

# UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON** | ENGINEERING

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Department of Biomedical Engineering

**Graduate Student Handbook**

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## Welcome

From the desk of the Department Chair, Dr. Metin Akay



I welcome you to the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Houston, established in 2010. We are dedicated to building one of the most respected biomedical engineering programs in Texas, the U.S., and the world.

We have built an innovative entrepreneurship environment and healthcare-focused academic curriculum to meet the ever-changing global economy's demands and requirements that influence healthcare technology, management, and delivery.

Our main goal is to develop leadership in academia, government, and industry nationally and globally. Our undergraduate and graduate programs have strongly emphasized the importance of global scientific, social, and cultural interaction and the demands of the ever-changing global healthcare economy. To achieve these goals, we are leaders in three academic and research fields:

### **Neural, Cognitive, and rehabilitation engineering**

We focus on neural implants, neurogenesis, neurochips, cognitive engineering, neural signal and image processing and modeling, and brain-computer interface from hardware to experimentation.

### **Biomedical Imaging**

We focus on biomolecular and cellular imaging research with a strong emphasis on biomarkers, therapy assessment, and biology models related to cancer. We also focus on clinical cardiovascular and brain imaging and develop an advanced interdisciplinary research field.

### **Bionanoscience**

We focus on gene regulatory networks, genetics of systems biology, computational biology, and infectious diseases. We also focus on innovative drug discovery and design, translational research, personalized medicine, and recent advances in bionanoscience and engineering.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Metin Akay'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Metin Akay, Ph.D.

Founding Chair, John S. Dunn Endowed Chair Professor

Department of Biomedical Engineering

3605 Cullen Blvd, Room 2027

Houston, TX 77204-5060

## Department Information

Location: Science & Engineering Research Center (SERC – Building 545) 2nd Floor  
 Office Hours: Monday to Friday,  
 8 AM to 5 PM  
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 3517 Cullen Blvd, Room 2018 Houston, TX 77204-5060  
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## Important University Websites

University of Houston	<a href="http://uh.edu/">http://uh.edu/</a>
Graduate School	<a href="http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/">http://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/</a>
Cullen College of Engineering	<a href="http://www.egr.uh.edu/">http://www.egr.uh.edu/</a>
Department of Biomedical Engineering	<a href="http://bme.uh.edu/">http://bme.uh.edu/</a>
Office of International Student Services	<a href="https://uh.edu/oisss/">https://uh.edu/oisss/</a>

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## Degree Plans and Timelines

### Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Engineering (from Bachelors)

*The program requires completing at least 72 credit hours of approved coursework and program milestones.*

#### Degree Plan (Fall 2020)

24 Coursework Credits

- 2 Math (BIOE 6300 +1 other)
- 1 Statistics (BIOE 6301)
- 1 Core (BIOE 6350)
- 4 Elective Courses

36 Research Credits

12 Dissertation Credits

Seminar (1 credit each semester enrolled)

#### Timeline (4- 6 Years)

- Coursework
- Qualifying Exam
- Form Dissertation Committee
- Prospectus
- Dissertation Defense
- Graduation

### Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Engineering (from Masters)

*The program requires completing at least 54 credit hours of approved coursework and program milestones.*

#### Degree Plan (Fall 2020)

12 Coursework Credits

- 1 Math           BIOE 6300
- 1 Core            BIOE 6350
- 2 Elective Courses

30 Research Credits

12 Dissertation Credits

Seminar (1 credit each semester enrolled)

#### Timeline (3-5 Years)

- Coursework
- Qualifying Exam
- Form Dissertation Committee
- Prospectus
- Dissertation Defense
- Graduation

### Masters of Science in Biomedical Engineering (Non-Thesis)

*The program requires completing a minimum of 30 credit hours of approved coursework.*

#### Degree Plan (Spring 2017)

30 Coursework Credits

- 1 Math           BIOE 6300
- 1 Statistics     BIOE 6301
- 1 Core           BIOE 6350

7 Elective Courses

#### Timeline (2 years)

- Coursework
- Graduation

### Masters of Science in Biomedical Engineering (Thesis)

*The program requires completing at least 30 credit hours of approved coursework and a successful Thesis defense.*

#### Degree Plan (Fall 2013)

21 Coursework Credits

- 1 Math           BIOE 6300
- 1 Statistics     BIOE 6301
- 1 Core           BIOE 6350

4 Elective Courses

3 Research Credits

6 Thesis Credits

#### Timeline (2 Years)

- Coursework
- Form Committee
- Thesis Defense
- Graduation



## Track Areas

*Below are the three Tracks offered by the University Of Houston Department Of Biomedical Engineering, with each track allowing for a specialized focus within a prominent area.*

### *Neural, Cognitive, and Rehabilitation Engineering*

We focus on neural implants, neurogenesis, neurochips, cognitive engineering, neural signal and image processing and modeling, and brain-computer interface from hardware to experimentation.

#### Course Options

- **BIOE 6305:** Brain-Machine Interfacing
- **BIOE 6309:** Neural Interfaces
- **BIOE 6342:** Biomedical Signal Processing
- **BIOE 6309:** Neural Interfaces

### *Biomedical Imaging*

We focus on in vivo molecular and cellular imaging research with a strong emphasis on the imaging of cancer biomarkers, therapy assessment, cancer biology models, etc. We also focus on clinical cardiovascular and brain imaging and develop an advanced interdisciplinary research field based on human cardiovascular and brain imaging.

#### Course Options

- **BIOE 6346:** Advanced Medical Imaging
- **BIOE 6347:** Introduction to Optical Sensing and Biophotonics
- **BIOE 6348:** Advanced Bioelectromagnetic Imaging

### *Bionanoscience Science*

We focus on gene regulatory networks, genetics of systems biology, computational biology, and infectious diseases. We also focus on innovative drug discovery and design, translational research, personalized medicine, recent bionanoscience and engineering advances.

#### Course Options

- **BIOE 6303:** Biomaterials
- **BIOE 6310:** Drug Design & Delivery
- **BIOE 6319:** Mass Transport for BioSystems
- **BIOE 6349:** Biomedical Microdevices
- **BIOE 6320:** Tissue Engineering

## Admissions

### Requirements

**Course Requirement:** those with a bachelor's outside of Biomedical Engineering must complete the following prerequisites.

- 2 years of Calculus and completion of Undergraduate Differential Equations.
- 1 year of Engineering/Calculus based Physics (University Physics I and II)
- 1 year of Biology (Any two 1000-level courses and higher)
- 1 year of Chemistry (Any two 1000-level courses and higher)

### Admission Criteria

B.S. Degree: Biomedical Engineering-related STEM field.

M.S. GPA 3.00/4.00 on last 60 hours

Ph.D. GPA 3.30/4.00 on the last 60 **undergraduate** or **Masters** Graduate hours.

GRE Q-159, V-150

### International Applicants

TOEFL: PBT580, CBT- 236, IBT- 92

IELTS: 7.0 overall with a minimum 6.5 writing score

Duolingo: 105 and higher

Graduate school requirements for more information:

<https://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/international-students/english-proficiency/>

Biomedical Engineering Department Graduate Admissions page for the most updated information: <http://www.bme.uh.edu/graduate/admissions>

### Unconditional Admissions

The accepted incoming student meets all admissions requirements and can proceed with enrollment into the graduate program without additional prerequisites.

### Conditional Admissions

The incoming student needs prerequisite or leveling courses to meet the admissions requirement and start graduate-level coursework.

**Example:** Students' bachelor's is outside biomedical engineering or related STEM fields.

- The student must complete the above-listed courses with a minimum of 3.0 GPA.

**Example:** Student's previous institution GPA needs to meet the minimum requirement.

- Must complete the first 12 SCH with a 3.0 GPA or B average for status change.

Students are evaluated at the end of the semester, and terms are met and required to complete a [graduate and professional student petition](#).

- Must be changed by the end of the first year of enrollment.
- Part-time students are required to complete the petition after completing 12 SCH.
- Students who fail to meet the conditions within the specified timeframe become ineligible for an advanced degree at the University of Houston.

### Leveling Courses

Students are only eligible for enrollment in graduate-level coursework once prerequisites and leveling courses are complete. A grade of B and higher is required in all classes and does not count towards the graduate-level degree.

## Academic Advising

### *Role of the Academic Advisor*

The Graduate Academic Advisor is responsible for confirming course enrollment, assisting with academic plans, processing changes or adjustments to degree plans through signed petitions, managing student records, and facilitating dialogue between staff, students, and faculty.

- The Graduate Academic Advisor is available Monday through Friday between 8 AM and 5 PM and is subject to change based on availability.
- Advising appointments are preferred and recommended to prevent long waiting periods.

### *Role of Faculty Advisor (PI)*

The Faculty Advisor or principal investigator (PI) is responsible for overall learning and serves as a mentor and role model throughout the graduate academic career.

Students are recommended to meet with the Faculty Advisor at the beginning of each semester to discuss academic engagement and learning.

### *Orientation*

Incoming Biomedical Engineering students will have multiple orientations (mandatory & optional)

- Graduate School Orientation
- Cullen College of Engineering
- Biomedical Engineering Department (If available)
- International Student Orientation (Mandatory for all International Students)

Students are encouraged to attend each to learn about the policies, procedures, and the University of Houston Graduate School and College of Engineering.

### *Credit Load*

- Doctoral students with an Assistantship and Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF) are required to enroll in 9 SCH each Fall & Spring semesters.
- Ph.D. students without an assistantship or GTF may enroll up to 12 SCH.
- M.S. students with an assistantship or scholarship are required at least 12 SCH each Fall & Spring.
- Non-Thesis M.S. students may enroll in a maximum of 12 SCH per semester.
- International Students must enroll in full-time status to maintain Visa Status.

### *Enrolling in Courses*

- The Graduate Academic Advisor is available for assistance if necessary. However, students are encouraged to enroll themselves each semester.
- Students seeking to take a MATH or ELECTIVE outside their BME program. Must receive approval from the PI and complete a generation [graduate and professional petition](#) stating the reason for enrolling in the course.
- Please reference the Academic Calendar for enrollment, dropping, graduation, and payment deadlines.

### *Dropping a Course*

Students may drop a student following the guidelines, restrictions, and consequences listed below.

- Funded Ph.D. students must remain in at least 9 SCH
- Funded M.S. must remain in at least 12 SCH.

Students who drop below the required credit hours per semester will lose their GTF and must repay all tuition and fees.

- Students dropping a course after the official day of record must complete a student-initiated drop form requiring the instructor's signature.
- Please reference the academic calendar for deadlines.

International students who drop below the required 9 SCH without a reduced course load form may have additional consequences.

- The reduced course load form is used during the international students' final semester with less than 9 SCH to complete graduation requirements.

### *Seminar*

BIOL 6111 is a professional development opportunity for students to present their research and interact with field experts brought to the classroom.

- The one-semester credit hour seminar is required, along with research hours.
- The credit does not count toward graduate-level coursework.

Students may adjust the research hours if the seminar course exceeds the maximum credit hours allowed. The following page outlines the research hours numbering system.

### *Department Courses*

Biomedical Engineering graduate courses include some upper-level undergraduates and all graduate students.

- Students may take electives outside the BME program after the course is approved and confirmed with the Faculty Advisor (PI) and Graduate Academic Advisor.
- Graduate students cannot enroll in courses in other departments for the first semester.
- Only twenty-five percent of your coursework may be completed outside the BIOE department.

M.S. and Ph.D. students must follow the degree plan outlined during the first enrolled semester.

- Reference the Graduate Catalog and Biomedical Engineering Website for courses: <https://www.bme.uh.edu/graduate/thrust-area>

### *Masters Research Hours*

Masters Research Codes start with a “6” and end with “98,” with the second number representing the number of credit hours.

- 6198 = 1 credit
- 6298 = 2 credits
- 6398 = 3 credits
- 6498 = 4 credits
- 6598 = 5 credits

Students interested in enrolling in 6 credits must enroll in two options above.

- For example, 6198 and 6598 = 6 credits.

Masters students must enroll in a 6X98 to begin working on their research.

### *Doctoral Research Hours*

Doctoral Research Codes start with an “8” and end with “98,” with the second number representing the number of credit hours.

- 8198 = 1 credit
- 8298 = 2 credits
- 8398 = 3 credits
- 8498 = 4 credits
- 8598 = 5 credits

Students interested in enrolling in 6 credits must enroll in two options above.

- For example, 8198 and 8598 = 6 credits.

Doctoral students must enroll in an 8X98 to begin working on their research.

### *Masters Thesis Hours*

Master’s Thesis Codes are 6399 and 7399; 6399 occurs first, then 7399.

Students traditionally complete their thesis hours during the last two semesters.

Master’s students are awarded a final thesis grade in 6399 and 7399 from their Thesis Advisor after successfully defending their thesis.

### *Doctoral Dissertation Hours*

Doctoral Dissertation Codes are 8399, 8699, and 8999.

Students traditionally complete their dissertation hours during the last two to three semesters.

Doctoral students are awarded a final dissertation grade of 8399, 8699, and/or 8999, with a minimum of 12 hours of dissertation credits successfully defending their dissertation. If students have taken/are taking more than 12 credit hours, only the last 12 hours of the thesis will be graded.



### Cullen College of Engineering Graduate Academic Policies

Refer to the Cullen College of Engineering Graduate Policies, including:

*Admissions, enrollment, time limitations, transfer credit, credit level changes, resident requirements, earning credit, grade point average, four C-rule, qualifying examination, practical training, graduation, thesis/dissertation guide, committee formation, academic honesty, grievance policy, competitive scholarships and presidential fellowships and GTF.*

<https://www.egr.uh.edu/academics/graduate-programs-policies>

### Graduate School Forms & Procedures

Reference the Graduate School Forms and procedures for the following:

*Forms and Procedures, including Graduate and Professional Student Petitions, Student-Initiated Drop Forms, Student Initiated Term Withdrawal, Medical/Administrative Term Withdrawal Requests, Letter of Financial Backing, CPT, and Reduced Course Load Form.*

<https://www.uh.edu/graduate-school/forms/>

### Safety Training

Incoming students must take laboratory safety training at the beginning of each semester.

Training is mandatory and by safety regulations from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. <https://www.uh.edu/ehs/>

- Safety (EH12) is required for students working inside a lab in the SERC building.  
<https://www.uh.edu/ehs/commons/safety-training/catalog/eh12/index>
- General Laboratory Safety and Hazardous Materials Orientation (EH06) is required for students working in labs outside the SERC building.  
<https://www.uh.edu/ehs/commons/safety-training/catalog/eh12/index>

Additionally, following the posted laboratory safety expectations and policies within each lab.

### Human Resources Training

Required for Ph.D. and M.S. Teaching and Research Assistants Only.

The following training must be completed within the first 30 days of enrollment.

- Conflict of Interest/Responsible Conduct Online Training
- Mandatory Online Hiring Training (Accessed through MyUH)
- Completion certificates can be emailed to the Department Business Administrator.

## Program Milestones

### *Coursework*

Outlined coursework within the agreed-upon degree plan must be completed by graduation with a 3.0 GPA or higher. Most students prefer to complete coursework (lectures) before focusing on research.

### *Qualifying Exam*

#### Eligibility

- Doctoral students are eligible by the end of their second semester and no later than the completion of the third semester unless otherwise approved by the Department Chair and Graduate Director.
- Students must inform and confirm when the exam will take place in the semester.

#### Components

- The exam includes two parts: written and oral. Students must submit two abstracts, including current and future research, to the graduate academic advisor at least one week before the exam.
- Notes, PowerPoint slides, or electronic displays are prohibited during the oral exam.

#### Committee

- The Graduate Academic Advisor created the Qualifying Exam committee based on available faculty and the student's schedule.
- The committee includes the candidate's Research Advisor, Department Chair or Graduate Director, and two additional faculty selected by the chair and graduate program director. The additional faculty will represent the candidate's research focus area and be primarily responsible for the examination.
- The Research Advisor is expected to fulfill the candidate's advocate role as the student prepares for the exam. The Department Chair's primary function is to ensure consistency across all candidates qualifying exams.

#### Overview

- The Graduate Academic Advisor notifies the candidate (student) of the date and time once confirmed with the committee.
- The oral component is the candidate's overview of their research track area and prospective research, lasting between 1 and 1.5 hours.
- The student's previously provided abstracts are sent to the committee by the graduate academic advisor.

The Exam Committee will ask questions and discuss with the student for the remainder of the session. The following are the goals and scope of the oral exam:

- Determine the students' depth of understanding of the Biomedical Engineering Core.
- Assess critical thinking and application of engineering tools to solve problems.
- Ability to integrate skills in biology or biomedical engineering research.
- Successful student completion will demonstrate critical thinking and application, incorporating the learned coursework to topics pertinent to the research area.



### Immediately Following

- The student is dismissed, allowing the committee to discuss performance and determine exam results. The following are possible outcomes.

### Contingent Pass

- The candidate continues in the Ph.D. program only if they successfully fulfill a plan recommended by the Exam Committee.

### Fail

- The candidate is removed from the Ph.D. program. However, a contingent plan may be developed to enter the thesis or non-thesis M.S. program.
- Petition to retake the exam, during which the student may be retained in the Ph.D. program until resolved.
- If denied, the student is removed. If approved, the student remains in the program contingent upon passing the repeat.

The graduate advisor adds the completed [Qualifying Exam Score Sheet](#) by the committee to the student's academic record.

### *Formation of MS Thesis and PhD Dissertation Committee*

The student and Faculty Advisor determine the M.S. Thesis/Ph.D. Dissertation Committee.

The Ph.D. Dissertation Committee requires a minimum of five members and includes at least four tenure-track faculty within the University of Houston and a fifth member outside the UH Systems.

- The student's faculty advisor acts as the chair.
- Two Biomedical Engineering Department faculty.
- One tenure-track faculty outside the BME department.
- The remaining member is a tenure-track faculty outside the University of Houston.

The M.S. Thesis Committee includes three tenure-track faculty members.

- The student's faculty advisor acts as the chair.
- One tenure-track faculty in the BME department.
- Remaining is outside of the BME department.

The Committee members complete the [Committee Appointment Form](#) acknowledging participation. The completed and signed form submission is required well before allowing time for approval by the Department and Dean's Office to schedule the proposal defense.

- The graduate academic advisor collects the CV's of faculty members outside of the University of Houston.
- A student is not required to enroll while requesting to form a committee but must be enrolled when the defense occurs.

### Committee Formation Deadlines

- Ph.D. At least three months before the Prospectus.
- M.S. Formed by end of the second full-length semester.

The Thesis or Dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate Academic Advisor for review.

## *Prospectus (Ph.D. Only)*

### Eligibility

- Doctoral students must complete at least one semester prior to graduation.

### Components

- The Prospectus requires a rough draft of the candidate's research proposal with approval of content by the Research Advisor before scheduling the oral presentation.
- The oral presentation of the dissertation prospectus is made to the student's Dissertation Committee.

### Overview

- The presentation should intertwine appropriate audio and visual aids with a limit of 50 minutes.
- All members should receive a copy of the written dissertation prospectus at least one week before the oral presentation.
- The oral examination requires successfully justifying the proposed research, including acceptable quality and magnitude consistency with quality doctoral education while defending their prospectus.
- The committee engages in questions and discussion immediately following the presentation. Once complete, faculty outside the department are excused while remaining interested faculty remain to ask questions regarding proposed research.
- The presentation and questions are limited to three hours, and once concluded, the student is excused, allowing the committee to deliberate and decide the outcome.

### Committee

- The Prospectus Committee includes the same members on the previously completed and approved Dissertation Committee and decides if the dissertation prospectus is acceptable to move forward.
- The Committee completes and signs the [Prospectus Approval Form](#) to turn in to the chair of the departmental graduate committee.
- Once approved, the graduate committee chair will recommend the student advance to Ph.D. Candidacy status.

If the dissertation prospectus is found unacceptable.

The dissertation committee chair formulates recommendations for future action and submits them to the chair of the departmental graduate committee and the department chair with two possible outcomes.

1. Schedule a re-examination and repeat the entire process.
2. The student is removed from the doctoral program.

The results will be provided to the student by the chair of the departmental graduate committee.

### *Dissertation & Thesis Defense*

The student will coordinate their defense date with the committee and Faculty Advisor and contact the Graduate Academic Advisor if a room is to be reserved.

- The student must distribute the written thesis/dissertation to the committee at least two weeks before the defense date.
- Results should be reported to the Graduate Advisor using the [final score sheet](#).

#### Dissertation/ Thesis Defense Deadline

- All students must defend before the deadline set by The Graduate School and Cullen College of Engineering, or they will be ineligible to graduate that semester.
- Refer to the academic calendar for the semester's deadlines and refer to the preparation guide for engineering deadlines:  
<https://www.egr.uh.edu/academics/graduateprograms-policies/guide-preparation-thesesdissertations>

Academic Calendar: <https://publications.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=48&navoid=18100>

### *Dissertation Submission*

For more information, please refer to the Graduate Programs Guide to Preparing Thesis and Dissertations. If there are questions or clarification regarding this two-step process, contact the College Graduate Coordinator in E421 in the Dean's Office of Engineering Bldg. 2 (D3)

Miranda Vernon Harrison by phone at 713-743-4219 or email [mavernon-harrison@uh.edu](mailto:mavernon-harrison@uh.edu)

<https://www.egr.uh.edu/academics/graduate-programs-policies/guide-preparation-thesesdissertations>

### *Graduation*

#### Steps for Graduation

- Apply for Graduation via MyUH and pay the fee (\$25 or \$50 if past the deadline)
- Receive a blank degree plan to be completed from the Graduate Advisor
- Complete Dissertation/Thesis
- Submit the Electronic Dissertation/Thesis to the Vireo website
- Submit an approved hard copy of the Dissertation/Thesis to Miranda Vernon-Harrison (E-421)
- Pay for binding (\$40)
- Attend Commencement
- Make sure your address is updated and accurate in your MyUH account

Check the Academic Calendar for Graduation application deadlines below for more information.

<https://www.egr.uh.edu/academics/graduate-programs-policies/graduation>

## Financial Support

### *Research Assistantships (RA)*

Faculty submit annual proposals for research grants and contracts to fund current and future research. Each faculty member accepts applicants and awards research assistantships directly to research assistantships from those funds. Often, students from a previous course are chosen.

Research Assistantships (RA) are awarded directly to applicants by the department faculty and are highly competitive. The faculty sponsor often arranges to research with a student pursuing a Ph.D. or M.S. degree similar to their research.

Applicants are responsible for finding a faculty member to collaborate on research projects.

### *Teaching Assistantships (TA)*

The Department of Biomedical Engineering Chair awards Teaching Assistantships (TA).

- Awards are based on the candidate's potential to contribute to the BME graduate program.
- Most TAs are expected to transition into being supported as an RA after their first year.
- TA positions are highly competitive and are only awarded to Ph.D. students.
- Not all students recommended for a TA will receive one due to the limited available positions.

### *BME Departmental Scholarships*

The scholarship is awarded through the Department of Biomedical Engineering, and applicants are eligible upon acceptance into the Graduate Program. The department's scholarship committee determines scholars' elections.

The criteria for awarding this competitive scholarship are as follows:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ▪ Academic record in an undergraduate program  | ▪ Job experience                               |
| ▪ The quality of the undergraduate program   | ▪ Publications                                 |
| ▪ The reputation of the educational institution and any previous academic experience | ▪ Research Interests and research statements   |
| ▪ Graduate record examination results  | ▪ Research Experience                          |
| ▪ Letters of recommendation  | ▪ Journal Publications                         |
|  | ▪ Poster and oral presentation record/evidence |

### *Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF)*

The Graduate Tuition Fellowship (GTF) is awarded each semester to RA/TAs and covers tuition and some fees. The department, on behalf of the student, submits the GTF award.

### *In-State Waiver*

RAs and TAs outside Texas are awarded waivers to change feeds from out-of-state to in-state tuition and submitted by the department on behalf of the student.

### *University of Houston Scholarships*

Review the following link for potential scholarships for M.S. and Ph.D. students.

<https://www.uh.edu/financial/undergraduate/types-aid/scholarships/index.php>

## Tuition & Fee Payment Options

### *Installment Pay Plan*

This plan is available to any student unable to pay the total amount due by the university due date.

- Does not cover prior unpaid balances.
- Requires four separate installments and a \$25.00 non-refundable origination fee.
- 25% of the current semester's tuition and fees are required by the initial due date.
- Late fee of \$25.00 for each installment past the due date.
- All funding sources must satisfy the outstanding balance before issuing a refund.
- If courses or fees are added, the new balance is included in the installment plan.
- Installment plan is not an option for summer or the winter mini stand-alone.
- Unavailable to students with financial aid covering 100% of the total balance.

### *Emergency Deferment Plan*

- Only available to students living off-campus.
- Does not cover prior and unpaid balances.
- Late fee of \$25.00 if unpaid in full by the due date.
- Requires scholarship and financial aid funds to be applied first.
- A 5% annual percentage rate is assessed on the Official Reporting Date of the semester.
- Requires the balance to be paid in full, during which the deferment plan was applied.
- Defers payment until the 90<sup>th</sup> day for Spring & Fall or the 45<sup>th</sup> of the summer.

### *Short-Term Tuition Deferment Plan*

Defers the payment of all current semester's tuition, fees, and housing.

- Only available to those living in university housing.
- Does not cover prior or unpaid balances.
- 12% interest accrues annually on the official reporting day of each semester.
- \$5.00 origination fee and \$25.00 late fee if the balance is not paid by the due date.
- The deferment is due and payable no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> calendar day of sessions other than the regular term or the last day of the session or whichever date occurs first.

### *Payment Deadlines*

Students are responsible for meeting deadlines and paying tuition and fees. Students may be dropped for non-payment.

Payment Due Dates: <https://www.uh.edu/financial/payment/billing-due-dates/>

Tuition & Fees Calculator: <https://uh.edu/financial/undergraduate/tuition-fees/>

## Health Insurance

### Domestic Students

The University does not require domestic students to obtain health insurance. However, it is highly recommended that all students have some form of health insurance. Available options:

**Option 1:** Direct Pay by mailing enrollment card to Macori Administration – see enrollment card and benefit book for requirements and deadlines.

**Option 2:** Direct Pay by enrolling online for requirements and deadlines

[www.studentinsurance.com/Schools/TX/UH/](http://www.studentinsurance.com/Schools/TX/UH/)

**Option 3:** Sign up through MyUH(PeopleSoft) to have your premium charged to the student account(Fall and Spring Semesters only – Use Option 1 or 2 to enroll for Summer-only coverage). See the benefit book or online enrollment information for requirements.

- **Enrollment Deadline:** Official Reporting Day as posted in the Academic Calendar.
- **Error in Enrollment:** Visit the Health Center to request a credit to the student account during the posted insurance waiver period - requests will not be accepted after the Official Reporting Day as posted in the Academic Calendar.

**NOTE:** A copy of the University of Houston endorsed Health InsurancePlan brochure and identification card for the current Academic year can be obtained at the link below or the University Health Center.

*Students are responsible for reading and understanding the policy coverage, limitations, claim processing, and responsibilities. The brochure includes medical emergencies, vision care discounts, 24/7 nurse lines, optional dental insurance, and evacuation/repatriation. Please carry the identification card with you at all times. The card contains your policy number and contact information for the current academic year's insurance company and provider network.*

### International Students

Non-immigrant International students carrying hours will be automatically enrolled and charged for health insurance each semester to satisfy the University policy regarding maintaining acceptable health insurance coverage. The amount during the Fall of 2016 was approximately \$750.

A health insurance fee waiver may be requested online with proof of acceptable alternate insurance. The insurance plan and the University's criteria are reviewed periodically and may be subject to change.

### Insurance Resources

UH Health Center, Student Health Insurance

<http://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/insurance/>

UH@studentinsurance.com

713-743-5151

## International Students

### *Arriving On-Campus*

All international students attending the University of Houston must contact the International Student and Scholars Services Office (ISSSO) upon campus arrival and attend the required orientation. For more information, please get in touch with ISSSO:

Student Center North Room 203  
4465 University Dr. Houston, TX 77204  
Phone: 713.743.5065  
Fax: (713) 743-5079  
[isssohlp@central.uh.edu](mailto:isssohlp@central.uh.edu)  
<https://uh.edu/oisss/>

### *Maintaining F1 Status*

- Students must be enrolled full-time (9 hours for graduate students).
- Students are not allowed to work unless permission is currently granted from an International Student Counselor or the Department of Homeland Security (Pg. 3 on the I-20 or an Employment Authorization Card)
- Students must carry current documentation (i.e., passport, I-20)
- Keep the ISSSO updated on address, contact information, and significant life changes.

### *Optical Practical Training (OPT)*

Optional Practical Training is not permitted for students with a GPA below 3.0 during their first semester.

**Post-Completion OPT** is allowed for students who have completed their M.S. or Ph.D., including their thesis/dissertation submission for binding.

**Pre-completion Part-time OPT** is allowed for unsupported F-1 students during any semester and is limited to 20 hours per week. Time used is deducted from the one-year eligibility at half the rate. Students must meet all applicable INS regulations regarding their status as students.

**Pre-Completion Full-time Summer OPT** is allowed, but students can only work full-time during the summer. Time used is deducted from one year of eligibility. Students cannot hold a full-time OPT and be supported students simultaneously.

**Pre-completion full-time OPT** with only thesis or dissertation remaining is allowed for non-supported students, with the approval of the thesis/dissertation advisor. All coursework and department requirements, like screening exams, qualifying exams, and thesis/dissertation proposals, must be completed for students to be eligible.

Students interested in OPT will need the following:

- Submit a copy of their EAD card to ISSSO.
- Actively search for employment (Visit USCIS for resources and information).

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment>

*According to the federal regulations [8 CFR 214.(f)], F-1 students are responsible for reporting the address, employer's name and address, and any periods of employment and unemployment while on OPT. ISSSO is accountable for updating the student's SEVIS record to reflect these changes. This reporting responsibility is an ongoing requirement.*

### *Curricular Practical Training*

Curricular Practical Training (CPT), such as Dissertation or Thesis Research, is allowed with an employer letter verifying involvement in the research, and the offer of employment is predicated on the need for access to their facility for data collection.

- The student's advisor must countersign the letter to show approval of the CPT.
- CPT as a practicum, internship, or CO-OP is not allowed.



## Miscellaneous Items

### *Student Travel*

**Domestic** The following must be submitted to the Program Coordinator AT LEAST TWO weeks before the travel date.

- Travel Request Checklist
- Travel Request
- Supporting Documents

**International** The following must be submitted to the Program Coordinator AT LEAST ONE month before the travel date:

- Travel Request Checklist
- Travel Request
- Supporting Documents
- Export Controls and Embargo Forms

Travel may only be approved by the deadlines and the inclusion of all documents. Reference the University's travel policies.

<http://www.uh.edu/af/universityservices/policies/mapp/04/040204.pdf>

### *Travel Reimbursements*

The TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT CHECKLIST and supporting documents are provided to the Program Coordinator for reimbursement. Please allow up to one month for processing.

### *Purchase Reimbursements*

The REIMBURSEMENT FORM and all receipts for lab-related purchases are provided to the Program Coordinator for reimbursement. Please allow up to one month for processing.

### *Mileage Reimbursements*

The MILEAGE REPORT FORM is requesting reimbursement for using a personal vehicle. The form and all receipts are provided to the Program Coordinator for reimbursement. Please allow up to one month for processing.

### *Room Reservations*

Students can reserve space within the 2nd floor SERC for presentations and academic milestones. Please speak with the graduate advisor to check the availability of space.

## Resources

### A.D. Bruce Religion Center

adbrc@Central.UH.EDU

(713) 743-5050

### Athletics

<https://uhcougars.com/>

### Bookstore

Bookstore Help Center

713-741-7095

### Student Accessibility Center

DCenter@central.uh.edu

713-743-5400

### Counseling & Psychological Services

Health 2 Building,

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 2005

713-743-5454

### CoogsCare

713-743-5454

### Engineering Career Center

ecareers@central.uh.edu

(713) 743-4230

### Get Involved

Student Organizations

(713) 743-2255

### Health Center & Pharmacy

713-743-5151

### International Student Services Office

issohlp@central.uh.edu

(713) 743-5065

### Library

(713) 743-1050

### Parking and Transportation

parking@uh.edu

832-842-1097

### UH Police

police@uh.edu

(713) 743-3333

### UH Main

(713) 743-2255

### UH Veteran Services

vets@uh.edu

(713) 743-2255

### UH Wellness

wellness@central.uh.edu

(713) 743-5430

### Graduate & Professional

Student Resources

Workshops & Events