

UMCES Graduate Assistant Academic Quick Facts

Updated August 2020

Item	Source, Website, or Email Address
General Information	
UMCES Student Resources	https://www.umces.edu/graduate-program-myumces
UMCES Student Council	Membership: https://www.umces.edu/graduate-student-council Email address: gradstudentcouncil@umces.edu
UMCES Student Handbook	https://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/Full%20Handbook_27aug2020_2.pdf
Policy on Academic Integrity	http://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionIII/III100.pdf
UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships	http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/III711UMCES_0.pdf
UMCP Graduate Assistantship Policies (appointments, duties, tuition and fees, FICA)	UMCP Graduate Assistantship Policy: https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships/
UMCP Graduate Catalog (policies and procedures)	https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/
UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships	http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/III711UMCES_0.pdf
Thesis Examining Committee Membership	https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/masters-degrees-policies/
Dissertation Committee Membership	https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/doctoral-degrees-policies/
Filing of Thesis or Dissertation	https://gradschool.umd.edu/students/academic-progress/thesis-and-dissertation-filing
Courses, Research Credits, and Registration	
Course Registration	Testudo: https://testudo.umd.edu
MEES Course Catalog	http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/Course%20Catalog_25june2020.pdf
MEES Course Syllabi	https://www.umces.edu/mees-course-syllabi
Registration Policies	UMCP Graduate School Website: https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/registration-policies/
Deadlines and Calendars	
Registration and graduation dates and deadlines	https://gradschool.umd.edu/calendar
UMCP Academic Calendar	https://www.provost.umd.edu/node/1920
UMCES Holiday Calendar	https://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/HolidayCalendar2019-2020.pdf
Forms and Requirements	
MEES Forms	https://www.mees.umd.edu/mees-forms-1-1
Additional Graduate School Forms	https://gradschool.umd.edu/forms
MEES Doctoral Requirements	https://www.mees.umd.edu/current-doc-req-1
MEES Masters Requirements	https://www.mees.umd.edu/current-ms-req-1
Mutual Expectations Form	https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/grad_council_docs/statement_of_mutual_expectations.pdf

FAQs

1. What is full time status and how do I maintain it if necessary?

A Graduate Assistant is on an academic appointment not involving academic tenure. The appointment may be full-time (20 hours per week) or half-time (10 hours per week). Full time GAs are required to be signed up for at least 48 units per semester. Assistantships are worth 24 units. GAs holding regular 20-hour appointments are considered full-time students by the University if they are registered for at least 24 units in a semester term or 18 units in a 12-week term program. Please see this link for more information, including calculation of units: <http://www.registrar.umd.edu/current/registration/Full-Time%20Status.html>

2. There is a block on my account when I go to register for classes. How do I remove this block so that I can register?

There are a variety of reasons you may have a block on your account when registering for courses. Periodically, students might not have fully submitted their immunization records or there are charges from previous semesters that are still unpaid. For more information on account blocks, please see this website: <http://registrar.umd.edu/current/registration/registration.html#blocks> Contact Amy Griffin or the MEES Office if you need further assistance.

3. What are research credits and when should I sign up for them?

Masters students should use MEES799 strategically throughout their duration in the MEES Program, making sure to leave 1 credit of MEES 799 for the semester he or she defends (if not taking courses). You cannot graduate without meeting the requirement of 6 credits of MEES799.

MEES898 is pre-candidacy research for doctoral students and should be used for continuous registration when the student is not taking a course but has not reached candidacy. The registrar automatically signs Ph.D. candidates up for MEES899. You need 12 credits of MEES899 to graduate, and each semester of candidacy, a student is signed up for 6 credits of 899.

For both masters and Ph.D. students, you will sign up for the section that corresponds to your advisor. Please visit this [website](#) or contact your advisor if you are unsure for which section you should sign up.

4. As a doctoral student, there are two research credits (MEES898 and MEES899). What is the difference in these research credits?

MEES898 is pre-candidacy research for doctoral students and should be used for continuous registration when the student is not taking a course but has not reached candidacy. The registrar automatically signs Ph.D. candidates up for MEES899. You need 12 credits of MEES899 to graduate, and each semester of candidacy, a student is signed up for 6 credits of 899. Please note, MEES899 has a flat tuition fee. Please see this website for an explanation of MEES899 charges: <https://billpay.umd.edu/tuition-billing-tuition-and-fees/phd-candidacy-tuition-and-fees>

5. What are the guidelines for the formation of my committee? Am I allowed to have non-UMCES or non-UMCP graduate faculty committee members and can they hold non-academic positions?

The M.S. Committee will include a minimum of three members of the Graduate Faculty, at least two of whom will be Full Members (on the graduate faculty at UMCES or UMCP). The Chair of the Committee normally will be the student's advisor, who will be a Full or Associate Member of the Graduate Faculty, or who has been granted an exception to the policy by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Ph.D. Committee must include a minimum of five members of the Graduate Faculty, at least three of whom must be Full Members. The Chair of the Committee normally will be the student's advisor, who will be a Full Member of the Graduate Faculty, or who has been granted an exception to the policy by the Dean of the Graduate School. Each Committee will have appointed to it a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean's Representative may be one of the five voting members. Alternatively, the Dean's Representative may not be a voting member of the Committee. Whether the Dean's Representative votes or not is a decision made by the student, primary advisor and the Dean's Representative before the Dean's Representative is nominated for approval by the Dean of The Graduate School. In addition, the Dean will ensure that there are five voting members on the Committee. Therefore, Committees that have a non-voting Dean's Representative must have at least six members (five voting members and the non-voting Dean's Representative.)

Outside committee members do not need to hold current academic positions (for example, they may be employed by NASA or NOAA). Non-UMCES or non-UMCP Graduate Faculty committee members will need to submit an up-to-date CV and their birth date to the MEES Office.

6. Do all of my committee members have to be present at my milestone meetings?

M.S. Students: The Graduate School policy is that all members of a Thesis Examining Committee must be physically present in the examination room during the entire defense and during the committee's private deliberations following the examination. Participation by telephone is not permitted under any circumstances. While re-affirming this policy, the Graduate Council approved a policy to permit remote participation by video teleconferencing under certain circumstances, outlined on the UMCP website:

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/masters-degrees-policies/>

Ph.D. Students: For the oral portion of your comprehensive exam and your dissertation proposal defense, four of the five Research Advisory Committee members must be present, while one may participate remotely. Per policy of MEES, for the doctoral comprehensive exam and for the dissertation proposal defense, any committee member needing to attend remotely will need the student's advisor to send the request to the MEES Director. It is the intention that committee members attend these important milestone events.

Dissertation Defense: Under normal circumstances, all members of a Dissertation Examining Committee must be physically present in the examination room during the entire dissertation defense and during the committee's private deliberations following the examination. Participation by telephone is not permitted under any circumstances. Remote participation by video teleconferencing is permitted under certain circumstances, outlined on the UMCP website: <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/doctoral-degrees-policies/>

7. Do I need to be registered for credits the semester I defend?

Yes. It is the requirement of the graduate school that all students must have continuous registration. If all of your coursework is complete and your research credits are fulfilled, you will still need to sign up for one research credit the semester you plan to defend.

8. What is the date for the final submission of my thesis or dissertation so that I do not have to sign up for a credit the following semester?

All edits are due the day before the first day of classes of the next semester, otherwise, you will have to register the following semester. Per the UMCP Graduate School, "As long as your academically complete document is

submitted by the deadline (even without correct Graduate School formatting), it is considered to have met the deadline.” We recommend submission a few business days before to ensure everything gets processed on time. Stay in close contact with the registrar’s office to ensure your material was received after submission. Please see this website for more information: <https://gradschool.umd.edu/students/academic-progress/thesis-and-dissertation-filing>

9. I am currently an M.S. student and I want to transition to a Ph.D. program in MEES. What is the procedure to do this?

All students switching degree programs must re-apply to the MEES Program. In the new application, they are looking for a new personal statement that reflects the change in goals. Instead of three letters of recommendation, the office will accept one letter of recommendation that is from their master's committee and the student’s M.S. and Ph.D. advisor(s).

Please do not hesitate to contact Amy Griffin (agriffin@umces.edu / 410-326-7211) or the MEES Office (mees@umd.edu / 301-405-6938) if you have any questions.