

Master's Program Policies

Admissions

Eligibility

Washington University encourages and gives full consideration to all applicants for admission and financial aid, without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information.

McKelvey School of Engineering is strongly interested in recruiting, enrolling, retaining and graduating students from diverse backgrounds. Applications for admission by students from diverse backgrounds to any of our degree programs are encouraged and welcomed. To the greatest extent possible, students with disabilities are integrated into the student population as equal members.

To be considered for admission into a graduate degree program, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution prior to starting the graduate program. Most of the engineering degree programs require a previous degree in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

Current engineering graduate students who wish to be admitted into another engineering graduate program must be admitted at least one semester prior to their anticipated graduation semester.

Application Process

Degree programs set their own application deadlines. Applicants should check deadlines (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/prospective-students/graduate-admissions/Pages/application-process.aspx>) through the McKelvey School of Engineering. It is generally advantageous to the applicant to complete the application well in advance of the deadline.

The application (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/prospective-students/graduate-admissions/Pages/default.aspx>) is available online through the School of Engineering website. Applications are ready for final consideration after the required items from the application checklist have been submitted.

Please review our application checklist (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/graduate-admissions/application-checklist.html>) for details on all materials needed for a complete application.

Admission and financial aid awards are for a specific academic year; students who do not matriculate that year must normally reapply. Admitted students can request a deferral of admission for up to one year from the admissions office. Applicants to whom admission is not offered may reapply for a future semester.

Admission of International Students

International students considering application to Washington University for graduate study should have a general familiarity with academic practices and university customs in the United States. All international students are required to present evidence of their ability to support themselves financially during graduate study. International students are required to submit valid English proficiency score reports from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Tests should be taken in time for results to reach Washington University by the application deadline. Official test scores are required at the time of application.

The English proficiency requirement may be waived during the application process. Please review our waiver eligibility criteria (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/graduate-admissions/application-checklist.html>) found on our application checklist (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/graduate-admissions/application-checklist.html>).

Students Not Candidate for Degree (SNCD)

SNCD admission may be granted to qualified students who hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, who wish to enroll in graduate courses on a non-degree basis, and who receive approval from a degree program. Examples include students in good standing at other graduate schools and students who wish to test their capabilities in a graduate setting. Students in this category may take a maximum of 9 units, and they may later apply to a degree program and transfer these units to meet degree requirements. SNCD students are not eligible for Title IV Federal Funding. Please contact Engineering Graduate Admissions (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/graduate-admissions/>) for application requirements.

Attendance

Each professor in the McKelvey School of Engineering decides how many absences a student may have and still pass the course. Professors are expected to give reasonable consideration to unavoidable absences and to the feasibility of making up work that has been missed. Students are expected to explain to their professors the reasons for any absences and to discuss with them the possibility of making up missed assignments.

Units and Grades

Credit-conferring grades for graduate students are as follows: A, B, C, or D (these grades may be modified by a plus or minus); S, satisfactory or U, unsatisfactory (S and U are used for all research units and should be noted at the end of each semester).

Other grades are F, failing; N, not submitted yet; X, final examination missed; and I, incomplete. The mark of I reverts to an F grade at the close of the next full semester a student is in residence.

McKelvey uses a 4-point scale for calculating grade-point averages, with A+/A = 4, B = 3, C = 2 and D = 1. A plus (other than with an A grade) adds 0.3 to the value of a grade, whereas a minus subtracts 0.3 from the value of the grade.

Auditing a Course

A student may register for some courses as an auditor. The criteria for a successful audit are determined by the course instructor, and the student should work with the instructor to ensure that these criteria are understood. Generally speaking, the completion of homework and the taking of exams are not required. The grade L signifies a successful audit, and the grade Z signifies an unsuccessful audit. Neither grade affects a student's grade-point average, and the course's units do not contribute to the student's total cumulative degree-seeking units. Audit courses do not count toward any degree, nor do they count toward full-time status determination. They do count toward the 21-unit cap per semester, and audit units are charged at the standard full-time or part-time per-unit rate. Class attendance is normally required to earn a grade of L; unsatisfactory attendance will result in a grade of Z.

Incomplete Grades

The grade I (incomplete) indicates that the work of a student has been generally acceptable but that extenuating circumstances led to certain requirements not having been met. The grade of X is recorded when a student is absent from a midterm or final examination because of illness or other unavoidable reason, provided the work has been otherwise satisfactory.

Grades of X and I must be removed no later than the close of the next full semester a student is in residence. On failure to make up an X or I grade, the student will not receive credit for the course, and the grade will be changed to F unless the student has been explicitly excused by the associate dean.

A student should **not** re-enroll in a course to complete an I grade. Enrolling in the course a second time invokes the Course Retake Policy (<https://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/engineering/policies/#repeating>).

Course Retake Policy

McKelvey graduate students may choose to retake a course with the permission of their advisor. If a course is repeated, only the second grade is included in the calculation of the GPA. Both enrollments and grades are shown on the student's official transcript. The symbol R next to the first enrollment's grade indicates that the course was later retaken. Credit toward the degree is allowed for the latest enrollment only. The R option may be invoked only once per course, and the original grade option must be retained.

Student Grievance

From time to time, students may feel that they have legitimate complaints regarding academic matters or an interaction with a faculty member. It is important that students and faculty have a common understanding of how such complaints may be expressed and resolved. Students with complaints regarding academic matters

should initially seek resolution from their faculty advisor, then from their director of graduate studies, and finally from the chair of their degree program. Complaints that remain unresolved may be addressed to the Associate Dean of Graduate Student Services. The final court of appeal for all doctoral students in the school is the Vice Dean of Research and Graduate Education. Washington University policies state that members of the university community can expect to be free from discrimination and harassment. Students, faculty, staff and outside organizations working on campus are required to abide by specific policies prohibiting harassment. An allegation of discrimination or harassment may be appealed to the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, who will determine whether to convene the Title IX Grievance Committee to hear the case.

Additional Course Information for Graduate Students

To count toward a graduate degree, courses must be offered at the graduate level, taken for a grade, and approved in advance by the student's advisor and program as eligible to count toward the student's degree. Depending on the program, graduate-level work begins with courses numbered at the 400 or 500 level. Audited courses and courses taken on a pass/fail basis cannot be counted toward the degree. Students should consult their advisors regarding these options.

Communication Tools Course for International Students

International students who were required to submit valid English proficiency scores for application and do not meet the waiver eligibility criteria (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/graduate-admissions/application-checklist.html>), will be required to take an Engineering Communication Tools course during their first semester. This course does not count toward degree requirements and does not require any additional tuition; it is graded on a pass/fail basis, so it is not factored into the grade-point average.

Transfer Credit

A maximum of 6 units of graduate credit obtained at institutions other than Washington University may be applied toward the master's degree. Approved transfer credit for undergraduate course work completed at a different institution cannot be posted until a letter is received from that institution's registrar, which states the graduate-level course work was not used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements.

Transfer credit must be recommended by the advisor, department or program chair and approved by the appropriate registrar. No graduate courses carrying grades lower than B can be accepted for transfer toward any graduate degree.

No courses will be accepted toward degree requirements if the course exceeds the 10-year maximum time period, unless those courses have the formal approval of the McKelvey Master Committee.

Student Status

All graduate students in Engineering must register each fall and spring semester until all degree requirements are complete. All registrations require online approval by the student's faculty advisor. Students should register in one of the below three categories.

Graduate students who do not register in one of the below categories may have to apply for reinstatement if they wish to re-enroll at a future time. Students should contact Graduate Student Services at 314-935-5830. Students seeking reinstatement may be required to pay a reinstatement fee, take special reinstatement examinations, and repeat previous work if their previous work fails to meet contemporary standards.

Active Status

A graduate student is viewed as having an active full-time status if enrolled in 9 or more units or an active part-time status if enrolled in fewer than 9 units. Graduate students must be authorized by their advisor prior to registration. International master's students on F1 and J1 visas are required to take a minimum of 9 units per semester except during their final semester. In order to have part-time status during their final semester, international master's students must complete a Reduced Course Load form, which is available from the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS).

Continuing Student Status

The Continuing Student Status course option may be used when graduate students are approved to register for fewer than 9 units but still need to maintain their full-time status. When students are registered for the Master's Continuing Student Status (883) course, they will still be viewed as having a full-time status, even if they are taking fewer than 9 units. Placeholder courses are 0-unit audit courses with no tuition charges associated with them for engineering students; however, students may be charged health insurance and/or student activity fees associated with full-time status. The EGS 883 course option is contingent upon advisor and departmental approval. **Note:** The 883 status is not available for master's students on F1 and J1 visas; domestic master's students may register under the 883 status only during their final semester and with departmental approval.

Nonresident or Inactive Status

Graduate students who do not need to maintain full-time status and who do not need to register for any course or research units during a given semester should, with departmental and advisor approval, register under the Nonresident/Inactive Status placeholder course option. Graduate students on an official leave of absence should also register under this status but, again, only with advisor and departmental approval. A master's student should register for this status using the EGS 885 course number. Placeholder courses are 0-unit audit courses with no tuition charges associated with them for engineering students. Students registered this way are not viewed as full-time students and will not automatically have university health insurance fees or coverage. This registration does

not defer student loans, and it does not serve as a legal status for international students. The nonresident/inactive status will ensure that the student's major program will remain open. This option is not available to international students (due to F1 and J1 visa requirements), unless approved by the OISS. A nonresident/inactive status is allowed only for a few semesters, at the department's discretion. Any student contemplating a nonresident/inactive status must be aware of the residency requirements and the total time limitation required for degree completion.

Academic Probation and Suspension

The following are the minimal standards to remain in good academic standing as a Master's student. Degree programs may set stricter standards, but they may not relax those listed below. Acceptability of grades below B- for the fulfillment of degree requirements is determined by individual departments.

- A Master's student is eligible for academic probation if a semester or cumulative GPA drops below 2.70.
- A Master's student is eligible for academic suspension if any one of the following occurs:
 - The student earns a semester or cumulative GPA less than 2.00, or
 - The student has been on probation for two semesters and has not attained a 2.70 cumulative GPA.

Academic probation represents a warning that things are not going well academically. Students placed on academic probation may continue to stay enrolled in their degree programs but must meet with the Director of Graduate Student Affairs. This meeting will serve as an opportunity for the student to identify areas for improvement and to create a strategy for success for the duration of their degree program.

Special academic probation represents a decision by the department to allow a student otherwise eligible for suspension to continue their studies under a special probationary status. Being placed on special probation may include additional student limitations, such as limit on enrolled units. If a student is given special probation in lieu of suspension, the conditions of the probation cannot be appealed.

Academic suspension represents being dismissed from the program. Students placed on academic suspension are not eligible to enroll or to continue their degree programs. There is no guarantee that students who have been suspended will be allowed to return.

- Students who are suspended may appeal to the McKelvey Master Committee. Appeals should be sent to the registrar in the McKelvey School of Engineering who will then forward the appeal statement for review. If a student decides not to appeal an academic suspension or if a student's appeal is not successful, registration for the upcoming semester will be cancelled, and the student's academic record will be closed.
- Students who have been suspended may apply for reinstatement after one year has passed. Reinstatement requests should be sent to the registrar in the McKelvey School of Engineering who will forward the requests to the program director. Students requesting

reinstatement will need to show that they have successfully completed challenging full-time course work at a different institution (generally, for at least one year), that they have been employed in a full-time position (generally, for at least one year), or a combination of the two (school and work). Reinstatement back into the program will be decided by the program director and/or the program department. Students may be asked to re-apply to the program through the full application process.

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Title IV Financial Aid

Federal regulations require that students receiving federal Title IV financial aid maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). The minimum GPA requirements needed to maintain eligibility for SAP are dictated by the specific program of study. In each case, per the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 668.34(a)(4)(ii), the federal student aid program requires a minimum of a C average to maintain eligibility for aid, but an individual degree or certificate program may have a higher minimum GPA for federal SAP.

SAP is evaluated annually at the end of the spring semester. In order to maintain SAP and thus be eligible for federal financial aid, a student must maintain minimum requirements for cumulative GPA (≥ 2.0 for undergraduates, ≥ 2.70 for master's students, and ≥ 3.0 for doctoral students). A student must also maintain minimum requirements for pace (credit earned for at least 67% of the credits attempted). In addition, the degree must be completed within the maximum time frame allowed for the program (defined as 150% of the required credits). Students who are not maintaining SAP will be notified by the McKelvey Registrar and, barring an approved appeal, are ineligible for aid for future semesters.

More information about Satisfactory Academic Progress (<https://sfs.wustl.edu/resources/Pages/Satisfactory-Academic-Progress.aspx>) is available from Student Financial Services.

Disability Resources

Services for students with hearing, temporary or permanent visual, orthopedic, learning or other disabilities are coordinated through Disability Resources. Identifying oneself as having a disability is voluntary.

To the greatest extent possible, students with disabilities are integrated as equal members of the total student population. Services provided for students with disabilities may include but are not limited to readers, note takers, special parking, tutoring, counseling, appropriate academic accommodations (e.g., alternate testing conditions), and referral to community resources. To receive accommodations or services, students must initiate a request for services and are encouraged to contact Disability Resources upon admission or once diagnosed. For more information, please visit the Disability Resources website (<https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>).

Leaves of Absence

Engineering students may petition to take a leave of absence. On a leave of absence, students in good standing are assured re-enrollment within the next year. Before returning, the student is to notify the McKelvey School of Engineering and submit a reinstatement form at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the appropriate term. A student wishing to take a medical leave of absence must have a recommendation for the medical leave of absence from Habif Health and Wellness Center (<http://shs.wustl.edu/>) submitted to the appropriate dean in the McKelvey School of Engineering prior to leaving and prior to re-enrollment. The dean will decide whether or not to grant the request for the medical leave of absence and re-enrollment upon reviewing the recommendations from Habif Health and Wellness Center and the student's file.

Academic Integrity

All students in the McKelvey School of Engineering are expected to conform to high standards of conduct. Our statement on student academic integrity is intended to provide guidelines on academic behaviors that are not acceptable. Visit the McKelvey Academic Integrity (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/current-students/student-services/Pages/academic-integrity-policy.aspx>) webpage to review the policy and learn more about our process.

Academic Calendar

In addition to the university's academic calendar, McKelvey maintains an Engineering Academic Calendar (<https://engineering.wustl.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html>) with dates and deadlines that are specific to McKelvey students. This calendar includes course information, which is also helpful for non-McKelvey students taking engineering courses.