FAQ – BME MS Thesis and MS Project

Thesis versus Project
You can either do a 6-credit thesis or a 3-credit research project plus an additional 3 credit academic course. Typically a thesis requires substantial time in the laboratory. We advise that all student work on a thesis but realize that for some it is easier to take the research project options instead.

Registration:
Registration for thesis and master's projects is done in person with the MS advisor. You cannot register on-line. The MS advisor will submit a “request for independent study” form (see below), and a few days later the Registrar will create the course/section and you will be registered. Be sure to talk to your potential mentor to find an agreement as to what project to work on and what the time frame of the project will have. Note that on CUNYfirst the course will be registered with your mentor as advisor. She/he is responsible for submitting grades at the end of the semester, except if the mentor is not CCNY faculty in which case the grade is entered by the MS advisor. Thesis can be registered as 3 credits for each of two semesters, or as a 6-credit course for a single semester. We recommend to register as 6 credit course after the work is largely completed and once it is absolutely certain that the thesis document and defense can be completed within that semester.

Thesis project and mentors
Students should identify early on in the program an area of interest to guide course selections and potential thesis topics. We recommend to also look for a thesis mentor well ahead of the actual start of the thesis. Keep in mind that the thesis typically takes 1 year from start to end. We suggest that students review the list members of the NYCBE (https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/bme/nycbe-faculty) and the faculty of the Department (https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/bme/department) for research areas of interest. The student can contact a member of the Department directly. Please speak to the MS advisor to establish contact with potential NYCBE members. The thesis will be evaluated by a committee, which includes the mentor and two members of the BME faculty. The work has to be presented to the Department as a seminar talk.
Final thesis document
The student submits two unbound copies of the Master's thesis to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (Dean Ardie Walser). The thesis has to be written according to the instructions of the graduate engineering office. You can obtain those instructions at the Dean's office. Both the mentor and Chair of the Department must sign the standard cover sheet of the thesis. The graduate engineering office must approve the thesis format before it is forwarded to the library for binding. We recommend making an appointment with the Dean to present the unbound and signed copies of the thesis.

Grading
The mentor typically submits the grade for the student, either at the end of the semester when grades are due, or if the defense is delayed past that deadline, then the mentor must submit a "change of grade form", which can be obtain from the secretary of the dept. External mentors will communicate the grade to the Department's MS advisor who then submits the grade. If the student registered for 3 credits only, after the first semester the mentor typically gives a SP grade for “satisfactory progress”, if indeed appropriate. The final grade for the second 3-credit semester (or for the single 6 credit registration) is the final grade for the thesis. It is recommended that the student be aware of all relevant deadlines (available from the registrar's office) and that they contact the mentor in a timely fashion soliciting grade submission. Late grade submissions by the mentor result in an INC (incomplete) grade and require a grade-change form to be changed to an actual grade. As with any other course, INC grades have to be updated with 12 months or else they are automatically converted into an FINC, equivalent to an F (fail).

Graduation card:
The student has to submit a graduation card to the Registrar during the first two weeks of the term in which the student intends to graduate. The graduation card can be obtained from the Registrar's office (Room A - 102, Tel. (212) 650-7874 or 650-7875). It can also be filed on-line in the registrar's web site. This will initiate the process of checking the academic and business records at the college. In the process the Department confirms that the student has satisfied the Department's requirements to graduate.

Important note concerning graduation and registration:
The student must be registered in the semester that he/she intends to graduate. That means that the student has to register for at least one credit in the last semester here at CCNY. Otherwise the student will be charged a maintenance fees just so he/she can apply for graduation. Therefore, we advise that the student registers for Thesis credits only when they are very sure that they can complete the thesis by the anticipated graduation deadline. Therefore, be sure to not register for all 6 thesis credits before you are ready to finalize your thesis. To facilitate that, student can choose to register for all 6 credits in the lasts semester (BME 19903) or they can register for 3 credits in each of two semesters (BME 19906).
REQUEST FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY
(Students: Please complete this and drop this of at the front desk of the BME department)

DATE: ____________________ SEMESTER: _______________________________ ________

STUDENT NAME: ___________________________ FIRST M.I. LAST

STUDENT ID: _____________________________________________________________

DEPARTMENT: ________________ Biomedical Engineering _______________________

COURSE ACRONYM & NUMBER: __ BME ____________________________ CREDITS: _________

COURSE TITLE:
Options for BME MS students are:
  MS Project, BME I9800 (3 cr.)
  MS Thesis, BME I9903 (3 cr., register twice over two semesters)
  MS Thesis, BME I9906 (6 cr., register all 6 cr. in the last semester before graduation)
  Report, BME I9700 (0 cr.)

INSTRUCTOR NAME : _______________________________________________________
(BME Faculty mentor of the projects/thesis, or MS advisor if mentor is not at CCNY)

INSTRUCTOR ID: __________________________________________________________
(Request this from the mentor after you have discussed your project)

REQUESTED BY : __________________ Prof. Bingmei Fu _________________________
Faculty requesting this registration

TELEPHONE #: ___________________ (212) 650-7753 EMAIL: _________________
 _______________ fu at ccny.cuny.edu ______________________
Faculty requesting this registration

To be completed by Registrar’s Office

COURSE NUMBER: _________________________________SECTION: __________________________

COURSE CODE: _________________________________DATE: _______________________________

PROCESSED BY: ____________________________________________