

GRADUATE GUIDE*
Graduate Program Policies and Procedures
in the
Department of Aerospace Engineering
at the
University of Maryland

Updated:
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*These guidelines are specific to the Department of Aerospace Engineering and are in addition to all degree requirements imposed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Maryland College Park as detailed in the Graduate School Catalog - see <https://www.gradschool.umd.edu/catalog/>

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

The department offers an environment for advanced graduate study and research in aerospace engineering. Two degrees are offered: The Master of Science (M.S.) and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). A third degree, the Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), is offered within the college with an option in Aerospace Engineering; for details on the M.Eng. course-work-only graduate degree program, contact the department of Maryland Applied Graduate Engineering (MAGE). The Master of Science Degree Program is the program for early graduate study. By contrast, the Doctor of Philosophy is awarded for creative and independent accomplishment at a high level of excellence.

Graduate study is designed to stimulate intellectual growth, increase the level of objective understanding of the physical world, and further develop capabilities for analysis and synthesis. Each plan of study will provide depth in a chosen field of specialization while broadening the student's command of basic scientific principles to encourage creative application of current science and technology.

This guide has been prepared as an aid to graduate students and faculty. It is a record of policy, rules, and regulations concerning all phases of graduate study in the aerospace department, including the responsibilities of both the student and their advisor. The statements contained herein complement the material in the University of Maryland (UMCP) Graduate School Catalog and all of the departmental requirements specified herein are in addition to those specified by the Graduate School. It is advisable to first become familiar with the overall Aerospace Engineering graduate program and requirements by reading the UMCP Graduate Catalog. Reference to this guide will then provide additional details of policy and procedures. New policies adopted by the Graduate School or by the Aerospace Engineering Department at some future date will take precedence. Furthermore, the department may choose to deviate from the policies stated in this guide in special circumstances or these policies may change. In such cases, the guide will be amended consistent with the new policy as expeditiously as possible.

B. Key Personnel

Department Chair: Dr. Alison Flatau, 301-405-1131, e-mail: aflatau@umd.edu,
Glenn L. Martin Hall, Room 3179J.

Director of Graduate Studies: Dr. Kenneth Yu, 301-405-1333, e-mail: yu@umd.edu,
Glenn L. Martin Hall, Room 3154.

Coordinator of Student Services: Leslie Davis, 301-405-0190, e-mail: ldavis17@umd.edu,
Glenn L. Martin Hall, Room 3179H

Administrative Assistant: Rachel Tucker, 301-405-2376, e-mail: rdtucker@umd.edu,
Glenn L. Martin Hall, Room 3179

Director of Administration, Otto Fandino, 301-405-1134, email: ofandino@umd.edu,
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II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

The decision to admit a student for graduate study at the University of Maryland is formally made by the Graduate School after reviewing the recommendations of the applicant's chosen department as to the applicant's ability to carry out scholarly work at the graduate level.

A. Steps of the Admission Procedure

1. The application, application fee, and supporting documentation are submitted to the Graduate School; a copy of the application, a statement of purpose, transcripts, and letters of recommendation are submitted to the department. The most effective way to apply is online at <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/>.
2. The Graduate School will send a copy of the application to the department, and, for international applicants, the application file is also sent to the Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) for an additional evaluation of the applicant's academic record.
3. In the Aerospace Department, the applicant's file is reviewed by members of the department's Graduate Committee (GC) and a decision to accept or decline the application is made by the department's Director of Graduate Studies based on the GC recommendation.
4. This departmental decision is sent to the Graduate School and to the applicant.
5. The Graduate School (and ISSS for international students) reviews the applicant's file again, makes the final decision, notifies the student of the final decision, and gives detailed instructions to successful applicants for completion of their registration.

B. Minimum Admission Requirements

1. Applicants should have a Bachelor of Science Degree (usually in Engineering, Physical Sciences or Mathematics) from an accredited institution.
2. Applicants are expected to have a strong academic record (GPA of at least 3.2/4.0 for the M.S. and 3.5/4.0 for the Ph.D.), especially in the junior and senior years of their undergraduate studies. Applicants with a lesser academic record may be approved for admission to the M.S. program if other evidence of accomplishment is provided, i.e. publications or very strong letters of recommendations. Admission to the Ph.D. program requires an academic record indicating promise of the high level of accomplishment required for the degree.
3. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is strongly recommended for all international applicants seeking financial support and for any applicants with marginal academic records. The expected minimum score on the quantitative portion of the GRE score for admission to our MS program is 85%, and for admission to our PhD program it is 90%.

4. Applicants who are from non-English speaking countries or who have attended non-English speaking universities must satisfy the requirements of the Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS). As a minimum, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or Pearson English Language Test (PTE) is required.

C. Exceptions to the Minimum Admission Requirements

If the applicant's qualifications do not meet the minimum admission requirements, the Graduate Committee can recommend a conditional status, which will automatically change to regular status when the specified conditions are satisfied. The applicant will be notified of the special conditions that they must meet.

D. Admission to the Ph.D. Program for Current M.S. Students

Students completing the M.S. Program in the Department of Aerospace Engineering must reapply to continue studies for a Ph.D. program. The most effective way to apply is online at <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/>. Only two letters of recommendation are needed (one should be from the advisor) and transcripts are obtained automatically.

III. SELECTION OF ACADEMIC ADVISOR(S)

Each new graduate student coming into the department will be assigned an advisor based on their indicated area of interest. This advisor is to give advice on courses to be taken and is generally the advisor who will direct the student's thesis, scholarly paper, and/or dissertation. The student has wide latitude to change their advisor at any later date to obtain increased compatibility and to best serve their specialty area of interest. Such advisor assignments will be documented in the student's file and are subject to the approval of the new advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Situations may arise in which the student has unusual advisory requirements:

- a. The student may be interested in an interdisciplinary area of specialization.
- b. A prospective thesis topic may not be in an area of current research in the department.
- c. Cooperative research efforts between the department and local industry or government laboratories may involve excellent advisory support outside the university.

In such cases, the student can form an advisory committee consisting of an advisor outside the department and a member of the graduate faculty in the aerospace department who will serve as chair of the committee. This committee must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. If such an advisory committee is formed, the functions of the advisor as outlined in this handbook become the functions of the advisory committee.

IV. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE

The student may pursue the degree of Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering under either of two options: with thesis option or non-thesis option.

A. Requirements for the Master of Science WITH THESIS option

1. The student is required to complete at least 24 semester hours of coursework beyond the B.S. and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA overall. Not less than 15 semester hours must be in courses designated as graduate courses (600 level or above) and not less than 12 semester hours must be taken in the student's chosen specialty area. This specialty area is generally one of the five departmental core areas such as a) Aerodynamics, Hypersonics and Propulsion, b) Dynamics Control and Autonomy, c) Rotorcraft, d) Space Systems, and e) Structural Dynamics and Composites, but courses taken to satisfy this requirement may be drawn from other core areas in the department or from other departments, as long as the chosen courses all relate to the specialty area in a meaningful way.
2. No more than 9 semester hours of credit may be for 400 level courses. No more than 6 of these 9 may be from the Aerospace Engineering Department. In accordance with university policy, no course may be counted towards both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree. All course selections will be done in conjunction with the student's advisor.
3. To accomplish a Master of Science with thesis, the student must perform a body of research commensurate with the level of the Master's Degree. This thesis should make some contribution to the advancement in the state-of-the-art of aerospace research; i.e., work performed for the M.S. thesis should be of such quality and extent that it would be suitable for publication as at least a technical note in an archival journal.
4. The student must register for at least six semester hours of ENAE 799 (M.S. thesis research) over the course of their Master's program, in addition to the 24 semester hours of coursework.
5. The procedure for the review of a Master of Science thesis is as follows:
 - a. The student's faculty advisor proposes a committee of at least three Full or Associate members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty to review the M.S. thesis. The advisor, who must be a Full or Associate Member of the Graduate Faculty, serves as the committee chair. Special Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve on the committee in addition to the three required Full or Associate Members of the Graduate Faculty (see list on Graduate School website at: <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/faculty/>). The members should have backgrounds and interests related to the student's area of specialization and the subject matter of the thesis. This committee must be submitted for approval to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School at least six weeks prior to the thesis defense using the "Nomination of Thesis or Dissertation Committee" form.

- b. The advisor is responsible for setting dates and deadlines for the review of the thesis. At least seven working days prior to the thesis defense, the student is responsible for providing each committee member and the department Coordinator of Student Services with a PDF copy of the thesis that has been approved for distribution by the student's advisor.
 - c. The thesis committee will evaluate the quality of the research as well as the clarity and literary quality of the thesis.
 - d. The thesis defense is an oral examination of up to 3 hours duration. During this exam the student will defend the thesis and answer any coursework-related questions posed by the thesis examining committee. The advisor is responsible for planning and holding this examination.
 - e. All members of the thesis examining committee must accept the thesis for the student to pass the examination: revisions to the thesis may be recommended. These revisions should be reviewed and approved by the advisor or by all members of the committee before the Report of Examining Committee form is signed.
 - f. The student may redo the thesis defense once only, if necessary.
- 6. The student must apply for graduation at the start of the semester in which they intend to defend their thesis, and submit the proper application to the Graduate School indicating completion of degree requirements.
 - 7. The student must provide the department Coordinator of Student Services with a final revised copy of the thesis in electronic form (PDF file) via e-mail. Copies of the thesis must also be provided to the Graduate School in accordance with the *Thesis and Dissertation Manual*.

B. Requirements for the Master of Science NON-THESIS option

- 1. The student is required to complete at least 30 semester hours of coursework beyond the B.S. and to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA overall. Not less than 21 semester hours must be in courses designated as graduate courses (600 level or above) and not less than 12 semester hours must be taken in the student's chosen specialty area. This specialty area is generally one of the five departmental core areas such as a) Aerodynamics, Hypersonics and Propulsion, b) Dynamics Control and Autonomy, c) Rotorcraft, d) Space Systems, and e) Structural Dynamics and Composites, but courses taken to satisfy this requirement may be drawn from other core areas in the department or from other departments, as long as the chosen courses all relate to the specialty area in a meaningful way.
- 2. No more than 9 semester hours of credit may be for courses at the 400 level. No more than 6 of these 9 may be from the Aerospace Engineering Department. In accordance with university policy, no course may be counted towards both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree. All course selections will be done in conjunction with the student's advisor.

3. For the non-thesis option, a scholarly paper must be completed and approved. The scholarly paper can:
 - a. Be done in conjunction with a course or independent of a course, but must be done with the advisement of a faculty member.
 - b. Take the form of a critical literature search; in this form, the paper can be similar to the first chapter of a Ph.D. thesis including
 - i. A survey of the state-of-the-art in a given problem area,
 - ii. Concise discussion of the fundamental principles involved,
 - iii. Discussion of what needs to be done to extend the state-of-the-art in the future.
 - c. Take the form of a piece of original research as for the M.S. thesis, although the research need not be as extensive. This form, for example, might be the solution of a problem of interest by a preliminary or less developed method.
 - d. Be non-original such as redoing all or part of the work of a published paper or report in order to gain in-depth understanding of a complicated analysis technique or concept.
4. The procedure for review of the scholarly paper is as follows:
 - a. The student's faculty advisor forms a committee of 2 members to review the paper (i.e. the advisor and a second faculty member). Both reviewers should have backgrounds and interests related to the student's area of specialization and the subject matter of the scholarly paper. The second faculty member shall be a Full or Associate Member of the Graduate Faculty (see list on Graduate School website at: <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/faculty/>).
 - b. The advisor is responsible for setting dates and deadlines for the review of the paper. The student is responsible for providing each committee member with a copy at least ten days prior to the review deadline.
 - c. If major problems are found, the committee shall recommend revisions.
 - d. Final approval of the paper requires approval from both members. This is indicated by the advisor's signature on the "Certification of Master's Degree Without Thesis" form.
 - e. A final copy of the paper, signed by the faculty advisor, is to be submitted via e-mail (as a PDF) to the department Program Coordinator of Student Services.
5. A comprehensive examination is not required for satisfaction of the M.S. non-thesis degree option.

V. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

A. Coursework Requirements

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Aerospace Engineering, the student is required to complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree. Courses should be listed on the Doctoral Coursework Plan as early as possible in the program, and must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Major Area: Not less than 18 semester hours shall be within one departmental core area of specialization:
 - a. Aerodynamics, Hypersonics and Propulsion
 - b. Dynamics, Control and Autonomy
 - c. Rotorcraft
 - d. Space Systems
 - e. Structural Dynamics and Composites

Note that courses taken to satisfy this requirement may actually be drawn from other core areas in the department or from other departments, as long as the chosen courses all relate to the area of specialization in a meaningful way.

2. Minor Area: At least 6 semester hours (2 courses that relate to each other) shall be from one of the other departmental core areas of specialization in the department or from another department. At least 3 semester hours must be at the 600 level or higher.
3. Math/Science Requirement: Not less than 9 semester hours of coursework must emphasize mathematics, physical sciences, life sciences, or computer sciences. At least 3 semester hours must be at the 600 level or higher. No more than 3 semester hours can be from the College of Engineering. The one engineering course that can count toward this requirement must not be a course that could apply to either the major or minor concentration area.
4. At least 9 semester hours of the credits taken to satisfy (2) and (3) above, must be at the 600 level or higher.
5. No more than 9 semester hours of credit may be for 400 level courses. No more than 6 of these 9 may be from the Aerospace Engineering Department. All course selection will be done in conjunction with the advisor and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.
6. The student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in all coursework.
7. Graduate credit hours for courses completed previously at other universities may be applied to the doctoral coursework requirement in some cases. For example, most students entering with an M.S. degree will be granted up to 24 credits of coursework assuming their M.S. degree is in a closely related field. However, all students must pass the doctoral comprehensive examination in the department, and must satisfy the major, minor, and math/science requirements with their coursework. In addition, to facilitate the student becoming familiar with the faculty

of the department, all Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of twelve semester hours of coursework in the department. It is preferable that at least six semester hours be taken from faculty other than the advisor, and that these be in the student's major area of specialization.

B. Doctoral Comprehensive Exam

All students entering the Ph.D. program must pass a comprehensive examination. The purpose of this exam is to assess the student's knowledge in their technical area at an introductory graduate level.

1. Schedule: Students who matriculate into the Ph.D. program with an M.S. degree should take the comprehensive examination during their third semester. Students who matriculate into the Ph.D. program with a B.S. degree should take the comprehensive examination during their fourth semester. The student is responsible for coordinating a time with their examination committee within the given semester. The student may opt to take the exam sooner or may request a delay under extenuating circumstances, with approval of the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
2. Examining Committee: The student and advisor are responsible for organizing the student's examination committee. The committee shall consist of four faculty members. There shall be at least two major area representatives, one minor area representative, and the student's research advisor. At least three of the committee members will be faculty in the Department of Aerospace Engineering. All four members must be Full or Associate Members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty.
3. Exam Topic: In the comprehensive examination, the student is responsible for all course material that the student has completed.
4. Exam Format: The comprehensive examination shall be conducted orally. The normal duration of the examination is two to four hours.
5. Committee Decision: If two or more members of the committee vote not to pass the student, the student fails the exam. Students who do not pass the comprehensive examination during their first attempt may, on the recommendation of their examining committee, be allowed to repeat the examination once more. The second attempt on the comprehensive should be taken within one semester of the failure. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to repeat the comprehensive examination more than once. Students who have exhausted their opportunities to pass the comprehensive exam will not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D. program. Such students will be permitted to remain in the program for one additional semester, after which their graduate admission will either be terminated or, upon the student's request and eligibility, be transferred to the M.S. program.

C. Doctoral Dissertation Proposal

All Ph.D. students must have a doctoral dissertation proposal approved by their Doctoral Dissertation Committee. The goal is to ensure that the committee approves the suitability and scope of the dissertation before the student invests significant time into a specific line of research.

1. Schedule: The doctoral dissertation proposal must be completed after the student has passed the doctoral comprehensive exam. The proposal should occur within one year of completing the comprehensive exam.
2. Format: The proposal will include a written document, an oral presentation, and committee questioning.
 - a. The written document should be 5–15 pages of content (single-spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins), excluding references. The written document should be distributed to the dissertation committee at least 5 business days prior to the oral questioning.
 - b. The oral presentation should be 25–45 minutes in duration. The committee questioning is expected to last 30–60 minutes.
3. Content: The proposal should include elements listed below:
 - a. A literature review of work related to the proposed doctoral research.
 - b. A research plan outlining the intended work, methodologies, and key research questions.
 - c. Anticipated contributions describing the importance and novelty of the research within the scientific field.
 - d. A description of the work already completed by the student, such as the status of models, theory, experiments, or preliminary results.
4. Committee: The student and the advisor are responsible for organizing the student's doctoral dissertation committee following the guidelines in Section F on page 11. This committee will evaluate the student's proposal. Prior to submitting a doctoral dissertation proposal to the committee, the student should obtain approval of the committee membership from the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - a. In the event that a student fails their initial attempt at the doctoral dissertation proposal, the student, in consultation with their advisor, may change one or more committee members prior to retaking the proposal, subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - b. If committee members change after a successful proposal but before the dissertation defense, the following steps are required:
 - i. New committee members must receive an updated copy of the written proposal reflecting current progress.
 - ii. New committee members must approve the research plan's scope and novelty.
 - iii. New committee members must confirm their concurrence via email to the student, advisor, and Director of Graduate Studies.
5. Committee Decision: If two or more members of the committee vote not to pass the student, the student fails the doctoral dissertation proposal. A student who fails the

first attempt at the dissertation proposal may be allowed to repeat the proposal once. A student who fails the retake of the doctoral dissertation proposal will not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D. program. Such students will be permitted to remain in the program for one additional semester, after which their graduate admission will either be terminated or, upon the student's request and eligibility, transferred to the M.S. program.

D. Advancement to Candidacy

Students must apply for and be admitted to candidacy within five years of admission to the doctoral program. Prerequisites for advancement to candidacy include the successful completion of both the doctoral comprehensive examination and the dissertation proposal. It is the student's responsibility to submit the application once all requirements are met. Applications for admission to candidacy are submitted to the graduate program for review before being forwarded to the Graduate School. Application forms are available at the Graduate School (Room 2123, Lee Building) or online. https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/default/files/2022-11/application_for_candidacy_202205.pdf Applications must be received by the Graduate School prior to the 25th day of the month in order for the advancement to become effective the first day of the following month. Students who have advanced to candidacy are automatically registered for six (6) credits of Doctoral Dissertation Research (ENAE899), for which they pay the flat candidacy tuition.

E. Doctoral Dissertation

The student must complete and obtain committee approval of the Ph.D. dissertation. The Ph.D. dissertation research should represent a significant contribution to the state-of-the-art in a given field of endeavor. It should typically be of sufficient quality and scope that it would be suitable for publication as at least one full-length paper in an archival journal. The procedure for supervision and review of the dissertation is as follows:

1. The student must register for at least 12 semester hours of ENAE 899 (Ph.D. thesis research) over the course of their doctoral program, in addition to the 36 semester hours of coursework.
2. After successful completion of the doctoral comprehensive examination, the advisor forms a dissertation committee. This committee must be composed of at least 5 faculty members (including the advisor) as outlined in Section F. The Director of Graduate Studies will review the membership of the dissertation committee for its appropriateness to the topic.
3. After successful completion of the doctoral dissertation proposal, a copy of the approved proposal is to be distributed to the committee and the Coordinator of Student Services for inclusion in the student's file.

4. The dissertation committee, and particularly the advisor, is responsible for ensuring that the dissertation research meets the accepted standards of originality and independent effort.
5. The student will give a pre-defense oral report on the progress of their research to the dissertation committee. This should take place when the student is 50–80% finished with planned research so the committee can actively share in the research and make constructive comments. The student is responsible for scheduling this pre-defense, in agreement with the advisor.
6. After approval from a majority of the committee, the student must undergo a final oral defense of their dissertation. This defense may be scheduled during any semester. The scheduling is the responsibility of the student. The defense is to be conducted during normal business hours. No exam should start prior to 8:00a.m. or later than 3:30 p.m. Notification of the defense should be posted at least 5 working days prior to the defense.
7. The student is responsible for providing each committee member and the department with a typewritten advisor-approved copy of the dissertation, at least ten working days prior to the defense. The department copy is to be delivered to the graduate program secretary and is then made available to the entire departmental faculty.
8. The dissertation defense will first consist of an oral presentation of the thesis to the examining committee and will be open to the public. The remainder of the defense will be open only to members of the Graduate Faculty of the University. After the examination, the committee will vote privately on the outcome of the examination. Two or more negative votes constitute failure of the exam. Revisions to the thesis may be recommended. These revisions should be reviewed and approved by the advisor or by all members of the committee before the Report of Examining Committee form is signed.
9. The final dissertation defense may be repeated, if necessary, only once.
10. The student must provide the department with a final revised copy of the thesis in electronic form (PDF file) via e-mail. Copies of the thesis must also be provided to the Graduate School in accordance with the *Thesis and Dissertation Manual*.

F. Doctoral Dissertation Committee

1. A dissertation committee must consist of at least five members who are either Full or Associate Members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty (see list on the Graduate School website at: <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/faculty/>). At least three members of the committee shall be full-time faculty who are members of the Aerospace Engineering Department; the Graduate Committee can be petitioned for a waiver of this requirement in case of dissertations based on multidisciplinary research, when this rule would prevent the dissertation committee

from having the required background and expertise. Additional committee members may be required or invited to serve at departmental discretion.

2. Each dissertation committee will have a chair, who must be a Full Member of the Graduate Faculty and full-time faculty member of the Aerospace Engineering Department. Dissertation committees may be Co-chaired upon written recommendation of the Graduate Director and the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. Affiliated faculty who are full-time faculty members at the University of Maryland College Park may chair Dissertation Committees with the Graduate Director's written approval of the dissertation topic.
3. Each committee shall have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. This person must be a tenured member of the Graduate Faculty at the University of Maryland College Park, and must have a tenure home different from the student's program and that of the chair and any co-chair(s). In cases where a student is in an interdisciplinary department or program, the Dean's Representative must be from a program outside of those departments and programs involved in the interdisciplinary endeavors.
4. Individuals from outside the University of Maryland system may serve on dissertation committees provided their credentials warrant this service and upon the written request of and justification by the advisor. These individuals must, however, be in addition to the minimum required number of regular members of the College Park Graduate Faculty.
5. Graduate Faculty who terminate employment at the University of Maryland may be regarded, for dissertation-committee service purposes, as members of the Graduate Faculty for a 12-month period following their termination. During that time, they may chair individual dissertation and thesis committees and work with students as necessary. After that time, they may no longer serve as chair of a dissertation committee, although they may take on the position of co-chair or committee member. If, after this 12-month period, these individuals continue to serve on a committee (as co-chair or member) they must be in addition to the minimum required number of regular members of the College Park Graduate Faculty. After they leave UMCP, faculty may not serve as the Dean's Representative
6. The doctoral dissertation committee must be submitted for approval by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School, using the "Nomination of Thesis or Dissertation Committee" form. This form must be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the dissertation defense.

VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- A. The department offers various forms of financial support, including teaching and research assistantships and fellowships. However, the total number of such appointments is always limited by available resources. Therefore, each year these assistantships and fellowships will be awarded on a competitive basis. There is no guarantee that, once financial assistance is granted to a student, it will continue for the duration of the student's program. Such continuation is dependent upon the student's individual competitive standing and dependent on available resources.
- B. The stipends for research and teaching assistants have been standardized in the College of Engineering and change from one year to the next. The current funding levels can be obtained from the aerospace office. The following important points should be noted:
1. The graduate school requirements for the three steps of an assistantship are given below.
 - a. Step I: Master's students in good standing
 - b. Step II: Doctoral students in good standing not advanced to candidacy
 - c. Step III: Doctoral students in good standing advanced to candidacy

All full-time enrolled graduate students at College Park are required to have health insurance. Students holding at least a half-time graduate assistantship have a choice to either enroll in a State of Maryland health insurance plan or the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).

SHIP is the default plan for all students. Students who already have insurance or choosing to enroll in a State of Maryland health insurance plan need to submit a waiver to opt out of the SHIP. Waivers are required each year and must be submitted online during SHIP open enrollment period.

In addition to stipends, teaching and research assistants also receive up to a maximum of 10 credits of tuition assistance in the fall and spring semester depending on the appointment level.

2. To be certified as full-time, a graduate student must be officially registered for a combination of courses equivalent to 48 units per semester. Graduate assistants holding regular (20 hrs./week) assistantships must be registered for at least 24 units in addition to the assistantship; holders of half (10 hrs./week) assistantships must be registered for at least 36 units. Audited courses do not generate graduate units and cannot be used in calculating full-time or part-time status. Most fellowships require you to be enrolled full-time, as described below:
 - a. You need to register for a MINIMUM OF 48 UNITS per semester to be considered full-time if your graduate employment status is listed as:
 - i. Graduate School Fellow
 - ii. National Needs Fellow
 - iii. National Science Foundation Fellow
 - b. You need to register for a MINIMUM OF 24 UNITS per semester to be considered full-time if your graduate employment status is listed as:

- i. Minta Martin Fellow
- ii. Smart Structures Fellow
- iii. Space Systems Fellow
- iv. Rotorcraft Fellow
- v. Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant (20 hrs./week)

Use the chart below to assist you in determining how to convert CREDITS into UNITS.

Courses in the series 000-399 carry 2-units/credit hour

Courses in the series 400-499 carry 4-units/credit hour

Courses in the series 500-599 carry 5-units/credit hour

Courses in the series 600-897 carry 6-units/credit hour

Master's Research course: 799 carries 12 units/credit hour

Doctoral Research course: 898 or 899 carries 18 units/credit hour

Course Series					
	400-499	600-897	799	898	899
1 cr.	4 units	6 units	12 units	18 units	18 units
2 cr.	8 units	12 units	24 units	36 units	36 units
3 cr.	12 units	18 units	36 units	54 units	54 units
4 cr.	16 units	24 units	48 units	72 units	72 units
5 cr.	20 units	30 units	60 units	90 units	90 units
6 cr.	24 units	36 units	72 units	108 units	108 units
7 cr.	28 units	42 units			
8 cr.	32 units	48 units			
9 cr.	36 units	54 units			

This policy is for the academic year only. It is not necessary for full-time graduate students (US citizens or international) to enroll in summer study unless they intend to confer their degree in that semester.

3. There are various options for assistantship appointments including:
 - a. A 9-month or academic-year appointment (20 hrs./week).
 - b. A 9-month academic-year appointment, plus a full-time appointment during the summer (20 hrs./week during the academic year, 40 hrs./week during the summer).
 - c. A part-time appointment during the academic year and/or the summer (less than 20 hrs./week during the academic year, and less than 40 hrs./week during the summer).

VII. STUDENT FILES

1. A file is maintained for each student when the admission procedure is complete and the applicant has accepted the offer of admission.
2. The student's file contains all records of the student's graduate studies. In particular, the following items will be in the file:
 - a. Copy of student's application to the Aerospace Department.
 - b. Copies of all correspondence with the Graduate School.
 - c. Information accompanying the initial application to the Graduate School and given to the department.
 - d. A copy of the admission control sheet with any provisional conditions indicated.
 - e. If applicable, a detailed statement of transfer credits approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.
 - f. All other documentation and forms relating to the student's program.
3. Responsibility for maintenance of the student's file is shared by departmental office staff, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the student's advisor. However, the advisor and the student have the primary responsibility for bringing to the attention of the office staff any information that needs to be included into the student's file.
4. Administrative forms must be submitted and included in the file for the completion of each milestone of a student's program, such as passing the comprehensive exam, appointment of an examination committee, completion of coursework, advancement to candidacy, etc. The following forms should be used:
 - a. Approved Program Completion for Master's Degree (graduate school form)
 - b. Application for Admission to Candidacy (graduate school form)
 - c. Nomination of Thesis or Dissertation Committee (graduate school form)
 - d. Report of Examining Committee (graduate school form; generated after student advances nominates thesis/dissertation committee)
 - e. Thesis and Dissertation Submission in electronic form (ProQuest/UMI publishing agreement)
 - f. Master of Science Coursework Plan (departmental form)
 - g. Doctoral Coursework Plan (departmental form)