INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: SPECIALIZATION IN TRANSLATIONAL BIOENGINEERING (PHD)

Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies, specialization in Translational Bioengineering
Unit: Graduate School (http://louisville.edu/graduate) (GI)
Program Webpage (https://louisville.edu/translational-bioengineering)
Academic Plan Code(s): IS_PHDTBE

Program Information

The Interdisciplinary Studies in Translational Bioengineering (ISSTBE) PhD program is designed to provide multidisciplinary training in translational bioengineering preparing students to lead research and development in academia, industry and governmental agencies and/or to advance bioengineering technologies through start-up companies as entrepreneurs or within established biomedical companies. This program is a collaborative effort between J.B. Speed School of Engineering, the School of Medicine, the School of Dentistry, and the College of Business.

In this PhD program, students will have the opportunity to pursue graduate-level training in one of three tracks:

- Traditional Bioengineering Research
- Clinical Translational Research
- Advancement of Bioengineering Technologies through Entrepreneurship

Students must also choose one of the following concentration areas:

- Bioelectronics and Biomedical Devices
- Bioimaging and Biocomputational Modeling
- Biomechanics and Rehabilitation
- Molecular and Tissue Engineering

Students will initially be assigned an advisor to aid in course selection, to identify a primary research mentor and to choose a laboratory where they will conduct their research. Dissertation committee members will be assembled from participating faculty in the Schools of Engineering, Dentistry or Medicine, or the College of Business, representing opportunities to conduct research within a broad range of bioengineering topics and/or develop technology for a wide variety of clinical applications. Students who successfully complete the program will demonstrate excellence in designing and conducting research leading to an intellectual contribution to the field, demonstrate in-depth knowledge of their concentration area and associated scientific literature, have an understanding of the clinical relevance and ethical implications of their research, have the ability to critically analyze, evaluate and interpret research methods and findings, and have the ability to effectively communicate knowledge of their concentration area.

Admission Requirements

The Graduate School has rigorous standards for admission into doctoral programs, and those standards apply to the ISSTBE PhD program as well.

Applicants must meet Graduate School admission requirements along with additional program requirements.

Applicants must, as a minimum, have completed a bachelor’s degree in Engineering or Medical Physics from an accredited program with a 3.25 cumulative grade point average to be considered for admission. The ideal applicant will have completed a master’s degree in engineering (MS or MEng) at the time of application.

Applicants must submit an online application (http://louisville.edu/graduate/apply), including the following:

1. Official transcripts of all college-level courses
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. A written statement by the applicant describing previous experience related to bioengineering
4. A statement as to how the PhD ISSTBE will allow them to fulfill their career goals as identified by their focus area of interest
5. Official Graduate Record Exam (GRE) verbal, quantitative, and writing assessment-analytical scores. Competitive scores on the verbal and quantitative sections will be required for admission.
6. Students whose native language is non-English or degree is from a non-US accredited institution are required to submit TOEFL scores (administered by the Educational Testing Service). A minimum TOEFL score of 79 or higher on the internet-based test or 550 or higher on the paper-based test is required. Alternatively, a minimum of 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System will be accepted.

Program Requirements

To earn the Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies with a specialization in Translational Bioengineering (ISSTBE), students are required to successfully complete the following:

- 47 credit hours of course work beyond their bachelor’s degree (18 Core credit hours, nine (9) Concentration credit hours, 20 Specialization credit hours)
- Participate in the Bioengineering Seminar Series (75 percent attendance rate and 1 presentation/term as a Doctoral Candidate)
- Pass the Comprehensive Examination
- Successfully defend a dissertation (15 credit hours)
- Submit two or more peer-reviewed journal papers representing their original dissertation research

Coursework

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>BE 601</td>
<td>Bioengineering Doctoral Seminar</td>
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<td>BE 603</td>
<td>Bioengineering Research Ethics</td>
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<td>BE 621</td>
<td>Bioinstrumentation</td>
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<td>BE 654</td>
<td>Advanced Physiology for Engineers</td>
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<td>BE 695</td>
<td>Bioengineering Research Design &amp; Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME 565</td>
<td>Advanced Engineering Mathematics I</td>
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<td>Concentration Area - 9 credit hours in one of the following areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>BE 551</td>
<td>Gene and Drug Delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td>BE 553</td>
<td>Nanoscale Bioengineering: Application and Methodology of Nanobiomaterials in Bioengineering</td>
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BE 552  Introduction to Tissue Engineering
BE 605  Tissue & Molecular Biology Techniques Laboratory
BE 650  Advanced Biomaterials
BIOC 611  Advanced Techniques in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
BIOC 668  Molecular Biology and Genetics
BIOC 680  Biomolecular Interactions

Bioimaging and Biocomputational Modeling
BE 542  Medical Image Computing
BE 540  Machine Learning in Medicine
BE 685  Computational Methods for Medical Image Analysis
CECS 622  Simulation and Modeling of Discrete Systems
CECS 627  Digital Image Processing

Bioelectrical and Biomedical Devices
BE 524  LabVIEW for Bioengineers
BE 581  Advanced Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing for Bioengineers
BE 611  Cardiovascular Dynamics
BE 650  Advanced Biomaterials
BE 683  Artificial Organs
BE 680  Bio-Micro
ECE 543  Fundamentals of Microfabrication and MEMS
ME 640  Optimum Design Methods
ME 647  Advanced Design Methods

Biomechanics and Rehabilitation
BE 630  Biomechanical Computer Modeling and Simulation of Human Movement
ME 651  Kinematics and Kinetics of Human Movement
BE 611  Cardiovascular Dynamics
BE 639  Injury Biomechanics
BE 658  Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology
ME 650  Biofluid Mechanics
ME 652  Advanced Human Biodynamics
ME 638  Computational Methods in Fluid Flow and Heat Transfer

Specialization Area Elective Coursework (see below)  20
Minimum Total Hours  47

Specialization Area Guided Electives

Courses in Specialization must be unique from those taken to fulfill the Concentration Requirement, and must follow either Track A, B or C below. Students must work with their advisor to establish a Plan of Study for Specialization Courses. All Specialization courses must be approved by the student’s advisor prior to registration.

Track A
Traditional Bioengineering Research PhD: 18 credit hours from those listed below with a minimum of six (6) credit hours in engineering courses + Teaching Practicum (two (2) credit hours)

Track B
Clinical-Translation Research PhD: 12 credit hours from list below designated as BIOC, ASNB, PSYC, BIOL, MBIO, OBIO, OBIO or EXP;

remaining six (6) credit hours from BE, CECS, ECE, IE, or ME + Teaching Practicum (two (2) credit hours).

Track C
Advancing Bioengineering Technologies through Entrepreneurship PhD: 12 credit hours from list below designated as ENTR or IMBA; remaining six (6) credit hours from BE, CECS, ECE, IE, ME + Teaching Practicum (two (2) credit hours).

Code  Title  Hours
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Guided Electives  20

- ASNB 614  Molecular Neuroscience  4
- BE 522  Biomedical Acoustics  3
- BE 540  Machine Learning in Medicine  3
- BE 551  Gene and Drug Delivery  3
- BE 552  Introduction to Tissue Engineering  3
- BE 553  Nanoscale Bioengineering: Application and Methodology of Nanobiomaterials in Bioengineering  3
- BE 542  Medical Image Computing  3
- ASNB 602  Fundamentals of Neuroscience  4
- BE 524  LabVIEW for Bioengineers  3
- BE 581  Advanced Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing for Bioengineers  3
- BE 630  Biomechanical Computer Modeling and Simulation of Human Movement  3
- ASNB 617  Seminar on Developmental Neurobiology  3
- BE 600  Advanced Topics in Bioengineering  1-6
- BE 605  Tissue & Molecular Biology Techniques Laboratory  3
- BE 611  Cardiovascular Dynamics  3
- BE 639  Injury Biomechanics  3
- BE 640  Computational Methods for Medical Image Analysis  3
- BE 650  Advanced Biomaterials  3
- OBIO 617  Advanced Oral Pathology  1
- BE 658  Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology  3
- BE 680  Bio-Micro  3
- BE 683  Artificial Organs  3
- BE 692  Bioengineering Clinical Rotation  2
- BE 693  Independent Study in Bioengineering  1-6
- BIOT 611  Advanced Techniques in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  4
- BIOT 645  Advanced Biochemistry I  4
- BIOT 668  Molecular Biology and Genetics  4
- BIOT 680  Biomolecular Interactions  2
- CECS 622  Simulation and Modeling of Discrete Systems  3
- CECS 627  Digital Image Processing  3
- CECS 628  Computer Graphics  3
- CECS 633  Computer Vision  3
- CECS 660  Introduction to Bioinformatics  3
- ECE 520  Digital Signal Processing  3
- ECE 521  Digital Signal Processing Laboratory  1
- ECE 523  Introduction to Biometrics  3
- ECE 543  Fundamentals of Microfabrication and MEMS  3
Dissertation Committee

By the end of the first semester, it is expected that the student has identified their Dissertation Chair. After the first year of study, the student (under the guidance of his or her advisor) must select a Dissertation Committee of five or more persons, for approval by the Program Director. The committee must consist of the student’s advisor from the Department of Bioengineering (who will act as the Dissertation Committee Chair), at least two additional faculty members from within the Department of Bioengineering, at least one faculty member from a partnering School or College, and at least one additional faculty member from outside the Department of Bioengineering.

Qualifying Examination

The PhD Qualifying Examination will be offered once per year and is to be taken by students upon completion of Core courses (with the exception of Bioengineering Seminar credits) and Concentration Area courses. The Qualifying Examination includes written and oral components. The written portion of the exam gauges student competency in fundamental bioengineering topics covered in their courses. ISSTBE affiliated faculty will submit and grade questions in their respective areas of expertise for the written portion of the Qualifying Examination. The oral portion of the examination is a formal presentation comprised of the student’s critique of a peer-reviewed journal paper selected from the student’s area of concentration, delivered to the ISSTBE Program Director and a subset of faculty with expertise in the respective concentration having Graduate Faculty status. Students are allowed no more than two opportunities to take the Qualifying Examination (oral or written components).

Comprehensive Examination

To qualify for candidacy, students must pass the Qualifying Examination, maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and pass the Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Examination requires the student to prepare a written dissertation research proposal (following an external funding agency format) that is presented, defended and approved by their Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee approval constitutes passing both the written and oral portions of the Comprehensive Examination. The written portion is comprised of the student’s dissertation document and the oral portion consists of the student’s presentation and defense of their dissertation, including response to questions posed by their Dissertation Committee and public attendees. The Dissertation Committee will evaluate written and oral performance on the Comprehensive Examination separately as a Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail. Students receiving a Conditional Pass must satisfactorily meet conditions set forth by the Dissertation Committee in order to Pass. Students failing either or both portions of the Comprehensive Examination will be permitted to repeat the respective portion(s) once.

Students must meet with their Dissertation Committee at least once per year during the remainder of their PhD program, culminating in the Dissertation Defense.