

Mutual Agreement between Students and Faculty
MS Materials Science
Fall 2025

A graduate program is different from an undergraduate degree. Your course faculty and advisors/mentors will become guides rather than instructors. As you progress through your degree you will be using a growing sense of independence. In the interest of clarity, below are a collection of the major expectations of both students and faculty during the program. There will be an additional agreement between each student and their research/project advisor.

Students should be prepared to:
Attend classes and complete course work on time
Communicate regularly with faculty regarding their progress, especially, when things don't go too well. Faculty include current course instructors, the Graduate Advisor, and a research/project advisor if chosen.
Regularly check email (and other communication systems); this is a major way the program and faculty will communicate with you
Ask questions when they arise about a class, the program, or anything else. Don't wait!
Take part in professional opportunities including (but not limited to): presenting your research and attending professional meetings; attending seminars regularly; meeting visitors; undertaking internships; and using campus resources.
Act like a professional, including dressing appropriately when attending external meetings or meeting with potential employers, and using appropriate language in professional situations.
Your peers are an important resource. Treat peers as fellow professionals and collaborators, and treat them with respect.
Motivate yourself to keep on top of your work, and meet deadlines. Provide clear communication if you have difficulty meeting expectations.
Finish all required safety and other training requested by the deadlines.
Allocate the needed hours and energy to succeed in the program; discuss work-life balance and graduation timelines needed for success when issues arise.
Work with your thesis/project mentor to formalize your working agreements in a mentoring compact (a template to be provided)
Observe proper safety protocol and build a safety culture. Learn to use equipment properly and treat it with care, as if it were your own.
Prepare to be a group leader and lab manager to instruct undergraduate students and manage the lab, such as lab safety checking, working with university's EHS, etc.
If serving as a teaching assistant, additional expectations will be communicated.

Faculty will be prepared to:
Provide timely path to course and thesis/project completion, including: • Providing clear objectives for course-work and research • Define an explicit pathway to finish the program after completing x courses or semesters
Provide mentoring and guidance appropriate to student career or educational trajectory
Help graduate students develop the independence needed to succeed in the program
Be responsive and flexible to student needs and unexpected or emergent circumstances as may arise
Share opportunities for TA positions, financial support, conference, etc... to students in the entire program
Refer international students to resources for VISA or immigration related support
Review regularly student progress through coursework and thesis/project
Write the recommendation letters for students when needed.
Promote a safe program and research environment, free of harassment
Provide safety equipment, training, protocols and promote a culture of laboratory safety
Assist students in finding funding to participate in professional opportunities, such as conferences or travel for research
Treat all the students equally and respectfully
Check students' work progress on a regular basis.
Work with your thesis/project students to formalize your working agreements in a mentoring compact (template to be provided)
Provide referrals for health, financial, spiritual, and personal wellness

I have read and agree to abide by the program expectations:

Student name:

Student Signature:

Date signed:

Reviewed by Graduate Advisor

Name:

Signature:

Date: