

WIND ENERGY SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND POLICY

Graduate Study

Wind Energy Science, Engineering and Policy (WESEP) is an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program that prepares graduates for wind energy related careers in industry, academia, and government institutions. WESEP is a unique integration of engineering, science, and policy-related disciplines that provides students with an opportunity for breadth and depth in their program of study.

Students take a set of 11 courses and participate each semester in a one-credit seminar course. Of the 11 courses, two courses are introductory wind energy courses, eight are core courses, and one is an advanced specialization course in wind energy. The seminar course will address research methods and communications in science and engineering. Students are also required to pass a qualifying examination in the first 18 months of their program, a preliminary examination generally taken by the end of year three, and a final oral defense with written dissertation to complete the program.

Of the eight core courses, students select five courses from a primary thrust area, providing disciplinary depth, and three courses from a secondary thrust area, providing interdisciplinary breadth. Students can take additional courses within the other thrust areas as needed for their research, but this requirement ensures students are research-capable in two thrust areas.

WESEP Thrust areas

- Wind resource characterization and aerodynamics of wind farms
- Wind energy conversion system and grid operations
- Manufacturing, construction, and supply chain
- Turbine reliability & health monitoring
- Economics, policy and public perception

Admission Requirements

Applicants should have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 (B average) and a B.S. degree from a calculus-based undergraduate curriculum. A calculus-based undergraduate curriculum is one in which students take the equivalent of two years of calculus, covering differential and integral calculus, multivariable and vector calculus, and differential equations, and one year of physics, covering mechanics, thermodynamics, electric circuits, electromagnetics, and optics. The GRE is not required. Applicants who do not meet these general standards will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Courses primarily for graduate students, open to qualified undergraduates:

WESEP 501: Wind Energy Resources

(3-0) Cr. 3.

Prereq: Graduate standing

Forecasting, wind measurement and analysis, site placement, aerodynamic principles associated with blade design, power generation technologies, power electronic topologies used in wind energy conversion, collection circuits, and grid operation with high wind penetration.

WESEP 502: Wind Energy Systems

(3-0) Cr. 3.

Prereq: Graduate standing

Systems approach to wind turbine design, manufacturing, installation, integrated with wind economics and policy issues. Topics include manufacturing practices used to produce wind turbines, construction practices, sensing and inspection technologies used in monitoring wind farm health, and the impact of policy making on the wind energy industry.

WESEP 511: Wind Energy System Design

(3-0) Cr. 3.

Prereq: WESEP 501 and WESEP 502

Advanced design, control, and operation of wind plants. Topics include electromechanical energy conversion systems, aerodynamic and aeroelastic loads, optimal control of wind farms, life cycle management strategies, tall tower design, and prediction of component residual life.

WESEP 590: Special Topics

Cr. 1-3. Repeatable.

Advanced study of a research topic in the field of wind energy, science, engineering, and policy.

WESEP 594: Wind Energy Real-Time Research Collaborative Seminar

(1-0) Cr. 1. Repeatable. F.S.

Prereq: Graduate standing

Identifying current wind energy research issues and conducting components of the research cycle in real-time, including proposal development, investigation/analysis/discovery, publication and presentation, ethical behavior, and leadership.