Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Policies of the Committee On Higher Degrees

The Committee on Higher Degrees (CHD) is responsible for overseeing all graduate degree programs of students in the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS). It is a body comprised of faculty from across the School. Students may work toward one or two of three graduate degrees, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Master of Science (S.M.), and Master of Engineering (M.E.); in one of four subjects, Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Computer Science and Engineering Sciences. SEAS also offers an S.M. and a M.E. degree in Computational Science and Engineering.

The basic degree requirements and other matters pertaining to graduate study are summarized in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) Handbook. Included in this document are SEAS-specific policies, procedures, and rules relating to SEAS degree requirements. Issues relating to acceptable graduate-level courses, cross-registration, part-time study and dissertation research in absentia are also discussed. The actions of the CHD are based on the requirements and regulations detailed in this document. This document is subject to change. The current CHD policies are posted on the SEAS website and available in the SEAS Office of Academic Programs; it is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with current policies, which are revised annually, usually in August.

Meetings of the CHD
The CHD meets approximately once a month during the academic year to review the program plans of students in all graduate degree programs and to act on other pending business. Exceptions to the rules must be submitted via petition and can be granted only by the CHD. Petitions to the CHD must be in writing, and must have the approval of the student's faculty advisor(s). Ordinarily, the CHD will not act on any matter submitted for its consideration through the Office of Academic Programs (Pierce Hall 110) fewer than ten working days prior to a given meeting. The Office of Academic Programs will communicate deadlines to the graduate students in advance of each meeting.

Academic Standing
For purposes of this document, “satisfactory academic progress” is defined as a student taking an appropriate number of courses, earning acceptable grades in those courses, and making adequate progress toward their research. Information about acceptable grades can be found in this document. The research advisor will be consulted about any question of satisfactory progress in the research component of the program.

Applying for a Degree
The Application for Degree form must be filed with the SEAS Office of Academic Programs not later than mid-July for a November degree, early November for a March degree, and late February for a May degree. Students will be informed of the exact deadlines by the Office of Academic Programs. Deadlines are also available on the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) Registrar’s Office website (http://www.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/). Students are responsible for knowing the deadlines. FAS does not accept late degree applications.

Students who apply for a degree and do not receive it will need to re-apply for the degree at the time they plan to complete the program. The FAS degree application tool retains the information the student previously entered and students will only need to log in, update the expected degree date, and print a new application.

The Application for Degree form must be submitted to the SEAS Office of Academic Programs; the Office of Academic Programs will take responsibility for auditing the form, obtaining the required signatures, and forwarding the signed paperwork to the Office of the Registrar. The courses listed on the Application for Degree must match the courses listed on the CHD-approved final program plan. If they differ, the student will be asked to re-do the Application for Degree.
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students are admitted to SEAS for one of three degrees: the S.M., the M.E., or the Ph.D. Graduate students admitted to SEAS as candidates for the Ph.D. degree may apply for one S.M. degree during the course of their studies, upon completion of the corresponding requirements. Students who have been admitted solely as candidates for the S.M. degree may apply for admission into either the M.E. or the Ph.D. degree through the standard application process via the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Every SEAS graduate student is assigned a field advisor who is a member of the SEAS faculty upon starting the graduate program. The first year/field advisor is assigned based on the research interests outlined in the application, is in the student's professed field of interest, and is primarily responsible for helping the student to plan a strong, coherent program in that field. In each semester of the first year of graduate study, a student is required to have the study card signed by his/her field advisor. For M.E. and Ph.D. students, the research advisor will sign the study card in subsequent years.

Composition of the Program Plan
The CHD approves each graduate student’s program plan, any revisions of that plan, and monitors progress towards attainment of the degree. It is the student’s obligation to keep the CHD apprised of any departures in course selection from an approved plan in timely fashion, as described by the deadlines below. The course requirements discussed hereafter are phrased in terms of graduate-level half-courses taken in SEAS (200-level courses in SEAS nomenclature), in other departments of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), or by cross-registration at other Harvard Faculties or at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Certain restrictions apply to courses taken by cross-registration (see below). Students are expected to take SEAS courses, unless their program requires courses not offered by SEAS. At least half of the courses taken to satisfy SEAS degree requirements must be drawn from those offered by SEAS.

Grading Scale
For SEAS purposes, a student's performance in letter-graded courses is evaluated based on the widely used 4-point system by assigning the twelve letter grades the following numerical equivalents: A(4.00), A-(3.67), B+(3.33), B(3.00), B-(2.67), C+(2.33), C(2.00), C-(1.67), D+(1.33), D(1.00), D-(0.67), E(0). Courses are weighted by credit hours. An average grade of B on the SEAS scale requires a numerical average of 3.00. Grades B- or better are honor grades; grades C- or better are satisfactory grades.

An excused ABS grade is equivalent to a B for accounting purposes and a temporary INC grade is equivalent to a C- when determining cumulative average grades at the end of a given semester. Students must make up an excused ABS during the succeeding term, and are expected to resolve temporary INC grades promptly. Temporary INC grades are assigned in letter-graded courses at the discretion of the instructor, who may impose requirements such as the date by which the deficiency must be remedied. Fall term temporary INC grades must be resolved before the beginning of the succeeding fall term, and spring term temporary INC grades must be resolved before the beginning of the succeeding spring term. An excused ABS or temporary INC unresolved by the stated deadlines becomes a permanent ABS or INC on the student's record. A permanent INC or ABS is equivalent to an E in SEAS; the course in question may be retaken for credit at a later time only if the student is allowed to continue. The EXC grade is not permitted for courses taken in an SEAS graduate program.

Independent Study Courses-299r
The CHD reviews the content of any 299r course when it is included on a program plan. 299r courses are arranged in advance of the term by the student and a faculty member. The Office of Academic Programs must be informed about a student registering for a 299r at the beginning of each term.

There is a 299r form that the student must complete that outlines the scope of the course and indicates the faculty member responsible for submitting the grade at the end of the term. The form is available in the Office of Academic Programs and must be signed by the 299r instructor and returned to the Office of Academic Programs not later than the date on which study cards are due.
Cross Registration
Many SEAS students have occasion to cross-register for one or more MIT graduate courses; fewer avail themselves of other opportunities for cross-regISTRATION. The following restrictions on cross-registration, constituting SEAS’ interpretations of the stipulations in the GSAS Handbook, must be satisfied by graduate students in SEAS degree programs. They apply to all courses taken by cross-registration, cumulatively where appropriate.

The reasons for taking graduate-level courses by cross-registration must be explained in the student's supplementary statement accompanying the degree program. Ordinarily, only graduate-level courses comparable in level of technical content to SEAS 200-level courses may be taken by cross-registration. MIT courses comparable to Harvard reading and research courses may not be taken by cross-registration. Courses taken by cross-registration should cover subjects not otherwise available in FAS: that is, they should not be taken in place of or in addition to any comparable FAS course without good and sufficient reasons. The student must satisfy GSAS in this regard before cross-registering; and should satisfy the CHD before such a course may be included in a SEAS degree program. Ordinarily, a SEAS graduate student may not cross-register for any course that is not directly related to his/her degree program. GSAS limits the number of courses that may be taken by cross-registration to no more than half of the student's total program of study. The SEAS interpretation of this is that no more than half of all letter-graded courses, exclusive of SEAS letter-graded reading and research courses, may be taken by cross-registration. The operative limit may be smaller than this in order to satisfy other SEAS requirements on degree programs described elsewhere in this document.

For specific policies regarding including courses from MIT or other universities on a Program Plan, see the Ph.D. and S.M. course requirements sections.

Definition of SEAS faculty
The phrase “SEAS faculty” is used throughout this document. The definition of SEAS faculty is a SEAS faculty member who is a member of the ladder faculty (Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor), including emeritus faculty.

Leaves of Absence
SEAS recognizes that there will be times when a student has to take a temporary leave from their graduate studies to deal with a personal or medical issue or to pursue activities unrelated to their degree program. A student should request a Leave of Absence in these cases. The field advisor or research/dissertation advisor must be consulted and approve of the leave. Leaves of Absences are generally approved for one year. Extensions of a Leaves of Absence require the approval of the Assistant Dean for Education, which will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Students who plan to return to SEAS after being on a Leave of Absence must have an active research/dissertation advisor (for Ph.D. students) or an academic advisor (for master’s students). Students who do not have an active advisor on record will not be permitted to return from a leave.
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

To earn a Ph.D. degree a student must acquire breadth and depth of knowledge in a field of study offered by SEAS, must be able to demonstrate understanding and proficiency in the field, and must write an original and significant research dissertation. It is the duty of the faculty to help each student to define these goals more precisely with respect to his/her primary field of interest, to guide him/her toward their achievement, and to judge whether they have been satisfactorily met.

SEAS Ph.D. Course Requirements (required of all SEAS Ph.D. students):

1. 10 letter-graded half courses are required, of which at least 8 are disciplinary courses and up to 2 are breadth courses. (Note: a half course is a typical semester-long course at Harvard. Unless otherwise noted, the term “course” in the points below refer to a half course.)

2. At least 5 of the 10 courses are required to be 200-level SEAS or SEAS-equivalent technical courses. A 200-level SEAS-equivalent course is a 200-level course taught by SEAS faculty in other FAS departments. The remaining courses will normally be from SEAS, FAS departments, other Harvard schools (Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Business School, Harvard School of Public Health, etc.), or MIT.

3. Ordinarily up to 2 of the 10 courses can be SEAS/FAS 100-level courses with the CHD’s approval.
   a. Up to 1 SEAS/FAS 100-level course can be counted toward the 8 disciplinary courses.
   b. Up to 1 SEAS/FAS 100-level course can be counted toward the 2 breadth courses.
   c. Courses below the 100-level are not suitable for graduate credit.

4. Up to 2 of the 10 courses can be breadth courses. Breadth courses may be technical courses, on topics adjacent and complementary to the student’s research topic. They may also be nontechnical courses, on topics such as innovation or communication, or on other relevant topics in FAS departments or other Harvard schools.
   a. Note that nontechnical courses (including innovation or communication courses) or courses from other Harvard schools normally can only count as part of the 2 breadth courses and not part of the 8 disciplinary courses.

5. Up to 2 of the 10 courses can be 294r, 297r, 298r or 299r courses.
   a. 299r courses do not count toward the 8 disciplinary courses; an exception is for Computer Science and for the Environmental Science and Engineering track of Engineering Sciences, which allow one 299r course to count as a disciplinary course. (Students who enrolled prior to the 2015-16 academic year will continue to be able to count one 299r as a disciplinary course at the CHD’s discretion.)
   b. 299r courses do not count toward the 5 200-level SEAS/SEAS-equivalent courses.
   c. 294r/297r/298r courses do not count toward the 5 200-level SEAS/SEAS-equivalent courses or the 8 disciplinary courses; they can only be included as part of the 2 breadth courses.
   d. Specific additional policies regarding 299r courses differ by area:
      i. Applied Math: Contact the Applied Math Area Dean for policy.
      ii. Applied Physics: If two 299r’s are taken, they must be taken with two different faculty.
      iii. Computer Science: If two 299r’s are taken, they can be with the same faculty but the topics must be sufficiently different.
      iv. Engineering Sciences: If two 299r’s are taken, they must be taken with two different faculty. An exception to this is for students in the Environmental Science and Engineering track, who are allowed to take two 299r’s with the same faculty member.

6. During a student’s tenure at SEAS, a student can petition for a course (in either the 8 disciplinary or 2 breadth) from another university such as MIT to be taken in lieu of a Harvard course.
   a. The student must provide justification why the other institution's course is necessary (i.e. SEAS does not offer the topic, the SEAS course has not been offered in recent years, etc.).
   b. For courses taken prior to the 2015-16 academic year, only H-level MIT graduate courses are acceptable; for 2015-16 or later courses, consult with the Office of Academic Programs. The student should attach the course syllabus and the catalog description when submitting the program plan, indicating H-level status if applicable.
   c. However, keep in mind that regardless of how many courses are taken at MIT or another university, at least 5 of the 10 courses are required to be 200-level SEAS or SEAS-equivalent courses.

7. If a student has completed a master's degree or graduate level work from another university prior to enrolling as a SEAS Ph.D. student (and this work was not completed while in an undergraduate program), a maximum
of 3 courses can be credited toward the 10 course requirement via petition. Petitions need to demonstrate that the courses in question are comparable to SEAS graduate courses, typically by submission of the course syllabus and requirements. The student should indicate in the petition which of up to 3 courses fit within the 8 disciplinary category, and which fit into the 2-course breadth category.

a. Note that all courses previously taken in another university must be approved by the FAS Registrar's Office in addition to the SEAS CHD before credit is given.

b. In exceptional circumstances, more than 3 courses may be considered by the CHD.

c. Typically only 1 of the transferred master’s courses is allowed to count as part of the 5 200-level SEAS or SEAS-equivalent courses.

d. Students must petition for transfer credit before or upon first submission of their final Ph.D. program plan in G2 year. Students are encouraged to petition for transfer credit on their prospective program plan in G1 year.

8. If a student has completed a master's degree or graduate level work from Harvard prior to enrolling as a SEAS Ph.D. student (and this work was not completed while in an undergraduate program), ordinarily all 200-level SEAS or SEAS-equivalent courses can be credited toward the 10 course requirement. 100-level courses will not be credited toward the 10 course requirement.

9. If a student has taken courses as a GSAS Special Student prior to enrolling as a SEAS Ph.D. student, up to 2 200-level SEAS or SEAS-equivalent courses can be applied toward the 10 course requirement.

10. SEAS/FAS 300-level courses and courses taken under the auspices of the Harvard Extension Program do not count toward the 10 course requirement.

11. Note that to meet GSAS resident requirements for the Ph.D. program, all students must complete at least 16 courses prior to graduation (i.e. the 10 courses required by SEAS, plus an additional 6, which often comprise 300-level research courses and/or other undergraduate/graduate coursework beyond the 10 required courses). TIME-C, TIME-R, and TIME-T courses do not count toward the 16 course requirement.

12. Note that in addition to the points above, all program plans must be approved by the CHD.

[Note: “technical” in item (2) and “innovation or communication” in item (4a) added Oct. 2015 to clarify existing CHD practice.]

Additional Area Requirements and Model Programs
In addition to the requirements above, which are applicable to all SEAS Ph.D. students, each area (Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Computer Science, and Engineering Sciences) may have area-specific requirements/guidelines.

In order to help students with planning, some areas have also provided model programs as suggestions of relevant courses for students focusing on various research subfields. Note that these model programs are guidelines only; a Ph.D. student’s program plan must always comply with the requirements outlined in the “SEAS Ph.D. Course Requirements” section above, in addition to complying with any area-specific requirements/guidelines.

Both the area-specific requirements/guidelines and model programs are updated regularly and can be found on the SEAS website on the “Model Programs” page.

GPA Expectations
Throughout a student's career, the CHD will be monitoring his/her performance. Students must achieve at least a 3.00 average in the ten courses specified in the program plan. No letter-graded course completed with a grade less than B- may be included in the Ph.D. program plan. At the end of any semester, a student who has failed to maintain a 3.00 average grade or has received any unsatisfactory grade may be required to withdraw, thus terminating degree candidacy, or may be reduced to candidacy for a terminal Master's degree.

A Ph.D. candidate whose average grade at the end of the first term is between 2.50 and 3.00 may be warned that continuation as a Ph.D. candidate beyond the second term is contingent upon achieving a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade at the end of the second term. Failure to meet this standard normally will result in reduction to candidacy for the S.M. degree, the requirements for which must be met by the end of the third term. The student may petition for reinstatement to candidacy for the Ph.D. at the end of the third term; this petition will be granted only if there is a reasonable expectation that the qualifying examination can be completed on schedule during the fourth term. A Ph.D. candidate whose average grade at the end of the first term is less than 2.50 but who could achieve a cumulative
3.00 or better average grade at the end of the second term, working at the full-time rate, normally will be reduced to candidacy for the S.M. degree. Continuation as an S.M. candidate for a third and final term is contingent upon a marked improvement in performance sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that the requirements for the S.M. degree will be completed at the end of the third term. A Ph.D. candidate who could not achieve a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade at the end of the second term normally will be required to withdraw at the end of the first term, thus terminating degree candidacy.

Scheduling of Courses and Research
A Ph.D. candidate's first year of graduate study ordinarily is spent principally on course work, although some students may begin research. The second year, in most cases, will involve half-time course work with the other half devoted to teaching and research. Subsequently, additional courses can be taken to fulfill any remaining requirements, and a transition would be made to full-time research. This is not, however, a hard and fast schedule that all students will necessarily follow. In a few special cases, it may be necessary to delay the start of research beyond the third term. In all cases early planning of the student's career at Harvard is highly desirable.

Prospective Ph.D. Program Plan: Spring of G1 year
By mid-term of the Spring of the G1 year, students should submit a Prospective Ph.D. program plan. The Ph.D. program plan specifies the ten SEAS graduate-level half-courses, or acceptable alternatives, be taken to satisfy the course requirements for the degree. The plan should contain a Proposed Thesis Topic/ Area of Research. The plan should be supplemented by a statement to explain the area of interest and the educational rationale for the courses included in the program. A major test of a program's intellectual validity is the possibility of providing a rational and persuasive argument in its favor. Supporting statements by the student's advisor(s) may also be necessary. The explanatory statement should be as brief as is consistent with clarity and completeness.

After consultation with his/her first year field advisor, the student will complete the Ph.D. program plan form, have it signed by his/her advisor, and submit it to the Office of Academic Programs by the announced deadline (usually in March of the G1 year). If necessary, the Application for Academic Credit for Graduate Work Done Elsewhere form also should be completed and attached to the prospective plan.

After reviewing the prospective program plan, the CHD may suggest or require modifications. It is in the best interest of the student that the prospective program plan be submitted as early as possible, during the first term if possible; in no case may submission be delayed beyond April of the G1 year. An approved prospective program plan is normally a condition for registration for a third term.

At any time after approval of the prospective program plan, changes to it are subject to approval by the CHD.

Credit for Work Done Elsewhere
We recognize that some students will enter SEAS already having taken some graduate courses, and in some cases will enter having already completed a Master’s degree. As a consequence, under ordinary circumstances the maximum number of courses for which academic, but not financial, credit will be approved is three and only if these courses are approved as part of the program plan. The student's supplementary statement should justify the inclusion of such courses. The CHD may stipulate that special examinations be taken to evaluate knowledge gained elsewhere. Per FAS policy, academic credit will not be granted for graduate courses taken while a candidate for an undergraduate degree.

Coursework taken elsewhere cannot be older than four years at the time the student submits the petition to the CHD. Grades given in courses done elsewhere will not be factored into the Harvard GPA, nor will the courses appear on the transcript. The FAS Registrar’s Office has final approval of all petitions for credit for courses taken elsewhere.

Selecting a Research Advisor: Spring of G1 Year
During the second term of study, the student will focus on identifying a specific research area and a potential Ph.D. research advisor. The potential research advisor may be the same person as his/her field advisor, but not necessarily so. Students are required to finalize their research advisor by early Spring of the G1 year to be making satisfactory
progress to degree. The Office of Academic Programs will communicate about the specific deadlines and forms
required as part of the selection process.

Occasionally, the potential research advisor may not be a SEAS faculty member, but ordinarily must be a Harvard
faculty member. The appropriate Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) must approve in advance if the student selects an
advisor who is not a member of the SEAS faculty. Every Ph.D. student with a non-SEAS research advisor must have an
active SEAS co-advisor. The SEAS co-advisor will communicate with the student’s primary research advisor, the
CHD, and the Office of Academic Programs about academic or financial issues as needed. The SEAS co-advisor will
chair the qualifying exam committee and the dissertation committee, meet with the student at least once a term to be
updated about degree progress, sign off on the annual student progress report, advise the student about coursework and
program requirements as needed, sign the student’s study card when primary research advisor is not a member of the
FAS faculty, allow the student to register for their 300 level research course and submit the necessary grades at the end
of the term when primary research advisor is not a member of the FAS faculty and communicate with the student’s
primary research advisor about the student’s progress on a regular basis (at least once a term).

Ph.D. students who wish to work with an advisor external to SEAS are reminded that they must get approval from their
DGS before committing to work with a non-SEAS advisor. Also, SEAS policy states that Ph.D. students who work
with non-SEAS advisors have their G2 tuition paid for by the non-SEAS advisor rather than by SEAS.

Ph.D. Program Plan (including qualifying committee): Fall of the G2 year
In consultation with the research advisor, the student will fill out the Ph.D. Program Plan form in the Fall of the G2
year. This form should be signed by the research advisor, and submitted to the Office of Academic Programs by mid-
November, preferably earlier. The final program plan serves two purposes: 1. it updates the prospective program plan
by noting any revisions to the ten courses to be taken and 2. it serves to form the qualifying exam committee. The
committee includes the research advisor and nominations by both the student and the research advisor of one member
each. The CHD reviews the final program plan and, on behalf of the Dean, nominates a fourth member for the
qualifying committee, who is a SEAS faculty member.

An approved final program plan is normally a condition for registration for a fourth term.

The SEAS Teaching Requirement: G2 year
All students entering the Ph.D. Program as of Fall 2013 will be required to TF at quarter time (0.25 FTE) for at least
one term for a SEAS course or for an FAS course (excluding Summer or Extension courses) taught by a SEAS faculty
member. This requirement must be met during the student’s G2 year. In exceptional cases, a research advisor may
request a deferral of the TF requirement until the G3 year, but there are financial implications for the advisor that must
be agreed upon in advance before a deferral is approved. [Summer/Extension clarification added September 2015.]

Students holding half-time appointments as Teaching Fellows or Research Assistants are regarded as full-time students.
They will register for up to two half-courses per term in formal courses, as necessary to complete the course
requirements for the degree. When serving as Research Assistants, they will register for the research course offered by
their supervisor as many times as necessary to remain full-time students. When serving as Teaching Fellows, they may
register for TIME-T. Students holding only a quarter-time appointment as a Research Assistant may register for three
or four half-courses in addition to registering for the research course offered by their supervisor. Students holding only
a quarter-time appointment as a Teaching Fellow may register for three or four half-courses in addition to registering
for TIME-T.

The SEAS Qualifying Exam: By end of G2 year
The qualifying examination should be taken no later than the end of May of the fourth term (or the end of the Reading
Period if the fourth term is in the fall). An extension of this deadline will be granted only if the chair of the qualifying
committee makes a specific request to the DGS. If a student is transferring between advisors and does not have a chair
of his/her qualifying committee, the student can make the extension request to the DGS. A recommendation that the
examination be held within a few weeks after that deadline as a matter of mutual convenience, or for good and
sufficient reasons during the period June through September following the second year of graduate study, will normally
be routinely approved, provided the student has a cumulative average grade better than 3.00. Marginal students, or
postponement beyond the end of September in the fifth term, will receive careful scrutiny as to the reasons behind the
recommendation.
If a student has not received approval for an extension and does not complete the qualifying examination by the deadline of end of May of the fourth term (or the end of the Reading Period if the fourth term is in the fall), SEAS will put the student in unsatisfactory (UNSAT) progress status with GSAS. At that time the student loses his/her monthly research funding support, and tuition for the following term is not paid unless the UNSAT has been resolved. Registration is blocked for the following term because of the tuition balance.

The qualifying committee is comprised of four committee members: the research advisor, the research advisor’s nominee, the student’s nominee, and the Dean’s Nominee (assigned by the CHD). The members of the qualifying committee should be Harvard faculty members, but on occasion MIT faculty members or other technical professionals of comparable stature from the local area may serve in this capacity with the approval of the CHD. The qualifying committee so constituted should include at least two SEAS faculty members, at least one of whom should be a senior faculty member (i.e., a full professor). Usually, the research advisor serves as chair of the qualifying committee; but if the research advisor is not a Harvard faculty member, he/she will serve as co-chair with a SEAS faculty member.

Approval of the final program plan and the identification of the Dean’s nominee by the CHD will permit the student to schedule the qualifying examination. Once the student has agreed upon a time for the examination with all members of the qualifying committee, the Office of Academic Programs should be notified (at least two weeks in advance). The student is responsible for contacting the Office of Academic Programs (classes@seas.harvard.edu) in order to schedule a room for the qualifying exam.

The qualifying examination has the dual purpose of verifying the adequacy of the student's preparation for undertaking research in his/her chosen field, and of assessing his/her ability to synthesize the technical knowledge already acquired. The purpose of the examination is not to reassess the student's performance in formal courses; however, evaluation of the student's general knowledge in the major field is appropriate. The basic judgment to be made is whether the student has demonstrated sufficient mastery of the intellectual skills necessary to conduct research so that a confident prediction can be made that an acceptable doctoral dissertation will be forthcoming in timely fashion. These skills include the ability to pull together scientific ideas, to formulate technical questions, to recognize answers thereto and to make reasonable judgments on how to seek answers to such questions.

The format of the qualifying examination ordinarily is a two-hour oral examination devoted to the presentation and discussion of one or more potential dissertation topics and to more general questions. The intent is to test the student's comprehension of his/her chosen research field and to probe the limits of the student's technical knowledge in related areas. Various groups within SEAS have different customs with regard to the detailed nature of the qualifying examination. One role of the Dean's nominee is to assure that comparable standards are applied throughout SEAS. The qualifying committee should agree among themselves as to what is expected of the student and so inform him or her in advance of the examination.

The qualifying committee may pass or fail the student, or may judge the performance to be inconclusive. Within its discretion, the committee may stipulate further requirements, such as additional course work, a written examination or presentation of a research proposal, as conditions that must be satisfied. The research committee (see below) will determine whether these conditions have been met, and so report to the CHD. Failure means that the student may not re-register, thus terminating degree candidacy. In the case of an inconclusive performance, after consultation with his/her potential dissertation supervisor, the student may schedule a second examination, which must be conclusive. The qualifying committee should explain to the student and report to the CHD its reasons for judging the performance to be inadequate and for granting a second examination.

Students who chose to switch degree areas within SEAS after completing their qualifying exam are required to take a qualifying exam in the new area (for example, within Engineering Sciences from Bioengineering to Electrical Engineering or between degrees such as from Engineering Sciences to Applied Physics). The qualifying exam committee for this exam should appropriately reflect the new degree path. Students must first seek approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the CHD in the area they wish to transfer and must submit a final program plan for the new degree area to be reviewed and approved by the CHD.
Research Advisor and Research Committee

Once the qualifying examination has been passed, the final stages of the path to the Ph.D. are initiated by the nomination by the research advisor of a research committee to oversee the student's dissertation research. The committee monitors the student's research progress and approves the final dissertation. The Designation of Research Committee form signed by the research advisor and indicating the other members of the proposed research committee, must be submitted to the Office of Academic Programs, ordinarily within one week after the qualifying examination. Typically the research committee is comprised of a subset of the members of the qualifying committee. Subsequent changes in the composition of the research committee must be approved by the CHD or by its representative. A duly constituted research committee must be in place throughout the rest of the student's graduate career.

The research committee normally consists of three or four Harvard faculty members, with the research advisor as chairperson. MIT faculty members or other technical professionals of comparable stature from the local area may be included with the approval of the CHD. At least two SEAS faculty members, at least one of whom is a senior faculty member (i.e. full professor), must be included. If the research advisor is not a Harvard faculty member, he/she will serve as co-chairman of the research committee with a SEAS faculty member.

Students who are in-between advisors

Students who are in-between advisors have the length of one full term to identify a new advisor. Students are expected to find external funding or to serve as TF at a half-time (0.5 FTE) appointment for their funding in the Fall or Spring terms. The TF covers the monthly salary and all tuition/fees. The monthly salary is equal to the RA salary. There are not TF opportunities over the summer and SEAS does not provide summer funding. Note a student must be in good standing in order to qualify to serve as a TF and receive funding. Students who cannot identify a new advisor at the end of one full term will be asked to withdraw from the program based on a lack of progress to degree.

Employment Policies

SEAS policy is that no full-time student may accept employment other than Teaching Fellowships and Research Assistantships during the academic year, either inside or outside the University, which involves a time commitment of more than ten hours per week without the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). No restrictions apply to employment during the Summer Period, except that employment as a full-time Research Assistant precludes other employment. Ph.D. candidates who have passed their qualifying examinations may not be granted part-time status for the purpose of accepting employment without the permission of the DGS.

Progress Reports

The student is responsible thereafter for submitting progress reports to the Office of Academic Programs once a year in the G3 year and beyond. These reports must be signed by all members of the research committee, and must contain a statement by the chairperson. Progress reports are due by the end of Reading Period in the Spring term but can be submitted at any point in the academic year. In addition to the standard review of the progress of each student each semester, students in their eighth and subsequent semesters should meet with their research committees, assembled as a group, at least once a year. The CHD urges that committee meetings be held in September or early October, and that each student and his or her committee members take full advantage of the excellent opportunities that meetings offer for appraising a student’s progress toward the degree and for clarifying and resolving problems. It is especially urged that these meetings be held when the members of the committee come from different disciplines and schools. The CHD may require an additional progress report at the end of the Summer Period if there is any question as to whether the student should be permitted to continue. The progress report due at the end of the final semester, if the final Ph.D. oral examination (see below) is imminent, may be omitted at the discretion of the dissertation supervisor, provided the Office of Academic Programs is duly notified.

Submission of a satisfactory progress report ordinarily is a condition for registration in the following semester.
Dissertation and Final Ph.D. Oral Examination
SEAS expects most students to complete their dissertation in four to six years. The dissertation must represent an original and significant contribution to knowledge. The dissertation should be a coherent document conforming with the customary standards of scholarly discourse and addressed to a broad audience in the corresponding subject rather than to a narrow audience of specialists in the field. The SEAS does not follow the practice prevalent in some departments in which a collection of manuscripts intended for publication (or actually published) as technical papers constitutes an acceptable dissertation. It should be understood, however, that the student has an obligation to prepare the work for publication in the archival literature in timely fashion. The dissertation must meet the GSAS requirements as to format; detailed information is available from the Office of Academic Programs and the FAS Registrar’s Office.

The last two requirements are the final Ph.D. oral examination and the submission of an electronic copy submitted as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file. The student must deliver a complete penultimate draft of the dissertation (except for the acknowledgments) to all members of the research committee at least two weeks prior to the final examination. Once the student has agreed upon a time for the examination with all members of the research committee, the Office of Academic Programs should be notified (at least two weeks in advance).

All members of the research committee must be present for the final oral examination. A request for remote participation by a member will be decided by the DGS on a case-by-case basis. In any such case, a committee meeting the stated SEAS requirements for composition must be physically present, in addition to any member participating remotely; the advisor must be physically present for the final examination and not the member participating remotely; all committee members must agree to the remote participation of any one; and the student is to send the presentation materials to the member participating remotely before the date of the examination, in addition to sending a penultimate copy of the dissertation.

The final examination is essentially a presentation and defense of the dissertation, though more general questions relating to the field of the dissertation are in order. At the end of the examination, the research committee may accept the dissertation, possibly subject to agreed upon revisions, or specify further requirements. If other than minor revisions are involved, the nature of the conditions that need to be met should be reported to the DGS. The dissertation supervisor must certify in writing that these conditions have been met before award of the degree can formally be recommended by the Dean.

SEAS facilities are the usual location for the final defense. A student planning a defense to be held outside of SEAS must have the approval of all his/her committee members before finalizing the location of the defense. Arrangements as to location will be made by the student through the Office of Academic Programs. Public notice will be given. The Office of Academic Programs strongly encourages students to schedule their defense not later than two weeks before the GSAS Ph.D. Dissertation submission deadline.

Ph.D. Funding
Please see the document entitled Financial Aid and Funding Policies addendum to this document http://www.seas.harvard.edu/academics/graduate/committee-on-higher-degrees.

Dissertation Research in Absentia
Dissertation research in absentia is defined as research that is not done primarily at Harvard and is not done under the immediate direction of a member of the Harvard faculty. Before discussing the regulations governing dissertation in absentia by SEAS Ph.D. candidates, several distinctions should be made. When a Ph.D. candidate is away from Harvard temporarily conducting fieldwork as part of his/her dissertation research, under the general direction of the dissertation supervisor, this is not deemed to constitute dissertation research in absentia.

It is not uncommon for MIT faculty members, or technical professionals of comparable stature from the local area, to serve on the research committee of SEAS Ph.D. candidates. On rare occasions, such individuals may serve as dissertation supervisors. In such cases, the research committee must be co-chaired by a SEAS faculty member, and the research committee normally should meet together as a group with the student whenever a progress report is required. Provided the research is done primarily at Harvard or MIT, such circumstances are not deemed to constitute dissertation research in absentia.
There may arise situations in which the dissertation supervisor is temporarily absent on leave or ceases to be a Harvard faculty member while a Ph.D. candidate is engaged in dissertation research. When the dissertation supervisor is temporarily absent for a substantial period, another member of the research committee, ordinarily a SEAS senior faculty member, should be designated by the research committee as chairman, and the Office of Academic Programs should be notified accordingly. If another member of the research committee ceases to be a Harvard faculty member, the committee should be reconstituted.

Faculty members normally should not agree to serve as dissertation supervisors unless they expect to see the research through to its conclusion. Should the dissertation supervisor cease to be a Harvard faculty member before the Ph.D. candidate completes the requirements for the degree, the research committee must be reconstituted. The student may wish to find a new dissertation supervisor. If the original dissertation supervisor and the student wish to continue their research collaboration, two situations arise. If the original dissertation supervisor remains in the local area and the research can be carried out primarily at Harvard, the previously stated rules shall apply. If the original dissertation supervisor does not remain in the local area or the research cannot be carried out primarily at Harvard, the rules stated below regarding dissertation research in absentia shall apply; these require that a SEAS faculty member assume the formal role of dissertation supervisor.

The following regulations govern dissertation research in absentia, as defined above. The student must have the consent of his/her dissertation supervisor, who must be a SEAS faculty member, and of his/her research committee. The student must establish to the satisfaction of the CHD that there are compelling educational reasons for the research to be done in absentia. The financial advantage of working in absentia is not an acceptable reason. The student must have completed all course requirements for the degree. The research committee must have approved the dissertation topic and a proposed plan of research. The student must register as a Traveling Scholar. If employed at more than a ten hour per week rate, the student must submit a letter from the employer certifying that three quarters of his/her working time can be devoted to dissertation work. The dissertation supervisor may add additional requirements before agreeing to direct dissertation research in absentia. The completed dissertation, in a form ready for study by the research committee, must be submitted at least three months before the final oral examination. All applicable regulations governing Ph.D. candidates in residence continue to apply. In particular, the requirement for periodic progress reports must be met; however, the research committee need not meet together as a group with the student if it deems that to be unnecessary and impractical. Research completed while in residence at Harvard may be written up in absentia if all of the above regulations are complied with except those relating to CHD permission and employer certification.
Master of Science (S.M.) and Master of Engineering (M.E.) Degrees

Note: For masters students in the Computational Science and Engineering Program, specific requirements are available here: http://www.seas.harvard.edu/programs/graduate/computational-science-and-engineering/master-of-science-in-cse

S.M. Degree Requirements

The following course requirements apply to all SEAS S.M. degrees (areas may have additional requirements, published on the SEAS website at http://www.seas.harvard.edu/academics/graduate/master-of-science-degree-requirements):

1. Eight letter-graded courses are required for the S.M. degree; as many of these as possible should be SEAS 200-level courses.
2. At least four of the eight courses must be offered through SEAS or taught by a SEAS faculty member in another FAS department. Because Applied Mathematics is inherently interdisciplinary and draws on offerings in Mathematics and Statistics, this standard is not applied stringently to S.M. programs in Applied Mathematics. Candidates for the S.M. in Applied Mathematics should consult their graduate advisor or the DGS in Applied Mathematics about their programs.
3. At least five of the eight courses must be 200-level SEAS/FAS technical courses, not including reading and research courses (299r), seminar/project courses (298r, 297r, 294r), or innovation or communication courses. The remaining three courses should be from SEAS, FAS departments, other Harvard schools, or MIT. (Note: for courses taken prior to the 2015-16 academic year, only H-level MIT graduate courses are acceptable; for 2015-16 or later MIT courses, consult with the Office of Academic Programs. Students should attach the course syllabus and the catalog description when submitting their program plan, indicating MIT H-level status if applicable).
4. Up to three of the eight courses may be 100-level SEAS/FAS courses. As a guideline, having one 100-level course will generally not lead to any concern; having two 100-level courses requires at least some justification (i.e., that the courses are necessary prerequisites for 200-level courses); having three will generally lead to close examination by the CHD.
5. Only one reading and research (299r), seminar/project (298r, 297r, 294r), innovation, or communication course can count among the eight courses. An exception is that two such courses are allowed in a CSE S.M. program plan. Another exception applies when a student chooses to write a Master’s thesis (see below).
6. Harvard Extension School courses may not be included in the program plan.
7. Transfer credit for work done previously elsewhere is not accepted toward the S.M. degree.
8. No 300-level courses may be included in the program plan.
9. Exceptions to these requirements are considered by petition to the CHD.

S.M. students who write a thesis are allowed to take two reading and research (299r) courses, provided they are taken in different terms, as discussed further below. A limited number of acceptable graduate-level courses taken as a Special Student in GSAS or when registered in the Harvard Summer School may be included in SEAS graduate program plans if completed with an honor grade; however, acceptable offerings are rarely available through the Summer School. Students needing remedial work, in computer programming for example, may nonetheless find Summer School or Extension courses of interest. Not more than a total of four graduate-level courses taken as a Special Student or in the Summer School may be included in a Master's program plan. Harvard University employees who take courses for academic credit under the Tuition Assistance Plan are treated as though they had registered as Special Students, for purposes of SEAS graduate degree programs, should they subsequently be admitted to GSAS.

S.M. Program Plan

The S.M. Program Plan should be comparable to that customary for the first year of a Ph.D. program, with special attention to attaining some breadth and depth of preparation. An approved S.M. program plan ordinarily is a condition for registration for a second term. The S.M. Program Plan form must be completed, signed by the advisor, and submitted together with the required supplementary statement through the Office of Academic Programs for approval by the CHD before study card day in the Fall term of their first year for terminal S.M. students, and by April of junior year for A.B./S.M. students. The Office of Academic Programs will notify students of the deadline. The program proposed ordinarily should allow the student to complete the requirements for the degree in one academic year, but
may propose continuation for a third and final semester. Subsequent changes must be approved in advance by both of the student's advisors and in timely fashion by the CHD.

GPA Expectations
Students must achieve a 3.00 or better average grade in the courses offered for the S.M. degree; no course completed with a grade less than C may be included. Failure to maintain a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade or receipt of any unsatisfactory grade may require that the student withdraw from the program, thus terminating degree candidacy. Academic credit is not granted for graduate work done elsewhere.

A regular S.M. candidate whose average grade at the end of the first term is between 2.50 and 3.00 normally will be warned that he/she will not complete the requirements for the degree at the end of the second term unless a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade is achieved. Should the student fail to satisfy the requirements for the S.M. degree at the end of the second term, continuation for a third and final term will be granted provided there is reasonable assurance that the degree requirements can be completed at the end of that term. A regular S.M. candidate whose SEAS average grade at the end of the first term is less than 2.50 but who could achieve a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade at the end of the second term, working as a full-time student, normally will be warned that continuation for a third and final term is contingent upon a marked improvement in performance sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that the requirements for the S.M. degree will be completed at the end of the third term. A regular S.M. candidate who could not achieve a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade at the end of the second term normally will be required to withdraw at the end of the first term, thus terminating degree candidacy.

Categories of S.M. students
Four categories of candidates for the S.M. degree can be distinguished: terminal S.M. candidates, part-time S.M. candidates, candidates in the SEAS doctoral program, and A.B.-S.M. candidates. The basic requirements above apply to all categories, but other requirements vary somewhat.

Terminal SM Candidates
Terminal S.M. candidates normally are expected to complete the requirements for the degree in one academic year in residence, and ordinarily are not permitted to continue beyond a third semester unless they have been advanced to candidacy for a higher degree. Advancement to candidacy for the M.E. or the Ph.D. degree is on a competitive basis, and considered according to the normal procedures of the SEAS Admissions and Scholarships Committee.

Terminal S.M. candidates will be assigned a field advisor who is a member of the SEAS faculty. This field advisor is primarily responsible for helping the student to plan a strong, coherent program in that field. The student should consult his/her field advisor before registering for courses and agree upon a tentative program. In each semester of study in the S.M. program, a student is required to have the study card signed by his/her field advisor.

Part-time S.M. Candidates
A limited number of S.M. degree candidates are admitted to study on a part-time basis. They must take at least one half-course each semester, and ordinarily no more than two. Such students are strongly encouraged to work at a rate of two half-courses per semester whenever possible. The degree requirements normally must be completed within four years. The SEAS form “Plan of Study/Degree Program for the Part-Time S.M. Degree” should be completed, signed by the student’s advisor and submitted to the SEAS Office of Academic Programs. In all other respects, such students are treated as though they were regular S.M. candidates; in particular, their performance will be reviewed at the end of each semester. A part-time S.M. candidate must achieve a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade at the end of each academic year; failure to meet this standard normally will require that the student withdraw, thus terminating degree candidacy.

Ph.D. Candidates earning the S.M. degree en route]
Ph.D. candidates may apply for the S.M. degree upon completion of the corresponding requirements, normally at the end of the first year of graduate study. Ph.D. candidates in SEAS and GSAS may earn the S.M. degree en route in any SEAS area, provided their S.M. program plans satisfy both the SEAS-wide and area-specific requirements for that area. In particular, a SEAS Ph.D. student pursuing an S.M. degree in the same area whose Ph.D. program plan in that area has been approved by the CHD can receive an S.M. in that area en route to the Ph.D. with no further approval required, provided that the courses selected to apply towards the degree satisfy both the SEAS-wide and area-specific S.M. course requirements. The CHD must review any S.M. plan that includes a combination of coursework that has not been
previously approved by the CHD. *Note that transfer credit is not accepted toward the S.M. degree, even if it has been approved toward the Ph.D.*

The SEAS S.M. Program Plan form must be completed, signed by the research advisor and submitted together with the required supplementary statement through the Office of Academic Programs for approval by the CHD. Additional flexibility in satisfying the basic S.M. requirements as part of those for the Ph.D. may be appropriate.

**A.B.-S.M. Program**

Undergraduates in Harvard College who have been granted Advanced Standing have the choice of graduating with the A.B. degree at the end of three years or remaining for a fourth year. During their third year, they may apply in the usual manner to GSAS for admission to candidacy for the S.M. degree during their fourth year. They will be considered for admission only if it is possible for them to complete the requirements for both the A.B. and the S.M. by the end of their fourth year. Early planning of the student's program is essential since flexibility may be limited. A student admitted to the A.B.-S.M. program will be assigned a field advisor shortly after his/her acceptance; the student is encouraged to consult with the advisor before the beginning of the fall term. Students must meet all requirements set forth above applicable to regular S.M. candidates in SEAS. Particular attention should be paid to the expectation that at least half of the graduate-level courses offered in satisfaction of the requirements for the S.M. degree will be drawn from those offered by SEAS.

Prospective A.B.-S.M. candidates should be aware that it is possible to designate graduate-level courses taken prior to the fourth year for inclusion in the S.M. rather than the A.B. program, provided this is done *before* the course is taken. (It will be necessary to do so in any event during the fourth year.) There can be no assurance, however, that such courses will in fact be accepted in a S.M. program unless approved in advance by the CHD; and such courses cannot be also included in the A.B. program. A tentative program plan may be submitted to the CHD for an advisory opinion.

**Master of Engineering (M.E.)**

**M.E. Degree Requirements**

Graduate students in SEAS who wish to pursue more advanced formal training without undertaking the research required for completion of a doctoral dissertation may earn the M.E. degree by successfully completing one year of course work and one year of research, including a final oral presentation of the thesis. A thesis is required in the M.E. program.

M.E. students must take 8 letter-graded courses that satisfy the requirements listed in the “S.M. Degree Requirements” section of this document, plus eight additional research-oriented courses at the 300-level that result in the completion of the required ME thesis. All rules for the 8 letter-graded courses that apply to the S.M. degree apply also to the M.E. degree. The letter-graded courses must be completed with a 3.00 or better average grade; no course completed with a grade less than B- may be included. Failure to maintain a cumulative 3.00 or better average grade or receipt of any unsatisfactory grade may require that the student withdraw, thus terminating degree candidacy.

The sixteen half courses, including research courses, offered for this degree must form a coherent program plan approved by the CHD. The SEAS form "M.E. Degree Program" should be completed, signed by the student's advisor, and submitted together with the required supplementary statement through the Office of Academic Programs for approval by the CHD before the end of the first term of graduate study. Subsequent changes in the program plan must be approved in advance both by the student's advisor and by the CHD. Students are expected to complete the requirements for the M.E. degree within four consecutive semesters. Continuation beyond the fourth semester will be granted only if there is reasonable assurance that the requirements can be completed by the end of the fifth semester.

SEAS Ph.D. students are not allowed to earn the M.E. degree en route to the Ph.D.

**Master's Thesis (S.M. and M.E. degrees)**

A candidate for a terminal Master's degree, with the prior approval of a faculty supervisor and of the CHD, may undertake an extended reading and research project resulting in what amounts to a Master's thesis. The thesis is optional for the S.M. degree and required for those pursuing the M.E. degree. In connection with this project, an S.M. candidate may take no more than two SEAS letter-graded reading and research courses (299r), no more than one in any
given term; M.E. candidates may take up to one 299r course as part of the eight graded courses and are required to take eight 300-level reading and research courses.

When a thesis project is pursued in connection with a terminal Master’s degree, the thesis supervisor, in consultation with the student, shall nominate an outside reader who is a member of the SEAS faculty for approval by the CHD before study card day of their third term. Ordinarily, both the supervisor and reader must be members of the SEAS faculty; exceptions must be approved by the CHD.

An initial draft of the thesis must be transmitted to the supervisor before Spring Recess of the student’s final term (or Thanksgiving Recess if the student’s final term is the fall). The final draft of the thesis, incorporating any revisions given on prior drafts by the thesis supervisor and outside reader, must be transmitted to the thesis supervisor and outside reader by the first day of Reading Period, and the student should simultaneously submit a one or two page abstract to the Office of Academic Programs. The thesis supervisor and outside reader should each submit to the Office of Academic Programs by the last day of Reading Period a letter giving their evaluation of the thesis. It is expected that such a thesis will represent a more substantial contribution than is customary for an undergraduate senior thesis, but less so than a doctoral dissertation. The thesis will follow a similar format to a Ph.D. dissertation, and satisfy similar criteria. The main difference is in the volume of original work expected of a master’s thesis, which might have the content of roughly 25% of original research as in the Ph.D. dissertation. No part of a master’s thesis may be included in a subsequent Ph.D. dissertation. The student should note that the following four points should be covered in a master’s thesis: introduction, stating the question being asked, or hypothesis being tested, or design challenge being addressed; literature review, summarizing pertinent prior work; original research or design; and conclusions, stating what was learned. The thesis abstract and evaluations will be made part of the student's permanent record. When an S.M. or M.E. program plan approved by the CHD provides for or requires the preparation of a thesis, award of the degree will not be recommended by the CHD until the abstract and satisfactory evaluations have been received by the Office of Academic Programs. Unsatisfactory evaluations of the thesis will be reflected as unsatisfactory grades given by the supervisor in the student’s 300-level and/or 299r courses and will preclude awarding of the M.E. degree; M.E. students who otherwise have met the course requirements for the S.M. may apply for that degree to be conferred on the next degree date.

**Part Time Study (for students in all graduate programs)**

GSAS normally does not offer part-time graduate degree programs. SEAS admits a limited number of S.M. degree candidates who study on a part-time basis. The special rules that apply to such students are detailed above. Under unusual circumstances detailed in the GSAS Handbook, a full-time degree candidate may petition for permission to work *temporarily* as a part-time student. Such part-time students usually register for two half-courses per term. Unless a student has been admitted directly into the part-time S.M. program, petitions for part-time status on grounds of outside employment normally will not be granted until at least one year of full-time graduate study as a SEAS degree candidate has been completed. Terminal Master's degree candidates who need less than four half-courses to complete the requirements for the degree will be charged tuition on a per course basis if they wish to work at less than a full-time rate during their final semester.

Part-time students are subject to the same requirements and regulations as full-time students. When granted temporary part-time status, a Master's degree candidate or a Ph.D. candidate who has not completed the course requirements for the degree and passed the qualifying examination will be permitted by the CHD to extend the normal deadlines for completing the corresponding requirements by one semester; in extraordinary circumstances, the student may petition the CHD for an extension of up to one year. When the problem arises from temporary health or family considerations, no special accommodations are usually required for Ph.D. candidates engaged in dissertation research, since adequate flexibility is already available. Employment inside or outside the University while engaged in dissertation research will be dealt with below.

Normally, a Ph.D. candidate will embark on the preliminary phases of the research component of the degree requirements at some point during the period between the end of the second semester of graduate study and the qualifying examination during the fourth semester. Many students seek employment outside the University during the summer following their first academic year of graduate work; some obtain employment within the University, perhaps commencing research. Most students remain in residence and devote themselves to full-time dissertation research in succeeding summers. The academic year extends from the day appointed for GSAS (and SEAS) fall registration
through the succeeding Commencement; however, graduate students who remain at the University during the Summer Period need not register in the Summer School to be regarded as students in residence.

**APPENDIX: FORMS AND DEADLINES**

This appendix lists the more important SEAS and GSAS forms which graduate students may encounter in the course of satisfying the requirements for the Ph.D., S.M. and M.E. degrees. The various forms are available on the SEAS, GSAS, and FAS Registrar’s Office websites; all forms must be filed with the Office of Academic Programs by the stated deadlines.

**Ph.D. Program Plan form (SEAS).** For prospective Ph.D. program plans, this form specifies the ten graduate-level courses offered to satisfy the course requirements for the Ph.D.; it must be filed before the Spring Recess in the second semester of graduate study, and must be accompanied by an explanatory statement. For final Ph.D. program plans, this form finalizes the Ph.D. program plan (updating it is necessary), and specifies the potential dissertation supervisor and two additional members of the qualifying committee. It must be filed before the Thanksgiving Recess in the third semester of graduate study, and must also be accompanied by an explanatory statement.

**Application for Academic Credit for Graduate Work Done Elsewhere (GSAS).** This form specifies graduate-level courses taken elsewhere for which academic credit in the Ph.D. program is sought. It should be attached to the Ph.D. Program Plan form if required, and the explanatory statement should justify inclusion of such courses.

**Designation of Research Committee (SEAS).** This form specifies the membership of the research committee, which monitors the Ph.D. candidate’s research progress and approves the final dissertation. The dissertation supervisor, in consultation with the student, nominates the original membership of the research committee at the time the qualifying examination is passed, normally during the fourth semester of graduate study. The student must arrange to reconstitute the research committee as necessary thereafter by filing a new Designation of Research Committee form.

**Progress Report (SEAS).** Ph.D. candidates engaged in dissertation research must file a progress report signed by all members of their research committee by the end of Reading Period in the sixth and eighth semesters of graduate study, and in each subsequent semester. In the eighth semester and beyond, the committee should meet together as a group with the student.

**Application for Degree (FAS).** This form notifies SEAS and FAS that the student expects to complete the requirements for the designated degree prior to the next degree recommendation deadline.

**S.M. Program Plan (SEAS).** This form specifies the eight graduate-level courses offered to satisfy the degree requirements. It must be filed by all S.M. candidates by Study Card Day in the first semester of graduate study, and must be accompanied by an explanatory statement.

**Petition for Part-Time Study (GSAS).** This form must be completed annually by any student requesting to be a part-time student. SEAS and GSAS must approve. Ordinarily this form is used by students wanting to enroll in the part-time S.M. program.

**M.E. Program Plan (SEAS).** This form specifies the sixteen graduate-level courses offered to satisfy the degree requirements. It should be filed before the Spring Recess in the second semester of graduate study, and must be accompanied by an explanatory statement.

**Application for Change of Subject (FAS).** Students are admitted as candidates for the S.M., M.E. or Ph.D. in one of four subjects: Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Computer Science and Engineering Sciences. This form is used if the student wishes to change the degree designation from one of these subjects to another.