

Materials Science and Engineering

Graduate Study

The department offers work toward the following advanced degrees: Master of Engineering in Materials Science and Engineering, Master of Science in Materials Science and Engineering and Doctor of Philosophy in Materials Science and Engineering.

Built on a foundation of thermodynamics, kinetics of phase transformations, mechanical behavior, physical properties, solid state science, and the structure and chemistry of materials, the graduate program offers advanced studies in many areas of materials science and engineering, including the design and control of materials for structural, electronic, photonic, magnetic, optical, and biological functionality. Graduates of the program have a fundamental understanding of the critical aspects of the field and how they are applied to real materials systems. The program is highly flexible and research-oriented, where students work carefully with their major professor in tailoring the various academic and research components to meet their interests.

With the ability to address complex problems in materials science while considering the various constraints inherent to both academic and industrial environments, our graduates are well prepared for a wide range of academic and research-related careers. They are skilled in carrying out independent and collaborative research, able to communicate effectively in formal and informal settings, and are proficient at writing persuasive technical articles and grant proposals.

The department boasts excellent facilities for academic materials research, maintaining a wide range of faculty laboratories across the ISU campus. In addition, departmental research is highly integrated with the operation of several Research Centers, such as the Ames Laboratory, the Center for Nondestructive Evaluation, the Microelectronics Research Center, and the Center for Advanced Technology Development. These laboratories offer excellent resources and opportunities for graduate student research.

Prerequisite to major graduate work is completion of an undergraduate curriculum in physical science, biological science, or engineering discipline. Graduate students from disciplines other than materials science and engineering may expect that supplemental coursework will be needed, in addition to the required graduate coursework. Well qualified students (juniors) enrolled in the undergraduate materials engineering program at Iowa State University can apply to the Graduate College for admission to the concurrent enrollment program, where students may simultaneously pursue both master of science and bachelor of science degrees.

The requirements for the M. Eng., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees are established by the student's program of study committee within the established guidelines of the Graduate College. Minimum requirements include coursework, research (M.S. and Ph.D. only), proposal (M.S. and Ph.D. only), preliminary oral examination (Ph.D. only), dissertation (M.S. and Ph.D. only), and a final oral examination (M.S. and Ph.D. only). Academic coursework requirements include 31 credits for the M.Eng. degree, 21 credits for the M.S. degree and 32 credits for the Ph.D., with additional specific rules for choices available from the department.

There are no foreign language requirements for any of the graduate degrees administered by the Department of Materials Science and Engineering. Graduate students wishing to declare a formal minor in materials science and engineering will have at least one materials science and engineering faculty member serving on their program of study committee. For the M. Eng., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees, they will take a minimum of 8 materials science and engineering course credits for the M. Engr. or M.S. degrees and a minimum of 12 materials science and engineering course credits for the Ph.D. degree.