

Updated July 2009 Admissions FAQs- MS

1) I do not have a degree in biomedical engineering. Am I eligible to apply for admission to the BME MS-only program?

Students with undergraduate degrees in other engineering fields or the quantitative sciences may apply for admission and are often admitted. At a minimum, students must have a background in advanced mathematics (through ordinary differential equations) and a basic understanding of biological sciences, physics and engineering related to their intended area of research. Under exceptional circumstances, a student may be admitted prior to meeting these requirements, but is expected to meet them before enrolling.

2) I originally applied to the BME PhD program, but I have changed my mind and would like to be considered for the MS-only program. Can I automatically be considered for the MS-only program without reapplying?

If a decision has not yet been made on your PhD application, you may send a letter to the graduate school requesting administrative reassignment of your application from the PhD to the MS-only program. However, if you were previously denied admission to the PhD program, you must reapply through the graduate school for admission to the MS-only program.

3) How do I apply for admission to the BME MS-only program?

Applications for admission are submitted online through the Graduate School website (<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/admission/>).

4) When is the application deadline for fall admission?

Applications may be submitted as late as May 31 for fall admission to the MS program, however for full consideration complete applications should be received by December 31. Applications will not be reviewed until all required supplementary information is received and the application fee is paid to the graduate school.

5) Is there a minimum GPA or GRE requirement for eligibility to apply?

The BME department does not enforce minimum GPA or GRE scores for applicants. However, admission is competitive and the average undergraduate GPA of MS students applying for Fall 2006 was 3.60 (4 Yr), and the average quantitative and verbal GRE scores were 760 and 590, respectively.

6) Before I apply, can I have somebody in the BME department review my qualifications and tell me if I have a chance of being admitted?

No. Because of the difficulty of accurately assessing qualifications of students in the absence of official transcripts, letters of recommendation and other information, we

cannot honor these requests. Emails sent to the BME department requesting a pre-application analysis of admission chances will not be acknowledged.

7) Do I need to take the GRE exam?

All applicants must take and submit the results of the general GRE exam. Official scores must be less than three years old, include results from the new analytical writing section, and must come directly from the Educational testing Service (ETS). [The institutional code assigned to The Graduate School at Northwestern is 1565](#). Be sure to include this number, and only this number, on your test form. If your results are not sent to this code, we will not receive them. Personal copies are not considered official, nor are "attested" or notarized copies. However, it is to your advantage to include a paper copy of your score report in your supplemental information packet. This helps the department verify your scores quickly, should there be any delay in receiving the official report from ETS.

8) Do I need to take the TOEFL?

Students whose first language is not English must take and submit the results of the TOEFL exam. International students that received a BS degree from a university in the USA or Canada do not need to take the TOEFL exam.

9) Is financial aid available for MS-only students?

The BME department generally does not offer financial aid to students in the MS-only program. Occasionally, students admitted to the MS-only program obtain research assistantships to perform research in the laboratory of a BME faculty member. Such arrangements are made between the faculty member and the student, and have no bearing on the admissions decision.

10) Is there a form to be used for recommendation letters?

No. Persons providing letters of recommendation should comment on your past academic/research performance and future potential.

11) How many letters of recommendation are required?

We require at least two (three preferred) letters of recommendation. The letters of recommendation should be provided in sealed envelopes and included in the supplementary information packet that you mail to the BME department.

12) Can I send supporting materials before my online application is complete?

Documents that arrive before your application will be held in a pending file until the application and fee are submitted. (Pending file items are held for six months and then destroyed.) Anything sent separately from the application should include your name and your birth date.

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13) Where do I send supporting documents (transcripts, recommendation letters, etc.).

Two official copies of transcripts and each letter of recommendation should be sent together with all other supplementary materials in a single packet to:

Graduate Admissions
Biomedical Engineering Department
Northwestern University
Tech Institute, Room E310
2145 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60208

14) What factors are taken into consideration, and when are admission decisions made?

Past academic performance, work experience, research experience, test scores, letters of recommendation and statement of purpose are all taken into consideration, and each case is unique. Admission decisions are made after review of applications by a committee of BME faculty, after which final approval of admission recommendations is granted by the Graduate School. Generally, most admission decisions are made by mid-April for fall admission for applications received by December 31.

15) Can I apply to the MS-only program for winter or spring admission?

Due to the high number of applicants, the BME Department has a full Fall class and will **not** be admitting students for Winter or Spring quarters until further notice. Please do not apply for admission for any quarter (besides Fall) as you will not be admitted and your application fee cannot be refunded. Please contact Nicky Lockman in the BME Office at 847-467-1213 or n-lockman@northwestern.edu with any questions about this policy.

16) Where can I find information on health insurance and services?

Northwestern University requires all full-time students to be covered by health insurance throughout their studies. Information on health insurance and health services can be found at this link: <http://www.nuhs.northwestern.edu/evanston/insurance.aspx>

