

Mechanical Engineering Fast-Track B.S./M.S. Program

Frequently Asked Questions with Answers

1. Am I qualified to apply for this program?

You must meet the following requirements at the time you submit your application:

- Be a declared ME major of junior (preferred) or senior standing, and
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or better based on the minimum 24 credits in ME major requirements.
- Enroll in ME 334 in the spring semester of your junior year. (Your application will be contingent upon whether you pass this class.)

2. How do I apply for this program?

The very first step is to disclose your intent to the ME department – please consult your potential ME faculty advisor, or consult the M.S. Program coordinator Dr. Lei Zhang for advising. When it is determined that you are eligible for the program, the coordinator will endorse your application by providing you with a stamped application form. You will then follow the normal application process by submitting your application materials to the Office of Admissions. Dr. Zhang can be reached at (907) 474-6135, (907) 474-6141 fax, Duckering room 337A, or lzhang14@alaska.edu.

3. Can I directly apply for the program online without consulting with the ME M.S. Program coordinator?

No. The ME department will only review endorsed applications.

4. Can I fill in my application form online?

You can fill out the enterable pdf application form at http://www.uaf.edu/admissions/pdf/grad_app.pdf. Then print the application, sign it, and take it to the ME M.S. Program Coordinator, for the endorsement stamp.

5. What documents do I need to prepare?

- Submit three letters of reference.
- Submit GRE scores.
- Resume
- Submit a Statement of Goals.
- Submit a UAF graduate application for admission, along with a \$60 processing fee.

6. I am interested in the program but not yet a UAF student; can I apply for this program?

Yes, but you will need to be admitted into UAF's Mechanical Engineering B.S. program first. Once you are in our B.S. program, you may consider applying for the fast-track program.

7. How long will the application process take?

It may take up to 2-3 months depending on how quickly your application materials such as official GRE scores, letters of recommendation, etc., can be sent to the Admissions Office.

8. Can I use 600-level classes to be counted toward my B.S. degree requirements?

Yes. 600-level ME classes can be used as ME electives for fulfilling the B.S. degree requirements. 600-level engineering (other than ME), science, or mathematics classes can also be counted toward technical electives for the B.S. degree requirements.

9. While I am applying for the program, can I take 600-level classes to be counted toward my M.S. degree requirements?

Yes, and we encourage you to do so. Please also disclose your intent to your academic advisor so that he or she can better help you plan your courses.

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10. What will be my status once I am in the fast-track program, undergraduate, graduate or both?

The Fast-Track program requires a minimum of 151 credits for earning the B.S. and M.S. degrees. Once you are in the Fast-Track program, there are three scenarios that you would try. The first scenario is that you intend to only take up to 151 credits, then you can only claim your B.S. and M.S. degrees simultaneously when you fulfill the 151-credit requirement. In this case, your status will be undergraduate before graduation.

The second scenario is that you would take 10 credits or more (such that you would have taken more than 161 credits when finishing the Fast-Track program). Those additional credits can allow you to fulfill the B.S. degree requirement (131 credits) such that you can claim the B.S. degree while you are in the Fast-Track program.

The third scenario is that you have taken (or are taking) some 600-level classes and decide to leave the Fast-Track program. Then you may allow to claim your B.S. degree for graduation if you fulfill the 131-credit B.S. requirement. (Those 600-level classes can be used as undergraduate electives.) However, if you later decide to come back for a M.S. degree, those 600-level classes which have used the B.S. degree requirement, cannot be double-counted toward the M.S. degree.

If you wish to be eligible for the Teaching Assistantship, you are suggested to consider the second scenario.

11. Can I choose to opt out of the fast-track program?

Yes. For example, if for some reason you wish to leave the program by only acquiring a B.S. degree, you only need to meet the B.S. degree requirements (of fulfilling 131 credits).

12. What degree check sheet(s) do I use toward graduation?

There is one degree check sheet for the fast-track B.S./M.S. program.

13. Is there any fellowship or funding opportunities to support my study once I am admitted to the fast-track program? What wage rate will I be paid once I work as an assistant? Will my tuition be covered under the financial support?

Yes, funding opportunities are often possible; please discuss with your advisor and the department chair the availability of such opportunities. Before you have finished the B.S. degree requirements, you can work as an undergraduate student assistant; however, you will not be eligible for a tuition waiver. Once you have finished the B.S. degree requirements (see Scenario 2 in Q10), you are eligible for graduate teaching or research assistantships.

14. Once I am admitted to the fast-track program, how do I find my thesis/project advisor? Who will take care of my study plan before I find my thesis advisor?

If you have not identified an advisor, the M.S. Program Coordinator will serve as your temporary advisor. We encourage you to initiate one or more undergraduate research projects with any faculty member in the ME department. These research experiences could help you to identify your research interests and your potential thesis/project advisor.