

# Doctoral Student Milestones Agreement

## Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

UTEP ID \_\_\_\_\_

UTEP email \_\_\_\_\_

ORCID iD \_\_\_\_\_

### Entering background

Do you have prior graduate coursework you intend to apply to the Ph.D.? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many semester credit hours (SCH) will you request to transfer (18 max)? \_\_\_\_\_ SCH

Have you earned a master's degree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, did you complete a thesis as part of that degree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### Welcome and purpose

Welcome to the Ph.D. program in Materials Science and Engineering. The purpose of this agreement is to help you succeed. It maps the milestones that mark your path to the degree and approximate target dates, so you and your advisor can plan with confidence. You will need to read it, review it with your advisor, sign it, and submit it to the Graduate School during your first semester. The milestones listed here and the general rules below will help you stay on track and graduate with the experience and skills you need.

### Two individuals who will support you

- **Your research advisor (mentor).** Chairs your dissertation committee, mentors your research, and meets with you each semester to review your research progress, degree plan, recommends coursework, and reviews milestones. You select your research advisor once you identify a research area.
- **The Graduate Program Director (academic advisor and program coordinator).** Serves as your academic advisor, advises on courses, reviews degree progression and oversees program requirements, milestones, approvals, and paperwork.

### Milestones

| Milestone and key steps                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Recommended target     | Latest deadline     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Preliminary items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete the required Graduate School and UTEP orientation</li><li>• Register for an ORCID iD</li><li>• Submit this signed Milestones Agreement to the Graduate School</li><li>• Submit any prior graduate coursework for transfer-credit approval</li></ul> | Within the first month | End of 1st semester |
| <b>Identify your research advisor</b><br><i>Until you select a research advisor, the Program Director serves as your</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                      | End of 1st semester    | End of 2nd semester |

| Milestone and key steps                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Recommended target                                                         | Latest deadline                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>academic advisor</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                            |                                                                     |
| <b>Complete background (leveling) courses, if required</b><br><i>Required only if your background is not in Materials Science and Engineering (e.g., MME 2303, 3306, 3308; MASE 6406, 6407)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | End of 2nd semester                                                        | —                                                                   |
| <b>Form your Dissertation Committee</b><br><i>Three members: your advisor (chair), one other core MASE faculty, one external member from other dept</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester                                            | Before the dissertation proposal defense (4 <sup>th</sup> semester) |
| <b>Complete core coursework</b><br><i>15 SCH of core courses (MASE 6360, 6361, 6362, 6363, 6365)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | End of 2nd semester<br><i>May be earlier with approved transfer credit</i> | End of 3rd semester                                                 |
| <b>Dissertation proposal (oral defense of written proposal)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit a written dissertation proposal to your committee</li> <li>• Oral presentation and defense before your committee</li> <li>• Provide abstract to your Graduate Program Director 1 week before</li> <li>• You may register for dissertation credits only after you pass</li> </ul> | End of 4th semester                                                        | End of 6th semester                                                 |
| <b>Advance to doctoral candidacy</b><br><i>File the Application for Candidacy with the Graduate School</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | After passing the proposal                                                 | 6th semester                                                        |
| <b>Complete required coursework</b><br><i>Total of 54 SCH (not dissertation research)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | End of 6th semester                                                        | —                                                                   |
| <b>Enroll in Dissertation I (MASE 6398)</b><br><i>Then enroll in Dissertation II (MASE 6399) each term until graduation</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Semester after the proposal passes                                         | By the 6th semester                                                 |
| <b>Submit a first-author journal paper</b><br><i>At least one paper submitted to a peer-reviewed journal as first author</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 8 <sup>th</sup> semester; before scheduling the dissertation defense       | Before scheduling the dissertation defense                          |
| <b>Dissertation and final defense</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the Graduate School format check</li> <li>• Submit the written dissertation to your committee at least two weeks before the defense</li> <li>• Provide abstract to your Graduate Program Director 1 week before</li> <li>• Public presentation</li> </ul>                                                | By the 8th semester                                                        | 9th semester with advisor approval                                  |

| Milestone and key steps                                                                                                                                                 | Recommended target            | Latest deadline          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private oral discussion with your committee</li> </ul>                                                                           |                               |                          |
| <b>Final dissertation submission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit all required documents to the Graduate School</li> <li>Submit to ProQuest</li> </ul> | Same term as the defense      | Graduate School Deadline |
| <b>Complete Survey of Earned Doctorates</b>                                                                                                                             | Within 4 weeks of the defense | —                        |
| <b>Complete Exit interview</b>                                                                                                                                          | Within 4 weeks of the defense | —                        |

## Progress reviews

- Complete a progress report before advising each semester, signed by you and your research advisor
- Update your Individual Development Plan (IDP) each year (Graduate School requirement) and file the signed IDP with the program and the Graduate School
- Meet with your committee to review progress and goals

## General rules

To remain in good standing, maintain your grades and your progress on milestones. Your research advisor and the Graduate Program Director are here to help you meet both. If you fall behind on either, work with them on a plan to get back on track. In addition to your program milestones, a few University rules apply throughout your program.

- Full-time enrollment.** Enroll full-time (9 SCH each fall and spring semester) until you reach the dissertation phase, then 3 SCH (MASE 6398 once; MASE 6399 until graduation).
- Grades and GPA.** Maintain a 3.0 program grade point average and earn a grade of C or better in every course. If your GPA dips below 3.0, you will be placed on academic probation and need to raise it over your next nine credit hours.
- Progress on milestones.** Keep reaching the milestones above. If you get behind, work with your advisor to develop a plan to maintain your status and catch up.
- Time to degree.** Complete all requirements within eight years.
- Employment.** To hold a graduate assistantship, you must be enrolled full-time (9 SCH, or 3 SCH of dissertation) and maintain a 3.0 GPA. State funding support is generally limited to four years.
- Tuition remission.** Tuition remission is available for up to 66 SCH.

## Review your full requirements

This agreement summarizes key milestones. It is important that you understand these milestones and the degree requirements for the Ph.D. MASE program along with the University's graduation requirements listed in the Graduate Catalog. Please review these documents before signing this Milestones Agreement.

## Acknowledgments

Initial each statement below.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have read the Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering program materials.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have read this Milestones Agreement and reviewed it with my advisor.

**Student signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_