Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science

The Department of Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science offers a PhD in either Mechanical Engineering or Aerospace Engineering. The department's research strengths include biomechanics, materials, energy, fluid mechanics and rotary-wing aerodynamics. The doctoral student, with their adviser, designs the program of study and the research project. The dissertation is defended at the end of the research effort. A typical time to PhD after an undergraduate engineering degree is four to five years, but the length of the program may vary depending on the individual and the area of study.

Contact: Prof. Jessica Wagenseil
Email: jessica.wagenseil@wustl.edu
Website: https://mems.wustl.edu/graduate/programs

Faculty
Chair
Philip V. Bayly (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Philip-Bayly.aspx)
Lilyan and E. Lisle Hughes Professor of Mechanical Engineering
PhD, Duke University
Nonlinear dynamics, vibrations, biomechanics

Associate Chairs
Katharine M. Flores (Materials Science) (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Kathy-Flores.aspx)
PhD, Stanford University
Mechanical behavior of structural materials

David A. Peters (Mechanical Engineering) (https://mems.wustl.edu/faculty/Pages/default.aspx?bio=92)
McDonnell Douglas Professor of Engineering
PhD, Stanford University
Aeroelasticity, vibrations, helicopter dynamics and aerodynamics

Endowed Professors
Ramesh K. Agarwal (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Ramesh-Agarwal.aspx)
William Palm Professor of Engineering
PhD, Stanford University
Computational fluid dynamics and computational physics

Guy M. Genin (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Guy-Genin.aspx)
Harold & Kathleen Faught Professor of Mechanical Engineering
PhD, Harvard University
Solid mechanics, fracture mechanics

Mark J. Jakiela (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Mark-Jakiela.aspx)
Lee Hunter Professor of Mechanical Design
PhD, University of Michigan
Mechanical design, design for manufacturing, optimization, evolutionary computation

Shankar M.L. Sastry (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Shankar-Sastry.aspx)
Christopher I. Byrnes Professor of Engineering
PhD, University of Toronto
Materials science, physical metallurgy

Professors
Jianjun Guan (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Jianjun-Guan.aspx)
PhD, Zhejiang University
Biomimetic biomaterials synthesis and scaffold fabrication

Srikanth Singamaneni (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Srikanth-Singamaneni.aspx)
PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology
Microstructures of cross-linked polymers

Associate Professors
Spencer P. Lake (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Spencer-Lake.aspx)
PhD, University of Pennsylvania
Soft tissue biomechanics

Jessica E. Wagenseil (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Jessica-Wagenseil.aspx)
DSc, Washington University
Arterial biomechanics

Assistant Professors
Damena D. Agonafer (https://mems.wustl.edu/faculty/Pages/default.aspx?bio=110)
PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Computational fluid dynamics and computational physics

J. Mark Meacham (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Mark-Meacham.aspx)
PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology
Micro-/nanotechnologies for thermal systems and the life sciences

Rohan Mishra (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Rohan-Mishra.aspx)
PhD, Ohio State University
Computational materials science
Amit Pathak (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Amit-Pathak.aspx)
PhD, University of California, Santa Barbara
Cellular biomechanics

Patricia B. Weisensee (https://mems.wustl.edu/faculty/Pages/default.aspx?bio=112)
PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Thermal fluids

Professors of the Practice
Harold J. Brandon
DSc, Washington University
Energetics, thermal systems

Swami Karunamoorthy (https://mems.wustl.edu/faculty/Pages/Swami-Karunamoorthy.aspx)
DSc, Washington University
Helicopter dynamics, engineering education

Teaching Professor
Emily J. Boyd (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Emily-Boyd.aspx)
PhD, University of Texas at Austin
Thermofluids

Joint Faculty
Richard L. Axelbaum (EECE) (https://engineering.wustl.edu/Profiles/Pages/Richard-Axelbaum.aspx)
Stifel & Quinette Jens Professor of Environmental Engineering Science
PhD, University of California, Davis
Combustion, nanomaterials

Elliot L. Elson (Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics)
(http://dbbs.wustl.edu/faculty/pages/faculty_bio.aspx?SID=188)
Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry & Molecular Biophysics
PhD, Stanford University
Biochemistry and molecular biophysics

Michael D. Harris (Physical Therapy, Orthopaedic Surgery and MEMS) (https://pt.wustl.edu/faculty-staff/faculty/mike-harris-phd)
PhD, University of Utah
Whole body and joint-level orthopaedic biomechanics

Kenneth F. Kelton (Physics) (https://physics.wustl.edu/people/kenneth-f-kelton)
Arthur Holly Compton Professor of Arts & Sciences
PhD, Harvard University
Study and production of titanium-based quasicrystals and related phases

MD, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
Neurological surgery

Lori Setton (BME) (https://bme.wustl.edu/faculty/Pages/faculty.aspx?bio=105)
Lucy and Stanley Lopata Distinguished Professor of Biomedical Engineering
PhD, Columbia University
Biomechanics for local drug delivery: tissue regenerations specific to the knee joints and spine

Matthew J. Silva (Orthopaedic Surgery) (http://www.orthoresearch.wustl.edu/content/Laboratories/2963/Matthew-Silva/Silva-Lab/Overview.aspx)
Julia and Walter R. Peterson Orthopaedic Research Professor
PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Biomechanics of age-related fractures and osteoporosis

Simon Tang (Orthopaedic Surgery, BME) (http://www.orthoresearch.wustl.edu/content/Laboratories/3043/Simon-Tang/Tang-Lab/Overview.aspx)
PhD, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Biological mechanisms

Senior Professors
Phillip L. Gould
PhD, Northwestern University
Structural analysis and design, shell analysis and design, biomechanical engineering

Kenneth L. Jerina
DSc, Washington University
Materials, design, solid mechanics, fatigue and fracture

Salvatore P. Sutera
PhD, California Institute of Technology
Viscous flow, bioreheology

Barna A. Szabo
PhD, State University of New York–Buffalo
Numerical simulation of mechanical systems, finite-element methods

Lecturers
Sharniece Holland
PhD, University of Alabama
Additive manufacturing and mathematics

Jeffrey Krampf
MS, Washington University in St. Louis
Fluid mechanics, modeling, and design

J. Jackson Potter
PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology
Senior design
Matthew J. Watkins  
MS, Washington University  
Finite elements  

Michael C. Wendt  
DSc, Washington University  
Mathematical theory and computational methods in biology and engineering  

Laboratory and Design Specialist  
Chiamaka Asinugo  
MS, Washington University  
Mechanical Engr. design  

Professor Emeritus  
Wallace B. Diboll Jr.  
MSME, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Dynamics, vibrations, engineering design  

Degree Requirements  
PhD in Mechanical Engineering or Aerospace Engineering  

Policies & Regulations  
A key objective of the doctoral program is to promote cutting-edge multidisciplinary research and education in the areas of mechanical engineering and materials science. Students are selected for admission to the program by a competitive process, and they typically start in the fall semester. On arriving at Washington University in St. Louis, the student will be advised by the temporary adviser on all procedural issues. The student will choose a permanent adviser by the end of the first year of residency in the program.  

Summary of Requirements for Doctoral Students  
The following is a brief summary of the requirements for students in the Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science doctoral programs:  
1. Pass the qualifying exams. Qualifying exams should be taken by the end of the third semester.  
2. Prepare and defend a research proposal. The research proposal should be defended by the end of the fifth semester.  
3. Write and successfully defend the doctoral dissertation.  
4. Complete a minimum of 36 hours of course credit and a minimum of 24 credits of doctoral research; a total of 72 credits is required to earn the PhD degree.  
5. Satisfy the applicable teaching requirements of the Graduate School.
Degrees Offered

The Department of Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science (MEMS) offers the following doctoral degrees:

- PhD in Mechanical Engineering
- PhD in Aerospace Engineering
- DSc in Mechanical Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, or Materials Science

  The Doctor of Science (DSc) has similar requirements to the PhD but without the teaching requirement. For a list of differences, please refer to the DSc and PhD Comparison (PDF) (https://mems.wustl.edu/graduate/programs/Documents/DoctoralComparisonSection.pdf).

- One may also pursue a PhD in Materials Science — through the Institute of Materials Science & Engineering (IMSE) — while working with professors from the Department of Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science. For details about this program, visit the IMSE Graduate Program (http://imse.wustl.edu/graduate-program) webpage.

For more information about MEMS PhD degrees, visit the MEMS Graduate Degree Programs (https://mems.wustl.edu/graduate/programs/Pages/default.aspx) webpage.