 with a GPA computed for these 6 courses of at least 3.3 on a 4.0 scale at the end of semester during which the application is made. Students may submit their application while taking ME320, ME380 and ME352.

Meeting these eligibility requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the accelerated master’s degree programs; the Dean of the Graduate College will make the final decision on whether an undergraduate student is accepted into this program. When “fast-track” students complete their undergraduate degree requirements, they will receive their bachelor’s degree and will then be classified as graduate students to continue their studies in the master’s program. At which time they are eligible to receive financial support with a Graduate Assistantship. To be considered for these competitive Graduate Assistantship positions, students should apply in the senior year of their bachelor’s degree. “Fast-track” students are subject to all academic performance requirements of the Graduate College, including semester GPA, program GPA, and individual course grade requirements. These requirements include maintaining a 3.0 GPA in the graduate level courses taken during their bachelor’s degree. Undergraduate students at other colleges and universities are not eligible to participate in this program.
Application Materials:
Undergraduate mechanical engineering students interested in pursuing an accelerated master's degree will apply during the 2nd semester of their junior year in order to start the 1st semester of their senior year. Interested students need to submit the following application materials:

1. **Application Form**: Verify eligibility and graduate courses to be taken during senior year (not to exceed nine credits).
2. **Statement of Purpose**: Articulate career goals and academic preparation, 1-2 pages (if MS applicant, must include discussion of possible thesis topics and name of prospective thesis advisor).
3. **Two Letters of Recommendation** (if MS applicant, one letter must be from prospective thesis advisor).
4. **Copy of Unofficial transcript**

Application Process, Deadlines and Beyond:
Application materials are to be submitted to the ME Graduate Coordinator by the **second Friday of April**. At the end of the semester, after final grades have been posted in ME 320, ME 380, and ME 352, the graduate committee will evaluate applications. Applicants will then be notified by Friday of the second week in June whether or not they are being recommended for the “fast-track” program. Recommended students need to immediately complete and submit a graduate application and application fee to Graduate Admission and Degree Services (GADS). In addition, these students must send an email message to Linda Platt at GADS (with a copy to the department chair) calling attention to the fact that the application just submitted is for the accelerated version of the master's program. The Graduate Dean will then make the final decision as to who is admitted into the program by the last Friday in June. Applicants will then receive a formal notification as to whether they have been admitted into the accelerated program or not.

During the second semester of their junior year, applicants will register for at least one 400-level ME program elective for the first semester of their senior year. If accepted into the accelerated program the student then submits a plan of study for their senior year to the ME graduate coordinator and Linda Platt; and then replaces the 400-level course(s) with a 500-level graduate course(s). A total of three graduate courses should be taken before completion of the undergraduate program. Depending on course loads, students are encouraged to take one graduate course during the first semester of their senior year and two graduate courses in the second semester of their senior year. It will not be necessary to submit a “Permit for Seniors to Take Graduate Course” form; Linda Platt will handle this matter. Graduate fees will be charged for these graduate courses.

Upon receiving their bachelor’s degree, “fast-track” students will then proceed to fulfill requirements for their master’s degree. Master of Science students will have 15 credits of course work and six credits of thesis research and a formal thesis defense to complete the degree. Master of Engineering students will have 21 credits of course work and a one-credit comprehensive exam to complete the degree.