

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS –

for Engineering-based Graduate Students

Scroll to see full listing of answers to commonly asked questions *or* select from options at left to jump to specific topic.

Suggestions for topics to be included in this “FAQ” should be sent to Engineering Student Services. We encourage and appreciate your input.

Contact:

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Office of Student Services – Lopata Hall, Room 303
Phone: 314-935-4577 Email: tomevola@wustl.edu

Advisor Info & “Authorization” to Register:

- You must meet with and/or communicate with your advisor prior to *each* semester’s registration period. Continuous registration is required *each* semester until degree completion; see information on registration in this FAQ listing for further details.
- You can *not* register unless your advisor “authorizes” you to register.
- This process helps assure that students are regularly meeting with their advisors to discuss their class schedules and academic plans, helping them to stay on-track for their particular degree program.
- Subsequent to meeting with an advisee, the faculty advisor uses the online Web-based system for Faculty (i.e. WebFAC) to designate an advisee as approved and “authorized” to register.
- Students can begin registering as per published registration start dates and up through the start of classes.

Courses:

ELP – English Language Program Course for Non-native English Speaking Students –

- A course is offered at least once a year (typically during the Spring semester, starting in January) entitled: Engineering Communications for Non-native English Speakers. This course is primarily intended to help international, engineering-based Ph.D. students improve their English language skills, in preparation for the time when they will ultimately fulfill their teaching requirement. However, other graduate students are welcome to register onto a wait-list, and if space is available they may be officially admitted at the instructor’s discretion.
- The course number is: E60-510A
- There are typically two sections for the course. Section 01 is intended for the engineering-based Ph.D. student wishing to improve his or her teaching skills in order to prepare for the teaching requirement of their degree. Engineering-based Ph.D. students will be given priority over others who might enroll. Section 02 is for all engineering-based graduate students wishing to improve their professional writing skills.
- If a student is fully funded and supported by the School, then the course costs will be covered by the Engineering School’s tuition remission, provided the student’s advisor approves of the registration.
- The course is published in the course listings book, plus it is online with full description viewable from within WebSTAC’s course listings option.
- **NOTE TO PH.D. STUDENTS:** It is recommended that incoming international engineering Ph.D. students be tested by the ELP area upon arrival to the University. If testing indicates a student needs ELP instruction, the student should plan to enroll in this new engineering course during the spring semester. A “B-” grade or higher should normally be received before the student is approved to teach undergraduates in fulfillment of the teaching requirement. If a student’s initial ELP placement test results are very poor (i.e., they receive either an “LS1” or “LS2” score, as indicated within the student’s SIS record) then the student will need to first enroll in the traditional University College course offerings recommended, taking the engineering-based course later on. University College courses are *not* funded by remission.

Courses:

Guidelines for *Full-Time* Engineering Students wanting to take Non-Engineering Courses –

- Full-Time Engineering graduate students may now take courses offered in other Schools here at Washington University provided the student's advisor fully approves.
- The course must be approved by the student's advisor as being part of, related to, supporting, or complementing the student's degree program. Such courses do not necessarily need to be part of the student's specific degree program. Students may take any course open to them; however, each student needs to explain to his or her advisor the rationale for taking the course and gain the advisor's approval.
- The student's course enrollment must also be approved by the non-engineering course instructor, with priority enrollment granted to students from the course's home school.
- If a student is fully funded and supported by the School, then the course costs will be covered by the Engineering School's tuition remission, provided the student's advisor approves of the registration. However, University College, Sever Institute of Continuing Studies, Executive or Evening program courses and Summer School courses are *not* covered under this agreement.
- If a student does decide to enroll in a non-approved course, the student will be responsible for all tuition and fees associated with such courses.
- Courses taken under this agreement may not count towards a second degree.

Dissertations & Theses:

- Engineering-based Masters (doing a thesis option) and all D.Sc. students must have their theses or dissertations reviewed for FORMATTING prior to defending.
- Engineering-based Masters and D.Sc. students should check with their department's administrative assistant and/or with the online engineering-based academic calendar to determine the deadline by which they must submit theses/dissertations for an initial, required FORMAT review. [NOTE: Ph.D. students do NOT have any special formatting review process.]
- There is also a deadline by which ALL engineering-based graduate students (MS, D.Sc. *and* Ph.D.) must submit their FINAL formatted copies of theses/dissertations. All degree requirements must be met by this date, at the very latest, plus students will need to defend prior to this date in order to allow adequate time for last minute revisions to their written materials. [NOTE: The deadline is typically late August for Summer graduates, late December for December graduates, and late April for May/Spring graduates, but be sure to check the appropriate online academic calendar and/or your departmental contacts for the exact deadline dates. In addition, students need to be sure to schedule their oral defense well in advance of the final deadline for submitting the final copies of the thesis/dissertation. Students should check with their departments to know what would be a reasonable timeframe for scheduling their defense, but typically, at least two full weeks prior to the end of the semester is minimum.]
- There can sometimes be extensions of these deadlines if the student's advisor/department approves *and* if the student is willing to graduate in the subsequent semester or time period. If a student finds that he or she can NOT make the official deadline for submission of the final thesis/dissertation, then the student may be allowed an additional few weeks to submit the thesis/dissertation, thereby being eligible to graduate in the next semester *and* without having to register and/or pay any fees. There are specific deadlines for this exceptional situation, so be sure to look online and/or check with your departmental contacts should you fall into this situation.

Graduation Info & Dates:

- A Recognition Ceremony is held in Graham Chapel for December graduates (typically, sometime during first weekend in December). For dates and full details please see the "Commencement" option available from the "quick links" dropdown list (found at top right of WU's main homepage).
- Early December --- Typically, the 1st workday in December is the deadline to submit an "intent-to-graduate" form for those wanting to graduate in SPRING/May. If you believe you are likely to graduate in Spring/May ...OR...if you were originally planning on trying to graduate in December, (but you realize you can't make the December graduation deadlines), then you need to submit a new "intent" for the Spring/May time period by early December. Submitting an "intent" by the published deadline is a requirement in order to be eligible to receive a degree for a given time period. Contact your department and/or the online engineering-based academic calendar for specific dates/deadlines. See further details in this FAQ listing on "Intent-to-Graduate Form".
- Mid-May --- Commencement Day for Spring graduation is typically sometime around Mid-May. For exact dates and full details, please see the "Commencement" option available from the "quick links" dropdown list (found on the top right of WU's main homepage).
- WHO CAN ATTEND: Prior Summer graduates, prior Fall/December graduates, *and* true Spring graduates are all welcome to attend the Spring graduation Commencement Ceremony. Family and guests are also welcome, and no tickets are required unless announced otherwise due to severe weather or other unexpected changes of circumstances and events.

Intent-to-Graduate Form:

- An "intent to graduate" form equates to an application to graduate.
- An "intent to graduate" form must be filed on-line (via WebSTAC) for any semester you believe you are ready to graduate.
- A student must generally file an "intent to graduate" form during the few months PRIOR to the semester in which he or she intends on graduating.
- The "intent to graduate" form is *required* in order to officially earn a degree. (Of course, any degree and graduation is still contingent upon the student fulfilling all the degree requirements.)
- Students must file an "intent to graduate" form by published deadlines, and reminder-emails are sent to students each semester about those deadlines.

Process for Filing "Intent-to-Graduate" Form –

- An "Intent to Graduate" form (i.e. ITG form) must be filed by using the on-line Web-based Student Access (WebSTAC) system (i.e., the same system students use to register, check grades, update their email address information, etc.)
- For information on "How-To" log onto WebSTAC, see FAQ for that topic.
- After logging onto WebSTAC, select the option "intent to graduate" on the left-hand side of the main WebSTAC screen
- Select the semester (from the drop down list) in which you intend on graduating (remember, only the next semester or two are ever available from the list)
- Scroll through the "intent" form and input information as needed
- Be sure to specify if you are "GRADUATING NOW" or "GRADUATING LATER ON" for EACH degree program that displays (i.e., some students may have multiple programs, so they need to designate which ones they will be graduating with at which time.)
- Scroll down further and you can input email and address after graduation, which will be helpful in contacting you and/or mailing your diploma to you, etc.
- Other information is optional and used by the Alumni & Development office.
- Be sure to click on the SUBMIT option at the bottom to officially file your "intent"
- Once submitted, then your "intent" is officially on-line and considered "filed"
- You can log off, and log back on later on, anytime to view what you've submitted and/or if you need to make further updates---up until the published filing deadline.

BS/MS Students (options for filing "Intent-to-Graduate") –

- **For BS/MS students who were admitted to WU's MS program prior to Fall 2008 (or prior to Spring 2009 for special dual-degree program BS/MS students):**
 - For BS/MS students who were admitted to WU's MS program prior to Fall 2008 *and* who are receiving undergraduate financial support, the School will extend the undergraduate financial aid eligibility for a maximum of two additional semesters during the time the students would be working on the MS graduate work. However, if such a student decides to obtain/earn the B.S. degree before he or she completes the requirements for the M.S. degree, then the student will *no longer* be classified as a BS/MS student; in such instances, the student would *not* be eligible for continuing undergraduate financial aid.
 - Because of the above stated guideline, normally a BS/MS student (who was admitted to the MS program prior to Fall 2008) will elect to wait and graduate with both degrees upon completion of the MS degree.
 - The above mentioned BS/MS students can still file a "Walk-Only" "Intent-to-Graduate" form for the BS degree on the year in which they normally would have completed their undergraduate studies, designating that they specifically choose to defer the actual earning of the degree until the MS program is completed and also fully earned.
- **For BS/MS students who were admitted to WU's MS program in Fall 2008 or later (or Spring 2009 or later for special dual-degree program BS/MS students):**
 - Normally, your BS program will remain your primary program up through the time you complete your BS degree requirements.
 - Upon fulfillment of your BS degree requirements, your MS program will become your primary program, during what would typically be your "5th year" (or perhaps "6th or 7th year" for special dual-degree program students).
 - BS/MS students in this category are *not* eligible to have their undergraduate financial aid extended beyond the typical undergraduate term of study. Students should always check with the Financial Services office for full details and options available.
 - BS/MS students in this category need to be sure to file an "intent to graduate" form for the semester in which they will ultimately be earning both degrees (i.e., the semester when they finally fulfill all BS and MS degree requirements). If, however, a student wishes to "walk" at the BS Recognition and Commencement Ceremony a year earlier (i.e., in order to participate with and "walk" with the student's main BS group of classmates), then the student can also file a preliminary "intent" for that earlier year, specifying he or she is a "walk only" student (and, being sure to indicate that each degree will NOT be earned at that time, but instead, that they will be earned "later on").

Filing a “Walk-Only” Intent-to-Graduate Form –

- If a student has completed all or nearly-all of the requirements for a particular degree, but is **not** technically going to earn the degree until a later semester, the student may file an “Intent-to-Graduate” form and specify that he or she wishes only to participate in or “walk-only” at the graduation ceremonies.
- When using the online WebSTAC “Intent-to-Graduate” option, the student simply selects the appropriate “Walk-Only” option---plus it can be helpful to place a comment of the student’s intentions in the comment field.
- When a student is ready to actually earn the degree, the student must re-file a new “intent” for the appropriate semester, but this time selecting the option for “Graduate Now” (i.e., graduate in the current semester at that time.)

Registration (general info, dates & times, etc.):

- Registration is done via WebSTAC after you are “authorized” to register by your advisor.
- Registration can be done via WebSTAC during the hours of 7:30 a.m. through 9:00 p.m. daily, beginning on the published start date, and up through the start of classes and the published last day to add a class.
- For further help on WebSTAC or the Advisor Authorization process, see appropriate FAQ topic.

Continuous Registration Requirement –

- Engineering-based graduate students are required to register **each** semester during the duration of their studies.
- If a student realizes he or she needs to take a leave of absence or be “inactive,” then the student should still register, but as an “inactive”/“non-resident” student (i.e., as a student who is primarily “not resident” on campus for the duration of the semester). However, in order to register this way, the student must be approved to do so by both the advisor and department Chair. This option is generally **not** available to international students. (See FAQ topic on “Status - Inactive” for full details.)

Registration-related Dates for current and/or coming semesters –

- Always check for all registration-related dates and deadlines online using the Engineering-based academic calendar options. Contact Engineering Student Services (314-935-6100) for support in this area if information is not clear or easy-to-find. We welcome your suggestions.

STATUS: Declaring Inactive/Non-Resident Status – for Engineering-based Graduate Students –

- Engineering-based graduate students are required to register **each** semester during the duration of their studies.
- If a non-international student realizes he or she needs to take a leave of absence or be “inactive,” then the student should still register, but as an “inactive”/“non-resident” student (i.e., as a student who is approved to **not** take any courses and who is primarily “not resident” on campus for the duration of the semester). In order to register this way, the student needs to self-register for the 885/886 course number (885 for Masters; 886 for Doctoral students). When doing this, the D.Sc. or Masters student must be sure to have their advisor’s and department’s approval. Ph.D. students also need to complete a “leave of absence” form and follow procedures required by the GSAS Office.
- When registering this way, a student loses all full-time benefits and the student’s “status” will NOT be considered a full-time, and this has potential to impact loan repayment deadlines and other student status related issues.
- Any student contemplating a non-resident/inactive status should carefully consider the residency requirements and the total time limitation required for their degree completion. Remember, Masters degrees should normally be completed within 6 years, and 7 years for doctoral degrees.
- All absences and “inactive” or “non-resident” status requests must be approved by the advisor and department Chair. Departments will receive audit reports to help monitor the number of times students have registered using the “inactive/non-resident” course option. Normally, a student should not be registering this way more than one or two semesters.
- IMPORTANT NOTE: Absences and “inactive” or “non-resident” status requests are normally NOT available to international students (due to F1 and J1 visa requirements), unless the student has plans to exit the country and has received approval from the Office for International Students and Scholars.

STATUS: Maintaining a FULL-Time Status – for Engineering-based Graduate Students –

- NOTE: International graduate students on F1 and J1 visas must always maintain a Full-Time status. International students on F1 and J1 visas may **not** register as a Part-Time student.
- Engineering-based graduate students taking 9 or more units will automatically have a Full-Time status. Taking 9 or more units is generally considered standard for Full-Time graduate students.

Even a student who has been admitted into a “part-time graduate program” who decides to enroll in 9 or more units will (for that semester) be viewed as a “full-time” graduate student. This is important to remember, since having a “full-time” status will trigger full-time benefits and related charges.

- A Full-Time engineering-based graduate student may sometimes drop down to fewer than 9 units, particularly in the final semester(s) of their studies and/or during other semesters when a lighter load is approved by the advisor; when this occurs, Full-Time students must then register for the 883/884 “continuing student status” course (883 for Masters; 884 for Doctoral students).
- The 883/884 course registration automatically causes the graduate student to receive a Full-Time status, even though they may be registered for fewer than 9 units. In some instances, students sometimes might need to take 0 units during their final semesters (i.e., when they have no further coursework to take and are wrapping up their projects, research and/or dissertation work); in such cases, a student can register for the 883/884 course by itself (i.e., without taking any other units), and this alone will grant them Full-Time status.
- IMPORTANT: The 883/884 course may **only** be used with advisor’s approval, and the 883/884 course registration should **not** be used by someone employed Full-Time elsewhere.
- For engineering-based graduate students, the 883/884 “continuing student status” courses are 0 units with no associated course fees.
- Along with a Full-Time status come the Full-Time benefits **and** related fees, including the health fee, metro pass availability, library and athletic facility access, etc.
- NOTE: For another look at how Full-Time and Part-Time engineering-based graduate students are defined, see the front portion of the Engineering School’s section in the most current semester’s Course Listings book.

STATUS: Maintaining a PART-Time Status – for Engineering-based Graduate Students –

- Engineering-based graduate students taking fewer than 9 units will automatically have a Part-Time status (provided the student does NOT also register for the above mentioned 883/884 “continuing student status” course). Students registering Part-Time will NOT incur the health services fee, nor will they receive any of the routine Full-Time benefits, such as the free Metro pass, and library and athletic facility access.
- International students can **NOT** register under a Part-Time status.
- Any student admitted into a “part-time program” will receive a “full-time status” for any semester in which the student registers for 9 or more units. Thus, students who need to continue to maintain their “part-time status” (and who don’t want to incur any full-time fees/benefits) should always be sure to register for fewer than 9 units. Also, such true part-time students would never want to register for the 883/884 placeholder courses mentioned under the documentation for full-time status described in this FAQ listing (see above).
- NOTE: For another look at how Full-Time and Part-Time engineering-based graduate students are defined, see the front portion of the Engineering School’s section in the most current semester’s Course Listings book.

Tuition Information: for Engineering-based Graduate Students –

- Your tuition charge is determined by your “prime” division, not by the division that teaches the course.
- If you are a fully-funded/school-supported graduate student, tuition may not be an issue for you, but for other students it is very important
- Even if you are a fully-funded student, tuition remission will **not** cover University College courses or other “evening program” courses
- In addition, tuition remission (for fully-funded/school-supported graduate students) will only cover non-engineering courses if your advisor fully approves. For further information, see FAQ topic for “Courses – Non-Engineering”.
- All students whose primary major program/division is in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (i.e., all of our engineering-based Ph.D. students) will be charged at rate **3** as published in the course listings book and shown below. All other Full-Time Graduate Engineering students are also charged at rate **3**. All Part-Time Graduate Engineering students (i.e., Part-Time Non-Ph.D. students) are charged at rate **8**.
- In general, Full-Time status is always established when either taking 9 or more units **or** when enrolled in fewer than 9 units but also taking course 883 or 884 (see other information in FAQ option for complete details on Full-Time vs. Part-Time status options.)
- Additional general information regarding rates can be found in the very front of the course listings book, as well as in the front portion of the Engineering School’s section within that same book.

- If you have more questions regarding the tuition charges, please contact Engineering Accounting at 935-6183.

Spring '09 Units	Tuition Rate Levels	
	3	8
1	1,508	1,280
2	3,016	2,560
3	4,524	3,840
4	6,032	5,120
5	7,540	6,400
6	9,048	7,680
7	10,556	8,960
8	12,064	10,240
9 or more	18,100	

WebSTAC Basics:

- WebSTAC stands for “Web-based Student Access” system
- WebSTAC is the web-based system that allows students to register for courses and view their historical student record.
- Information viewable from WebSTAC includes: general directory information such as address, phone, and email; class schedule information with courses taken, instructor names, room assignments, etc; major and minor programs you are registered in; grade information, etc.
- There are a number of options on the left hand side of the main WebSTAC menu (once you log on) including options for registering, updating your profile and address information, viewing your class schedule, filing an “intent to graduate”, etc.
- NOTE: There are also options on the center-lower-portion of the WebSTAC screen for viewing general University Policies and Procedures, including the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act and Tuition information.

Logging on to WebSTAC –

- From the main Washington University homepage (i.e., www.wustl.edu) there is a “WebSTAC” option in the dropdown list under the “Quick Links” option found at the top right of the screen.
- Starting in January 2009 all students are required to create and use what is called a “WUSTL KEY” when logging into WebSTAC.
- Once you have created your “WUSTL KEY”, you must use it to access any or all Washington University system applications---that is, wherever you see the WUSTL Connect or WUSTL KEY logos. New students will be assigned a temporary “WUSTL KEY” to use for their initial log on, and then they will be asked to change it.
- You will always still have an SIS student login ID number (i.e., the system number that prints onto your student/staff ID card), but that SIS login ID will not be used or accepted as your login identifier; instead, it is the “WUSTL KEY” and corresponding password that is needed.
- For more information regarding WUSTL CONNECT, please go to the following website: <http://ConnectHelp.wustl.edu>