

# Distance Education MAE Master's Program Student Guide

Hello Distance Education (DE) Master's Students,

Included here is important information to help ensure you are meeting all of the requirements for the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering distance education master's degree program. Please review this information, and if you have any follow up questions please email the MAE Graduate Office at [mae\\_gradoffice@ncsu.edu](mailto:mae_gradoffice@ncsu.edu).

## Quick Guide to Resource Links Provided in this Guide

Quick links are provided here for easy access, but many of these links will make more sense after reading through the guide.

EOL Academic Calendar - <https://www.engineeringonline.ncsu.edu/about/calendar/>

Graduate Student Handbook - <https://www.ncsu.edu/grad/handbook/index.php>

MyPack Portal User Guide - <https://sis.emas.ncsu.edu/students/>

EOL Courses by Semester - <https://www.engineeringonline.ncsu.edu/apply-and-enroll/online-courses/>

[Student Information System Training Manual](#)

[How to create a Plan of Work](#) (video)

MAE Graduate FAQ - <https://www.mae.ncsu.edu/graduate-faqs/>

MAE Graduate Advising Website - <https://www.mae.ncsu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/graduate-advising/>

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## Master's Degree Requirements

| MS Degree Requirements |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Minimum GPA            | <b>3.0</b>  |
| Graded Courses         | <b>27 credit hours</b><br>* Up to 9 credit hours (3 courses) can be non-MAE courses approved by the MAE DGP |
| Capstone Project       | <b>3 credit hours of MAE 586</b>  |
| Total Credits Required | <b>30</b>   |

\* DE student **do not** register for MAE 801.

MAE 586 is independent study, and since it's considered a capstone course, it's typically taken during the final semester. Additional information about MAE 586 is provided later in this guide.

Although you will work with a project advisor during their final semester, your faculty advisor throughout your MS degree program will be the MAE Director of Graduate Programs (DGP).

## Graduate Advising

The [MAE Graduate Office](#) is the advising resource for MAE distance education graduate students

Director of Graduate Programs – serves as the faculty advisor and Committee Chair

MAE Graduate Office – comprised of the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Program Assistant

The director of graduate programs can answer your advising questions, while the graduate office staff can connect you to departmental and Graduate School resources.

The [Engineering Online \(EOL\) team](#) assists MAE DE students with course enrollments, in addition to answering questions regarding the EOL academic calendar deadlines and using the EOL platform.

## Enrollment & Credit Hour Requirements

### DE students submit course enrollment requests to Engineering Online

- Course pre-requisites are verified by Engineering Online
- If pre-requisites need an exception, the course may require instructor's approval to enroll
- Engineering Online will enroll students once approved

### All students are required to maintain Continuous Enrollment

- Continuous Enrollment means there is no break in your enrollment/registration.
- It is possible to file a Leave of Absence for up to two (2) semesters during your academic career at NCSU.
- Read more in the Graduate Handbook: [section 3.14a Requirements of Continuous Enrollment](#)
- Distance Education students are not required to maintain full-time enrollment (9 credit hours). However, students who are not registered as full-time students by Census Day (the 10<sup>th</sup> day of classes each semester) lose their eligibility for student loans. Read more in the Graduate Handbook: [section 3.14b Requirements for Full/Half-Time Registration](#)
- Students are not required to enroll in the summer term to maintain continuous enrollment. Further, if a student applies for a leave of absence, they do not need to include the summer term.
- Visit the [EOL Academic Calendar](#) to view important academic deadlines.
- Visit the [Courses by Semester](#) website to view current course offerings.

### Enrollment for semesters beyond the 30 credit hours

- If you received an "incomplete" (IN grade) in your final semester you will need to enroll in one (1) credit hours of MAE 689 the following semester. This course is a placeholder to maintain continuous enrollment.

## Plan of Work & Advisory Committee Explained

The Graduate Plan of Work (PoW) is in MyPack Portal and is comprised of two parts: 1. the course plan, and 2. the advisory committee. The PoW serves both as a guide to successful degree completion, and a commitment between students and their committee member(s). In this way, the PoW serves to reduce the potential for misunderstandings about degree completion requirements and outlines the expected academic progress students should make. It should be viewed as a “living document” that reflects changes that may occur as students continue to develop and refine their academic program.

Access your PoW in MyPack Portal by navigating to **Student Homepage > Planning and Enrollment > Graduate Plan of Work**

Your PoW should be started early in the first semester you are enrolled, submitted for approval before the end of your second semester, and updated as necessary throughout your degree program. For additional information regarding this Graduate School requirement, visit the Graduate Handbook ([section 3.3 Graduate Plan of Work](#)).

### Timeline for Creating your Plan of Work

#### **Semester 2: create & submit your Plan of Work in your MyPack Portal**

- Create your plan of work, listing the courses you plan to complete for your MS.
- Designate the MAE Director of Graduate Program (DGP) as the committee Chair.
- Submit your Plan of work for approval.

#### **Continuously: review & save your Plan of Work**

- The review and modification process can be done continuously, especially if the classes you take do not match your original PoW.
- We recommend that you review your Plan of Work at least once a year.

#### **Second-to-last Semester: review & submit your final Plan of Work for approval (if required)**

- Finalize your PoW– ensuring the course list accurately reflects the courses taken to complete your degree. Submit the PoW for approval one last time before the start of your final semester.

### Who is your “Committee”?

Your committee consists of one role/person – the Chair. The MAE Director of Graduate Program (DGP) serves as the Chair for all MAE DE graduate students. Select the *Committee* tab of your PoW to create your advisory committee.

### The Plan of Work Approval Process:

- 1) Submit your PoW through MyPack Portal.
- 2) Department approval: the DGP then reviews the PoW for departmental approval.
- 3) Graduate School approval: the Graduate School will review for final approval.

Note: If at any time in the process your PoW is denied, a comment will be made and your PoW will be reset. Click the *Comments* tab of your PoW to read comments regarding the required changes that should be made. Once the necessary changes have been made, you can resubmit your PoW for approval again, and the approval process will start over (Committee approval, DGP approval, then Graduate School approval).

## Transfer Credit

Graduate students that have completed graduate level coursework that has not been applied toward any other degree, may be approved to apply transfer credit toward the completion of the MS degree (up to 12 credit hours). The Graduate School outlines their transfer credit policy in the Graduate Handbook ([Section 3.1.D Credit Hour Requirements for Master's Degree Degrees](#)). Students that would like to apply transfer credit toward the completion of their degree should complete the [Transfer Credit](#) form and email it to the MAE Graduate Office ([mae\\_gradoffice@ncsu.edu](mailto:mae_gradoffice@ncsu.edu)) for DGP approval.

## How/Why to Request to Reset Your Plan of Work

Since a student's course plan can change throughout their graduate program, the PoW can be reset throughout your program. Simply email [mae\\_gradoffice@ncsu.edu](mailto:mae_gradoffice@ncsu.edu) to make your request, and the MAE Graduate Office can assist you. Once reset, you will have to opportunity to edit your course list on your PoW– resubmitting it for approval once all the necessary changes have made.

**Helpful Resource:** [Student Information System Training Manual](#)

- Creating a Plan of Work (pg. 4)
- Creating an Advisory Committee (pg. 7)
- Applying for Graduation (pg. 12)

## What is MAE 586 – Project Work in Mechanical Engineering?

MAE 586 is intended to pull the knowledge you have gained in the other courses completed in your graduate program. As such, MAE 586 is typically completed in the final semester. [MAE 586 – Project work in Mechanical/Aerospace Engineering](#) is an independent project course with no formal lectures. Instead, students will perform an analysis or experiment under the advisement of a project advisor. You will enroll in MAE 586 just like every other DE course (following EOL procedures).

During the first week of this course you will be assigned an instructor, who will serve as a faculty mentor for your project. With assistance from the assigned instructor, the student will develop a one-page project proposal that includes a description of the intended project, and timeline of major tasks. Although it's not required, it is a good idea to start thinking about specific project ideas before the start of the class. Contact your faculty advisor for specific questions regarding this course.

## Applying to Graduate (MyPack Portal)

### **IMPORTANT: All students must Apply to Graduate in MyPack Portal during their final semester**

- All students must Apply to Graduate for the degree posted on the transcript, and receive a diploma. Distance Education students are also welcome to participate in commencement and must Apply to Graduate to do so.
- Apply to Graduate in MyPack Portal: **Student Homepage > Planning & Enrollment tile > Apply for Graduation**. Detailed instructions are available [here](#).
- Students must apply to graduate by “Apply to Graduate” deadline Date. This deadline can be found for the upcoming semesters on the graduate school website at [ETD Deadlines](#).

Students that Apply to Graduate will be included on emails the MAE Graduate Office sends out about the MAE graduation ceremony.

## Semester-by-Semester Program Checklist

### Prior to completing 9 credit hours of coursework

- Create your plan of work and submit it for approval in MyPack Portal.
- Designate the MAE Director of Graduate Programs as the Chair of your Committee.

### During the term 27 credit hours will be completed

- Review Plan of Work for accuracy after enrolling in final semester courses and resubmit for approval if necessary.

### Final semester

- Complete MAE 586.
- Apply to graduate in MyPack Portal.

## Academic Difficulties

The graduate school will place students who are not progressing satisfactorily towards the degree into one of three categories of academic difficulty at the end of the semester:

- **Academic Warning** – students in this category have accumulated 18 or fewer credit hours and have less than a 3.0 GPA.
- **Academic Probation** – students in this category have accumulated more than 18 credit hours and have a GPA in the range of 2.667 to 2.999.
- **Termination** – students in this category have accumulated more than 18 credit hours and have a GPA below 2.667 or have accumulated 30 or more credit hours and have a GPA below 3.0.

Students in the first categories may continue to enroll in courses, however there may be implications for eligibility for external financial aid. Contact the financial source if you have questions about eligibility. Student in the third category cannot enroll for courses, but may be reinstated by the graduate school, provided the DGP can provide a justification for the performance and a plan to bring the GPA back up in the following semester to meet graduation requirements.

If you fall into one of these three categories (particularly the second or third category), contact the DGP **immediately** so that together you can create an action plan to improve your GPA and avoid future actions by the graduate school. The earlier you put together the action plan and submit to the graduate school, the more likely you will graduate.

Read more in the Graduate Handbook: [section 3.19 Academic Difficulty](#)