

Formal Graduate Review for BME Ph.D. Students

The Graduate Review Process for Ph.D. Students

The BME Graduate Review was established to track the progress of Ph.D. students and provide timely and constructive feedback. This is a positive, constructive process, allowing the faculty to be in touch with the entire graduate student body. Students are expected to receive input from the BME graduate program faculty in a timely manner, which should not only provide feedback to the student but also accelerate professional development and career success.

The material to be presented at the BME Graduate Review consists of: a self-assessment form written by the student, the draft feedback letter written by the advisor(s) and the formal feedback letter from the previous semester. This will be followed by a discussion by the entire graduate program faculty body resulting in a letter designation (SP, USP, N-1, M2M; see below) as well as written feedback to the student signed by the Program Director and Associate Director.

Approximately 6 weeks before the next scheduled BME Graduate Review, the students will be asked to update their self assessment form consisting of their publication list, teaching assistance/experience if any, graduate milestones, and other accomplishments. It is the student's responsibility to keep this information as up-to-date as possible as this is the student's opportunity to make the faculty body aware of such accomplishments.

The student is expected to make a thoughtful assessment of his/her academic, research, and professional progress, not just a laundry list of things done or to be done. It is useful for the student to include a self-assessment of general strengths and weaknesses and to comment on possible areas of improvement, which will likely generate the most constructive feedback from the faculty body. The student is encouraged to share his/her self-assessment form with the advisor(s). The advisor(s)' draft feedback letter should be shared with the student prior to the BME Graduate Review. The outcome of the BME Graduate Review is a formal feedback letter from the faculty to the student (signed by the Program Director and Associate Director in representation of the department faculty) including one of the following designations:

- SP (satisfactory progress) states that the faculty body is satisfied with the student's performance. The feedback letter may give specific pointers to help the student's research.
- USP (unsatisfactory progress) states that the faculty body expressed concern over some areas of the student's performance. The feedback letter will state those concerns. In most cases, given satisfactory progress, the grade of USP is converted to SP in the following semester.
- N-1 (support not continued past next semester) states that the faculty body expressed deep concern over student's performance, and would be given only in rare circumstances. The feedback letter will state specific milestones to be met for the designation of N-1 to be converted to SP in the following semester; otherwise, the student's support is terminated at the end of that semester.

- M2M (support not continued past next month) states that the faculty body expressed grave concern over student's performance or conduct, and would be given only in rare circumstances. The feedback letter will state specific milestones to be met for the support to continue past the following month.

The BME Graduate Review would take place once per semester, generally at the beginning of the Spring semester to evaluate the progress students made during the Fall semester, and at the beginning of the Fall semester to evaluate the progress students made during the Spring semester and Summer term. The following pages include proposed templates of the draft feedback letters the advisor(s) can use to prepare for reading at the BME Graduate Review.

Dear [Student Name]:

The Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program is pleased with your progress in the last semester.

In particular, we congratulate you on [insert here any papers, presentation at conferences, good job on mastering the literature and any other significant positive events]. Keep up the good work!

[Optional] We urge you to [insert here any comments on possible improvements, such as mastering the literature, public speaking etc].

[Optional] We remind you that you are scheduled to take your [Qualifying Exam/Proposal Exam] before the beginning of the [semester/year]. Please contact Prof. Joo Ong (Anson.Ong@utsa.edu) or Prof. Ender Finol (ender.finol@utsa.edu) with any questions you might have about preparing for the exams.

Congratulations on another successful semester!

Status: SP – satisfactory progress

{Signed by the Program Director and Associate Director}

Dear [Student Name]:

The Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program is concerned about your performance in the last semester.

In particular, we are concerned about [insert here any comments on concerns]. We recommend you [insert here any comments on what to do in the next semester].

We would though like to congratulate you on [insert here any papers, presentation at conferences, good job on mastering the literature and any other significant positive events].

[Optional] We remind you that you are scheduled to take your [Qualifying Exam/Proposal Exam] before the beginning of the [semester/year]. Please contact Prof. Joo Ong (Anson.Ong@utsa.edu) or Prof. Ender Finol (ender.finol@utsa.edu) with any questions you might have about preparing for the exams.

We are hoping this feedback will be useful to you in rectifying any deficiencies we identified. Please feel free to contact us, your advisor, or the Graduate Advisor of Record, Prof. Mark Appleford (Mark.Appleford@utsa.edu), with any questions you might have.

Status: USP – unsatisfactory progress

{Signed by the Program Director and Associate Director}

Dear [Student Name]:

The Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program is deeply concerned about your performance.

In particular, we are concerned about [insert here any comments on concerns]. This letter serves as a roadmap of milestones you must achieve by the end of [insert date]; otherwise, your financial support will be discontinued at that point. The milestones we identified are as follows: [insert here what the student must do, it has to be specific, doable and quantifiable].

We are hoping this feedback will be useful to you in rectifying any deficiencies we identified. Please feel free to contact us, your advisor, or the Graduate Advisor of Record, Prof. Mark Appleford (Mark.Appleford@utsa.edu), with any questions you might have.

Status: N-1 – support not continued past next semester

{Signed by the Program Director and Associate Director}

Dear [Student Name]:

The Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program is gravely concerned about your performance.

In particular, we are concerned about [insert here any comments on concerns]. This letter serves as a roadmap of milestones you must achieve by the end of [insert date, a month from the date of the letter]; otherwise, your financial support will be discontinued at that point. The milestones we identified are as follows: [insert here what the student must do, it has to be specific, doable and quantifiable].

We are hoping this feedback will be useful to you in rectifying any deficiencies we identified. Please feel free to contact us, your advisor, or the Graduate Advisor of Record, Prof. Mark Appleford (Mark.Appleford@utsa.edu), with any questions you might have.

Status: M2M – support not continued past next month

{Signed by the Program Director and Associate Director}