Northwestern | McCORMICK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Civil and Environmental Engineering

Master of Science
Civil and Environmental Engineering
Student Handbook

2026-2027

September 2026

Also available online

http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/current-students/forms-documents.html

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Academic Time Table

based on a 3-quarter program

What	When	How
Academic adviser assignment	CEE Orientation	Assigned by MS program coordinators
Plan for fall quarter courses	CEE Orientation break out sessions	Meet with your adviser, discuss course selection, adviser approve plan
Learn GSP and CAESAR	CEE Orientation	Read MS CEE Student Handbook
Fall Registration	NU Orientation week till the end of first week of class	Fall course selection must be uploaded to GSTS and approved by the adviser in GSTS before registration hold is removed. Once registration hold is removed, students are ready to register via CASESAR
Job/internship search	As soon as you can	Register with McCormick Office of Career Development (MCD) adviser, register with McCormick Connect (http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/career-development/mccormickconnect.html).
		Networking with profession, alumni, etc.
	Fall quarter	Attend professional seminars available in the department. See announcements on presentation on job search resources, resume writing, etc. in CEE.
		Prepare resume and practice interview
		Start looking for jobs or internships
	October	**Participate in CEE Fall Career Fair,** http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/career-opportunities/career-fair.html
	January	**Participate in CEE Winter Career Fair**
Curriculum Plan	By October 31	Submit curriculum plan for the entire degree program to GSTS. Plan must be approved by the academic adviser.
Winter quarter advising	Start at about the 5th week of fall quarter	Make an appointment to meet your adviser to discuss courses you plan to take in the winter quarter.
Winter quarter registration	Start at about 9th week of fall quarter	Have your course selection approved by your adviser.
Spring quarter advising	Start at about the 5th week of winter quarter	Make an appointment to meet your adviser to discuss courses you plan to take in the spring quarter.
Spring quarter advising	Start at about 8th week of winter quarter	Have your course selection approved by your adviser.
Spring graduation		
AFD	early spring quarter	Submit Application for a Degree form via CAESAR
Degree completion	late spring quarter	Form signed by at least two faculty advisers due at TGS. Check with Academic Coordinator

Staff Contact List

Academic Year 2026-2027

Department Chair: Prof. Yu (Marco) Nie, y-nie@northwestern.edu

Program Coordinator: Mr. Logan Hart, logan.hart@northwestern.edu

Director of Graduate Studies: Prof. Gianluca Cusatis, g-cusatis@northwestern.edu

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Prof. Eric Garcia, ericvincent.garcia@northwestern.edu

EES Area Coordinator: Prof. George Wells, george.wells@northwestern.edu

STR Area Coordinator: Prof. Federico Ciardo, federico.ciardo@northwestern.edu

USE Area Coordinator: Prof. Alessandro Rotta Loria, af-rottaloria@northwestern.edu

TRN Area Coordinator: Prof. Amanda Stathopoulos, a-stathopoulos@northwestern.edu

Business Administrator: Mr. Charles Martell, Charles.martell1@northwestern.edu

Financial Assistant: Mounir Affoun, mounir.affoun@northwestern.edu

Environmental laboratory & safety coordinator: Chan (Yingqian) Xiong, yingqian.xiong@northwestern.edu

IT Help: mccit@northwestern.edu

Important Dates

Academic Year 2026 - 2027

Full Academic Calendar: https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/academic-calendars/index.html

CEE Orientation	9/18/2026
Fall Classes Begin	9/23/2026
Last day to add a class for fall	9/29/2026
Last day to drop a class for Fall	10/30/2026
Winter Registration begins	11/16/2026
Fall quarter classes end	12/5/2026
Fall quarter final exams	12/7/2026
Winter classes begin	1/4/2027
Last day to add or change a course	1/8/2027
Martin Luther King Day Observance (no classes)	1/18/2027
Last day to drop a class for Winter	2/12/2027
Spring registration begins	2/22/2027
Winter classes end	3/13/2027
Winter quarter final exams	3/15/2027
Spring break	3/20/2027 - 3/29/2027
Spring classes begin	3/30/2027
Last Day to add or change a course	4/5/2027
Last day to drop a class for Spring	5/7/2027
Fall 2026 registration begins	5/17/2027
Memorial Day Observance (no classes)	5/31/2027
Spring classes end	6/5/2027
Spring quarter final exams	6/7/2027
Commencement	6/21/2027

Students with Student Visas:

If you plan to graduate Fall 2027 or beyond, please make sure you maintain full time student status. Below are the ways you can maintain full time student status. You do not need to maintain full time status in the summer, unless you are an international student and it is a requirement of your visa. If you are not sure, check with OISS.

- If you are completing a thesis, register for CIV_ENV 590. You will need a permission number.
- If you are completing an independent study, register for CIV_ENV 499.
- If you are completing a required paper (MS TRN students only registered with CIV_ENV 508), you need to register for TGS 512 in each academic quarter (except the summer term) until you complete the work.
- If you still have course(s) to take, but less than 3 courses, to meet the degree requirements, you need to complete a reduced course load form from the International Office. You are only permitted to register with a reduced load if that is the last quarter before graduation.
- Please, check the Registrar Office website for graduation deadlines http://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/index.html

Preface

This handbook is intended to provide you with a comprehensive guide to the Master of Science degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) programs granted by The Graduate School (TGS) at Northwestern University. We hope this handbook will enhance your experience at Northwestern.

This handbook is prepared as a handy reference guide to the degree requirements, programs, policies, and procedures of the Department and The Graduate School. An Academic Timetable on page 3 and Important Dates starting on page 4 are provided to guide you through various milestones during a 3-quarter (9 – 12 months) program. We hope that you will find the information you need for both planning and understanding your MS education.

The Department would also like to emphasize the importance of social and ethical implications of an engineer's work in the betterment of society. Through student professional organizations, departmental seminars, and many ethnics groups, you can interact with world renowned researchers and engineers, and experience diverse cultures. You can also interact with professionals in the Greater Chicago area through meetings hosted by various professional groups. We hope you will take full advantage of the opportunities presented to you during your stay with us.

We hope you find this handbook a useful resource for your MS study. We wish you much success and welcome your suggestions for improvement of the handbook.

Marco (Yu) Nie, Ph.D.
Roxelyn & Richard Pepper Family Chair & Professor
Civil and Environmental Engineering

Gianluca Cusatis, Ph.D.
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
Civil and Environmental Engineering

Responsibility for Meeting Degree Requirements

Ultimately, students are responsible for understanding the degree requirements for their specialty area and for planning their course of study accordingly. The Department, Assistant Dean of Graduate Study of McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, The Graduate School, and the International Office are valuable resources for academic and visa information. Faculty advisers assigned to you will assist you in course selection. However, they are not responsible for ensuring that you meet all the degree requirements including grade point average (GPA) requirement and (when relevant) U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services requirement. Those are the responsibilities of the student.

Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science (MEAS) at Northwestern University (NU). The faculty, staff, and students at CEE look forward to interacting with you so that you can enjoy the maximum learning, social, and cultural experience that Northwestern University can offer you. This handbook is part of our effort to help you achieve this goal from the academic aspect. In addition to academic requirements, this handbook includes an academic timetable (based on a 3-quarter to 12-month program) of some milestones such as completion of curriculum plan, advising and registration, internship or permanent position, Application for a Degree (AFD), and degree completion. We hope you will **thoroughly read this handbook at least once**. We also hope that you will refer to it whenever you have an academic related question. Of course, our faculty members, in general, and our MS program coordinators are available to address any issue or question you may have. Please feel free to contact them.

A new edition of the handbook is published annually to coincide with each academic year. Revisions will be made as needed each quarter. The handbook and all the forms listed in this handbook are available online at the following link Forms & Documents | Students | Civil & Environmental Engineering | Northwestern Engineering.

Missions

Northwestern University

Northwestern is committed to excellent teaching, innovative research, and the personal and intellectual growth of its students in a diverse academic community.

The Graduate School

The mission of The Graduate School at Northwestern University is to cultivate an environment of academic excellence where graduate students and postdoctoral fellows are enabled to learn, discover, and create knowledge that enlivens an understanding of human endeavors and the world in which we live. *(http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/).*

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

We inspire and cultivate innovative leaders and problem solvers prepared to address complex societal-scale challenges in areas of resilient infrastructure, smart and sustainable cities, water and energy security, climate change, mobility of goods and people, and environmental protection. We achieve this mission through:

1. *Education that advances the intellectual development of our students using modern engineering curricula focused on quantitative and predictive methods, academic and professional mentoring, and service-based learning;*
2. *Research that leads to new theories and techniques and transforms our ability to design, construct, and manage society's infrastructure, control material behavior, and sustain natural and engineering systems around the world;*
3. *Cultivation of a diverse community of scholars, who, through motivation to serve society, are prepared to lead management and decision-making both inside and outside of the Civil and Environmental Engineering professions.*

The above mission statements can be found on the websites:
University – http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/about/index.html
The Graduate School – http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/
Department – http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/about/mission-vision-statement.html

Student and Professional Organizations

Student and professional organizations provide networking opportunities and seminars on state-of-the-art research and design in the civil and environmental engineering profession. The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering is home to the Student Chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers (NU ASCE). Professional organizations of all branches of civil and environmental engineering have a local section in the Chicago area which hosts monthly meetings. You are encouraged to attend some of these meetings to interact and network with the engineering profession. The following is a list of organizations in which you may consider participating.

Northwestern University American Society of Civil Engineers Founded in 1852, the American Society of Civil Engineers represents more than 150,000 members of the civil engineering profession worldwide and is America's oldest national engineering society. ASCE's mission is to provide essential value to our members and partners, advance civil engineering, and serve the public good.

The Mission of NUASCE is *to create a more informed and involved Civil Engineering community by providing opportunities to apply and further refine technical skills, increasing student and faculty interactions, and preparing students to enter the professional engineering industry.* Through NUASCE you will have the opportunity to meet other students with similar interests, network with professionals, and participate in exciting design competitions such as concrete canoe and steel bridge. Most importantly, the student chapter prides itself on creating a strong community of engineers, and they would love for you to join! Graduate students are welcome and encouraged to join. For more information, visit their website: http://asce.mccormick.northwestern.edu.

Other student organizations:

Civil and Environmental Engineering Graduate Association (CEEGA) – see Charles Martell, staff advisor or Prof. Giuseppe Buscarnera, faculty adviser.

McCormick Graduate Leadership Council (MGLC) Founded in 2006, the MGLC fosters community among all McCormick graduate students. http://mglc.mccormick.northwestern.edu/

Graduate Student Association (NUGSA) at Northwestern enhances graduate students' experiences in and out of the classroom and strives to create resources and programs to improve the quality of students' lives. https://sites.northwestern.edu/nugsa/

Graduate Leadership and Advocacy Council (GLAC) is the voice of graduate students in academic and administrative matters at Northwestern University and a forum for graduate student leaders. http://sites.northwestern.edu/glac/

Chicago Area Professional Organizations

Illinois Section American Society of Civil Engineers represents Civil Engineers in Northern Illinois. The Section has five technical groups and the Younger Member Group (YMG). The technical groups are Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI), Geo Institute (GEO), Structural Engineering Institute (SEI), Transportation and Development Institute (T&DI), and Urban Planning and Development (UBD). All groups hold monthly lunch or dinner meetings. YMG usually hosts social events for younger engineers of all disciplines to network and they also sponsor a number of outreach events to pre-college students. A great way to develop your professional network and career advancement. For more information, visit http://www.isasce.org/.

American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists http://www.aaees.org/
American Chemical Society: http://www.acs.org
American Concrete Institute (ACI) https://www.concrete.org/
American Geophysical Union: http://sites.agu.org
American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) http://www.aisc.org/
American Society for Microbiology: http://www.asm.org
Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors: http://www.aeesp.org
Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) http://www.ite.org/
Structural Engineers Association of Illinois (SEAOI) advances and advocates excellence in structural engineering and to aid in safeguarding the public. https://www.seaoi.org/
Transportation Research Board (TRB) http://www.trb.org/AboutTRB/AboutTRB.aspx
Water Environment Federation http://www.wef.org

Internship and Career Development

Civil and Environmental Engineering Career Fair

Through the joint effort of NUASCE and EnvEUS, the inaugural **CEE Career Fair** was held in 2013. Since 2014, the Career Fair has been organized by the CEE Department with support from McCormick's Engineering Career Development office beginning in 2019. CEE Career Fair focuses on firms that hire civil and environmental engineering graduates for internships and for full time engineering positions. The number of participating companies has gone from six in 2013 to 24 in 2016. Starting in the 2016-2017 academic year, the Department expanded the Career Fair to have Fall and Winter Career Fairs. **The Fall Career Fair is held in October while the Winter one is held in January**. Watch for the announcement of the event and call for registration and submission of resumes. The Department also maintains a web page (https://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/students/career-resources/industry-job-opportunities.html) where internships and graduate engineer positions are posted when the information is sent to the Department. We suggest you check on the site periodically to see what is being posted.

SWE Industrial Day

A McCormick-wide career fair is hosted by the Society of Women Engineers. This career fair is usually held on the third Thursday of October. A McCormick networking mixer is held the evening before. The mixer is an informal meeting with company representatives. Watch Plan-it-Purple to see the exact date and location.

McCormick Office of Career Development (MCD)

MCD http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/career-development/index.html provides career preparation and employment assistance through a variety of work-integrated learning programs including co-op engineering education, internships, research experience, and service learning. Register with **McCormickConnect** (http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/career-development/mccormickconnect.html) to receive information on job postings, resume submissions, interview schedules, career events, or meet with a MCD adviser. MCD is located in Room 2.350 in Ford Building.

Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA)

The mission of Northwestern Career Advancement is to foster excellence in career development, preparation, and professional opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students and alumni by providing comprehensive services and programming and by promoting strong partnerships with employers, academic departments, and the university community.
http://www.northwestern.edu/careers/

Academic Integrity and Engineering Ethics

Academic Integrity

Northwestern University and the CEE Department expect their students to hold high standards of academic honesty. Behaviors such as cheating on exams, plagiarism, using unauthorized materials for your work are not tolerated. Northwestern Provost Office issues a document ***Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide, August 2024 edition*** (https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies-procedures/academic-integrity/) which is a central resource of policies governing academic integrity for all students and faculty at Northwestern. There are four main sections of the Guide:

- Principles regarding academic integrity
- Eight Cardinal Rules of academic Integrity
- Counseling and contacts
- How to avoid plagiarism

Additional resources on academic integrity can be found in The Graduate School web site https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/academic-integrity.html

We strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with all these documents. Failure on your part to understand the Academic Integrity Policy will not relieve you from that responsibility.

Engineering Ethics

As civil and environmental engineers, our primary responsibility is to serve the public through all the infrastructure systems we design and maintain. Hence, practicing engineering ethics is extremely important to our career and the public. The public entrusted us to provide a functional infrastructure system and to protect our environment. To guide us with our professional integrity are the Codes of Ethics from the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Many states require an ethics exam as part of the Register Professional Engineer (PE) application and require continuing education in ethics as part of the renewal of PE. Below are the ASCE Code of Ethics Canons. They are very similar to the ones provided by NSPE. You can find the complete Code of Ethics at NSPE website https://www.nspe.org/resources/ethics/code-ethics.

ASCE Code of Ethics (http://www.asce.org/code-of-ethics/)

Canon 1. Engineers shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public and shall strive to comply with the principles of sustainable development in the performance of their professional duties.

Canon 2. Engineers shall perform services only in areas of their competence.

Canon 3. Engineers shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.

Canon 4. Engineers shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall avoid conflicts of interest.

Canon 5. Engineers shall build their professional reputation on the merit of their services and shall not compete unfairly with others.

Canon 6. Engineers shall act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, and dignity of the engineering profession and shall act with zero-tolerance for bribery, fraud, and corruption.

Canon 7. Engineers shall continue their professional development throughout their careers, and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those engineers under their supervision.

Canon 8. Engineers shall, in all matters related to their profession, treat all persons fairly and encourage equitable participation without regard to gender or gender identity, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, political affiliation, or family marital, or economic status.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Northwestern University prohibits discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, caste, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, height, weight, or any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance or any other classification protected by law in the matters of admissions, employment, housing or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended in 2008; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and any other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or ordinances that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

The University has designated the Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to coordinate the University's compliance with federal and state civil rights laws regarding protected characteristics, including Title IX and those other laws and regulations references above:

Emily Babb
Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance | Title IX Coordinator
Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance
1800 Sherman Ave., Suite 4500
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 467-6165
OCR@northwestern.edu

Tiffany Little
Senior Director. Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance | Deputy Title IX Coordinator
Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance
1800 Sherman Ave., Suite 4500
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 467-6165
OCR@northwestern.edu

The University complies with all federal and state laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination based on their disability or perceived disability status. As such, reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities when such modifications and services are necessary to access the institution's programs and services. The University's ADA/504 Coordinator is:

Laura Conway
Director, ADA Compliance | ADA Coordinator
Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance
1800 Sherman Ave., Suite 4500
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 467-6165
Accommodations@northwestern.edu

Sam Milgrom
Deputy ADA Coordinator
Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance
1800 Sherman Ave., Suite 4500
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 467-6165
Accommodations@northwestern.edu

Inquiries about Title IX or the University's prohibitions against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation can be directed to the Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, the ADA/504 Coordinator (for disability-related questions) or to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights at the contact information listed below:

Complaints and inquiries regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation involving federal laws may be directed to:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
John C. Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn St., 37th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 730-1560
OCR.Chicago@ed.gov

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John C. Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn St., Suite 1866
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 872-9777

Any person who believes that the University as a federal contractor has violated nondiscrimination or equal opportunity obligations may contact the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) at

OFCCP
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20210
www.dol.gov
(800) 397-6251

Downloading Computer Software & File Sharing

It is incumbent on any person who uses Northwestern University resources, such as computers and associated networks, to ensure that they are not using illegal software. Downloading and using software that was obtained illegally is against University policy. Obtaining software legally means that either you personally, or your adviser through NU, has paid for the correct number of copies of the software for the number of computers you have installed the software on.

It is also against University policy to illegally download copyrighted material, such as movies, videos, mp3s, scientific papers, magazine articles, etc. **Any person who has violated this policy is subject to the disciplinary action determined by the University**.

There are many alternatives to using illegally obtained software. The University provides a limited number of software titles available for students on the IT website at http://www.it.northwestern.edu, located under the "Students" tab. Also, many software titles are available either free, or at a reduced cost, for educational purposes. In addition, there are many free alternatives to standard software titles, such as Open Office, that can be used freely and are very robust.

Any questions or concerns about this matter should be directed to your adviser or Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering technical support staff.

Safety Training – Laboratory

Northwestern University and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering take the safety of every member in the community very seriously. In that spirit, Northwestern University and CEE require students to take special care while working in the university laboratories. Everyone who works in any laboratories under the supervision of CEE MUST follow the Lab Safety Requirements outlined below.

a. If you plan to use any lab for course projects or research, you must contact the lab coordinator: Dave Ventre, d-ventre@northwestern.edu, if you plan to use any of the civil engineering labs; or contact Chan Xiong, yingqian.xiong@northwestern.edu, if you plan to use any of the environmental engineering labs. The lab coordinator will also explain the lab rules of etiquette and cleanup. Then, the Lab Coordinator will add you to the lab roster.
b. All lab workers must be on the official Office for Research Safety (ORS) lab roster in order to conduct any experiments or projects in the lab.
c. Lab Safety Training and preparation are required by ORS and CEE ***before a student can begin any lab work***. The required training can be taken on-line.
d. Once you are on the roster, you will receive email notification from Northwestern Safety Information System (NSIS), the automated training website. The email will provide links to take the on-line ORS training. They can be taken from any NU computer, or off campus (requires VPN).
e. The lab coordinator will be notified when you have successfully completed the ORS training.
f. In addition, you **MUST** take the CEE on-line training, http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/research/lab-safety.html. Read the Safety Guide, then take the Safety Quiz. Submit the quiz as an attached file (pdf, doc, txt, etc.) to Dave Ventre at d-ventre@northwestern.edu.
g. You may be required to have additional training, such as welding safety, depending on the specific machinery or equipment you will use.
h. Once you have successfully completed the CEE safety quiz, ORS training, and any additional safety training, the lab coordinator will give you your lab access code and you can begin lab work.
i. Please note that our labs and workshops contain certain specialty machines and tools that require individual, hands-on training to operate safely. This includes MTS machines, the Hobart mixers, saws, grinders, drills, hand tools, welding equipment and others. Most are kept locked. **Using any such machines without proper training and lab coordinator approval is strictly forbidden**.
j. Anyone working in a lab without the required training, failing to follow lab safety and hygiene rules, or operating equipment without proper training and authorization, will have their lab access and privileges suspended.
k. Under no circumstances should there be only one person in the lab during weekends, holidays, and non-normal operating hours, which are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Academic Advising

You are among the elite groups of students in the Northwestern community. It is our goal for you to have an enjoyable and productive learning experience during your time with us. To achieve this goal, the Department has developed an Advising Policy for the MS programs described below to assist you with curriculum planning and progress towards your MS degree. The Department is using the GSTS (Graduate Students Tracking System) to monitor all the MS student academic plans, academic progress, and advising. You will have 24/7 access to your unofficial academic record (the only official academic record is the transcript issued by the Registrar Office), study plan, curriculum plan. The URL of GSTS is https://gsts.northwestern.edu/site/login. You can login with your NetID and password.

While all the advising communication can be done online through GSTS, **it is not the intent of GSTS to replace your adviser**. You are **STRONGLY** recommended to meet with your adviser as often as you wish/need and certainly no less than once a quarter. Your adviser is your primary resource for academic and professional advice. As experts in their fields, you should take full advantage of the opportunity to interact with your advisers.

1. Academic Adviser

Each MS student is assigned a faculty adviser in the student's area of study during the new student orientation in the Fall quarter. The four major areas of the MS program are: Environmental Engineering and Science (EES), Underground Science and Engineering (USE), Structural Engineering (STR), and Transportation Systems Analysis and Planning (TRN). Each B.S. student interested in the BS/MS program must include the signature of his/her MS faculty-adviser-to-be in the application to BS/MS program. This faculty will become the BS/MS
student's faculty adviser upon acceptance to the program.

A student may change his/her faculty (academic) adviser at any time. However, the **new faculty adviser must be a faculty member with at least 50% appointment in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering in the area of the student's study**. A change of adviser form, signed by the current adviser and adviser-to-be, must be submitted to the MS coordinator through the Academic Coordinator in the CEE office.

2. Curriculum Plan

Each MS student **must complete a curriculum plan in GSTS by the end of October** in the academic year that the student first enrolled in his/her MS program. This would help facilitate your advising session and help your adviser understand your career goal. The curriculum plan must follow the guidelines of one of the four MS programs that are described on the CEE website (http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/graduate/index.html).

Students with a registration hold will not be allowed to register for any courses until the hold is removed.

Students may revise their curriculum plan at any time prior to the student's graduation with the MS degree. The revised curriculum plan must be approved by the student's academic adviser. The most current curriculum plan in the student's file will be used for MS degree audit when the student submits the AFD (Application for a Degree) form to The Graduate School.

3. Monitoring of Progress

All MS and BS/MS students **must meet** with their faculty advisers at least once per quarter for academic advising and career planning. During each advising session, the student is encouraged to discuss current course performance, course selection for the subsequent quarter, and career planning such as internship, co-op, or post graduate job searching with the faculty adviser. Course selection should follow the most current curriculum plan.

Every MS and BS/MS student is required to complete the plan of study (course selection for the upcoming quarter) via the GSTS and approved by his/her adviser in order to receive permission to register for the following quarter. The mandatory advising session should be held no later than a week before the registration begins for each quarter. Registration holds will be in place until your adviser approves your plan of study each quarter. Failure to meet with the academic adviser will delay the student's ability to register.

Registration hold is usually removed within 1 business day after your adviser approves your plan. E-mail will be sent when the registration hold is removed. A new registration hold is placed on each student in each quarter until the student completes all the degree requirements.

4. Satisfactory Progress

According to The Graduate School (TGS) requirements: *A student whose overall grade average is below B (3.0 GPA) or who has more than three incomplete (Y or X) grades is not making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on probation by TGS. Individual programs may have stricter criteria* (https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress.html).

A GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation. A GPA below 3.0 in any quarter will place a student on probation. Probation is intended as a notice of unsatisfactory academic performance and constitutes a warning that improvement must be made in subsequent work to demonstrate progress toward the MS degree. TGS allows a student **up to two (2) consecutive quarters** to return to satisfactory progress (quarter and cumulative GPA ≥ 3.0). Lack of improvement or evidence of inability to complete the work successfully in a given curriculum may provide reason for dismissal. Each student's academic performance is reviewed by the MS coordinator to ensure students are progressing satisfactorily.

If a quarter GPA (QGPA) or cumulative GPA (CGPA) falls below a 3.0, the MS coordinator will send an e-mail via GSTS before the beginning of a new quarter informing the student of his/her unsatisfactory progress. A letter from TGS will arrive in about the second week of the new quarter.

If a student's QGPA or CGPA is between 3.0 and 3.2, an e-mail from MS coordinator will be sent via GSTS to the student. Although this range of GPA is still considered satisfactory, a course below 3.0 could easily put the student's GPA in jeopardy. Unlike undergraduate programs, the MS program is only one year long, so it is critical to recognize the importance of time and performance.

Degree Requirements

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) offers The Graduate School (TGS) Master of Science degree in four (4) specialty areas. The requirement for MS in CEE is 12 units of courses. A minimum of 9 units must be taken for grades. Each specialty area requires a minimum of 2 to 3 quarters of seminar course. This is a zero unit, no tuition course.

In addition to the above requirements, each program has its own core and elective courses requirements; thesis, course-only, design project, or research paper requirement; and possibility for minor; etc. Please refer to the area degree requirements in subsequent pages for detail and discuss the requirements with your adviser.

Full Time Enrollment

While the MS degree is designed for full time enrollment, this is not an absolute requirement. For international students (F1 or similar visa holders), full time enrollment is required during the academic year (fall, winter, and spring quarters) but not for the summer session.

Full time enrollment is defined as 3 to 4 units of courses in a quarter. If a student wishes to enroll more than 4 units of courses in any one quarter, additional tuition will be charged (equivalent to 1/3 of quarter tuition per unit of course beyond 4 units in a quarter).

For students who have registered for 12 units of courses but have not completed the degree requirements, for example, completing research paper (must register for **CIV_ENV 508**, zero unit) in TRN; completing a **CIV_ENV 499** project; or completing **CIV_ENV 590** thesis, registration of **TGS 512** is required for international students if the work is to be completed in U.S. during the following academic year. Registration of **TGS 512** is recognized by Northwestern as full-time enrollment. The cost of this course is about $100 and is only allowed after a student has registered for 12 units of courses. For U.S. residents or U.S. citizens, registration of **TGS 512** is not required if the student is not completing the work on campus. More information can be found on TGS General Registration Policy
http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html

Part Time Enrollment

Part time enrollment is permitted and usually occurs when a student needs one or two courses to complete the degree. For international students (F1 or similar visa holders), part time enrollment is permitted during the quarter when the student only needs those courses to complete the degree. In this case, the student must submit a ***Reduced Course Load Form*.** This form is on the OISSPortal page. Click on the appropriate link for your Reduced Course Load. Submit your application. Please note that the Reduced Course Load for Final Term requires an advisor's electronic recommendation.

Independent Study (CIV_ENV 499)

Independent Study is a self-structured study that is agreed upon between the student and a faculty supervisor. For an Area that has a thesis option, CIV_ENV 499 is a good way for both the student and the faculty to see if research or thesis is right for each other**. Independent work done during CIV_ENV 499 can be expanded to become an MS thesis.** At that time the student should register for CIV_ENV 590.

Application for a Degree (AFD)

In any quarter if you **anticipate** completing ALL your degree requirements (12 units of courses and necessary paper, project, or thesis depending on the program), you **must** submit an **Application for Degree (AFD**) via GSTS. Submission of this form does not bind you to complete all your work by the deadline of that quarter. It is a notice to TGS that you plan to graduate at the end of that quarter. There is a deadline for submitting AFD each quarter and in the summer session, which can be found here. You may submit AFD more than once until you graduate.

Master's Degree Completion Form (MDCF)

Once we approve your AFD, you will return to GSTS to fill out the **Master's Degree Completion Form**. You will choose two faculty members to approve your graduation. One member will be your (academic, project, research, etc.) adviser; the second should be a graduate faculty member in CEE.

CIV_ENV 499 Project Application for an Independent Study

1) **Your Topic**
   a. Scope/project objectives

   b. List of project tasks/goals and a tentative weekly schedule

   c. References

   d. Deliverables (all projects must include a written report and an oral presentation; if this is for lab work, it must involve a significant lab report at the end of the quarter.)

2) **How this independent study supports your curriculum**
   a. Courses that led to this one

   b. How this enhances your learning in your master degree?

3) **Interaction with professor**
   a. How often will you meet
   b. Basis of evaluation (preference: itemized evaluation, example – weekly reports 15%, scholarly/ technical component 50%, written report 20%, oral presentation 15%)

4) Signatures by sponsoring independent study Professor,

Sponsoring Project Adviser _____
(print name)

_____ Date_____
(signature)

Student _____
(print name)

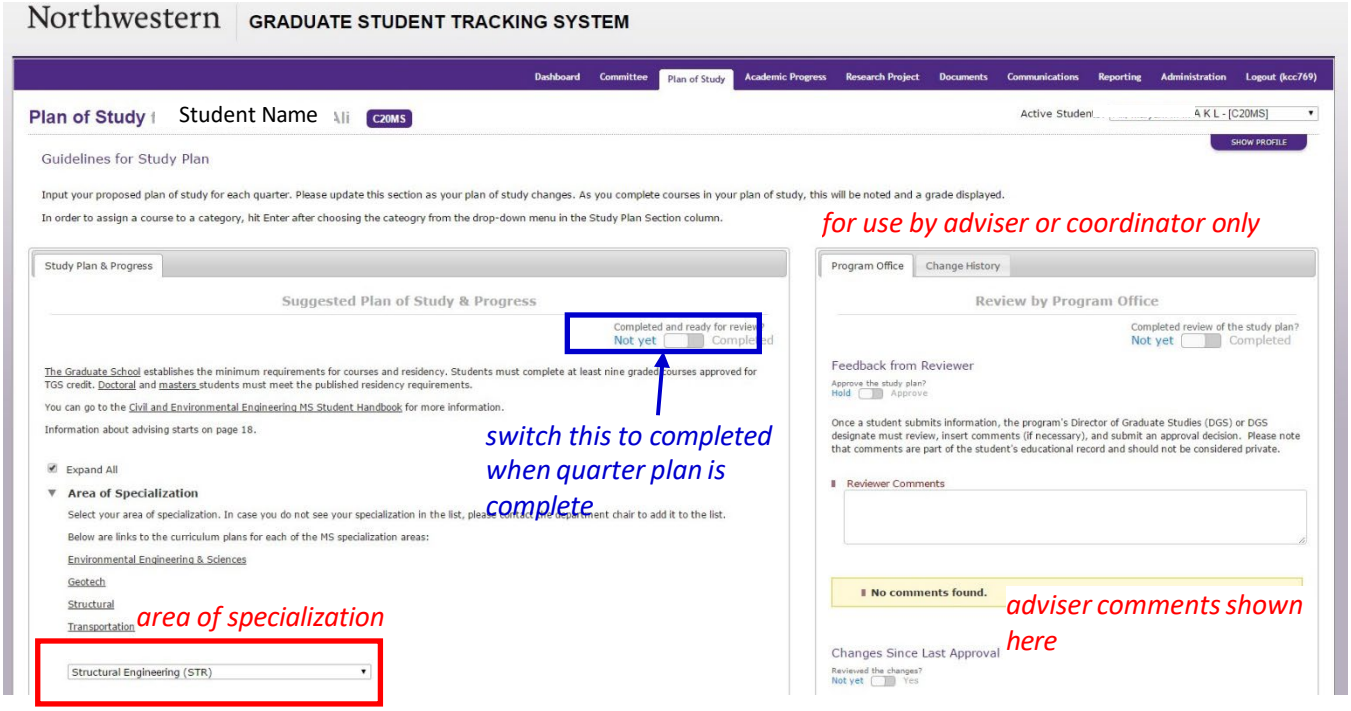
_____ Date_____
(signature)

Please return completed form to CEE Academic Coordinator (Tech A236) to be placed in the student's academic folder and to receive a permission number to register CIV_ENV 499.

Instructions for Using GSTS (Graduate Students Tracking System)

https://gsts.northwestern.edu/site/login

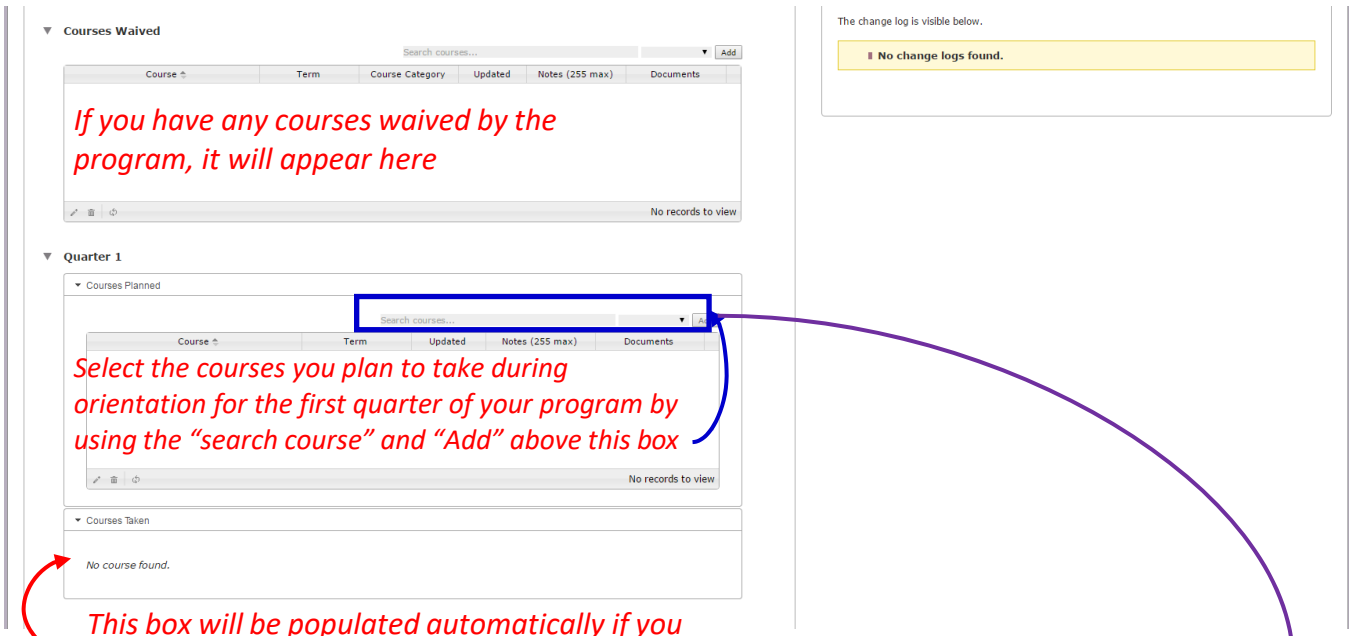
Plan of Study Page – Part 1



Shown above is the top section of the Plan of Study page, you will see your area of specialization on the left hand panel. On the same panel, there is a toggle for "completed" when your quarter course selection plan is complete and ready for your adviser's review and approval. Once you switch this toggle from "not yet" to "completed", a notification is sent to your adviser and the MS coordinator requesting your adviser's review of your quarter course plan.

The right hand panel is for your adviser or coordinator's use. When your adviser wishes to comment on your quarter course plan, the comments will be shown here. A notification is sent to you when your adviser approves or has comments on your plan. Unfortunately, GSTS does not have a comment only notification. We advise you to check GSTS when you receive the automated notification from GSTS to see if your adviser leaves you a message.

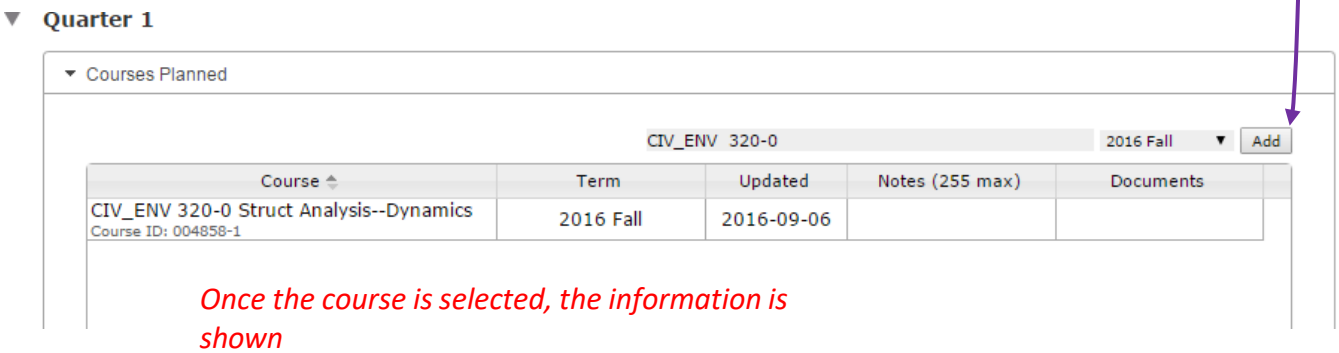
Plan of Study Page – Part 2



If you have any courses waived by the program, it will appear here

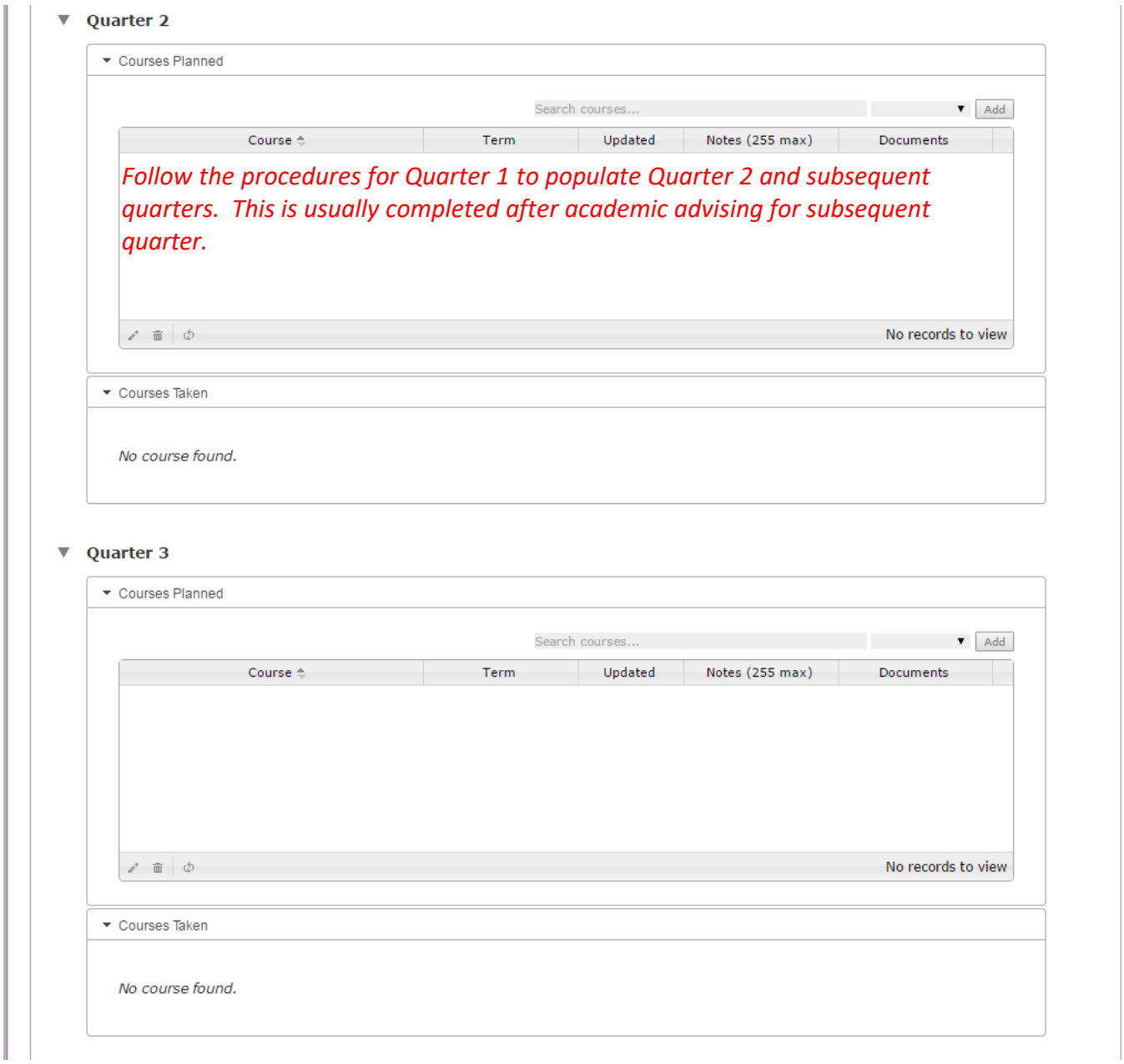
Select the courses you plan to take during orientation for the first quarter of your program by using the "search course" and "Add" above this box

This box will be populated automatically if you denote the courses you selected as either required or elective



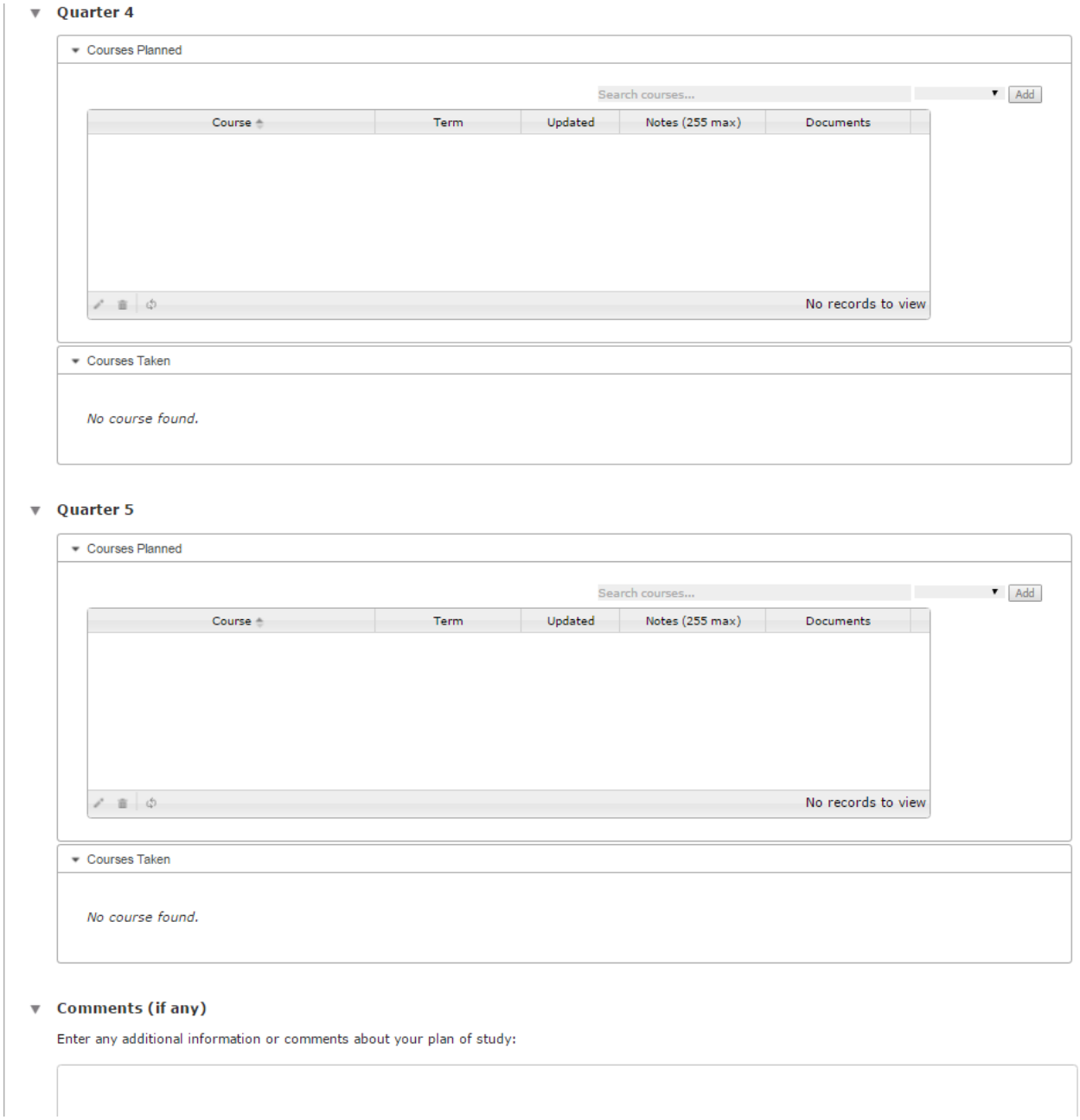
Once the course is selected, the information is shown

Plan of Study Page – Part 3



You will repeat the same process for each quarter. For Quarter 2 which is the winter quarter, the advising process starts at around the fifth week of the fall quarter (Quarter 1). Please make an appointment to meet with your adviser to discuss your course selection for Quarter 2. Registration for the winter quarter starts at about the 8th or 9th week of the fall quarter. The same process repeats for registration of the spring (Quarter 3).

Plan of Study Page – Part 4



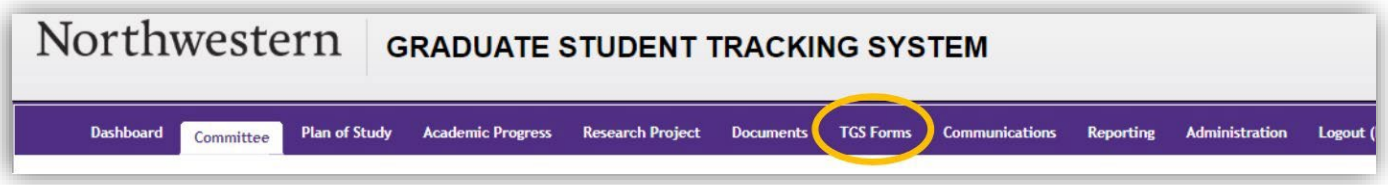
For most of you, three quarters of registration is needed to complete your MS program. If you plan to extend your study to beyond three quarters, you are required to have course selection beyond Quarter 3 approved by your adviser. This requirement is necessary even if you are registering for TGS 512 for cases where your Independent Study (CIV_ENV 499), Paper (CIV_ENV 508), required by Transportation Analysis and Planning, TRN), or thesis (CIV_ENV 590) requires more time to complete. Please note that there is no need to register for TGS 512 during the summer.

The “Comments” box is for you to communicate with your adviser for information such as a desire to have a minor, certificate, thesis advisor's name, alternative courses, etc.

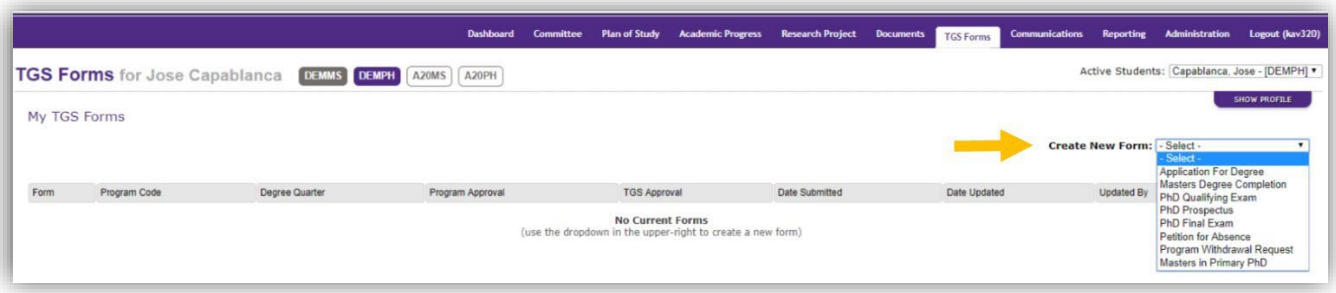
Quick Guide to TGS Forms in GSTS for Students in The Graduate School

Updated May 26, 2019

<u>Access GSTS</u> at https://gsts.northwestern.edu/site/login and navigate to the "TGS Forms" tab:



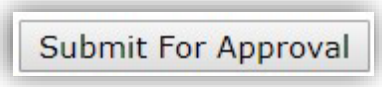
To <u>submit a new form</u>, select the type of form you want to submit from the "Create New Form" drop down menu:



TGS forms and their uses:

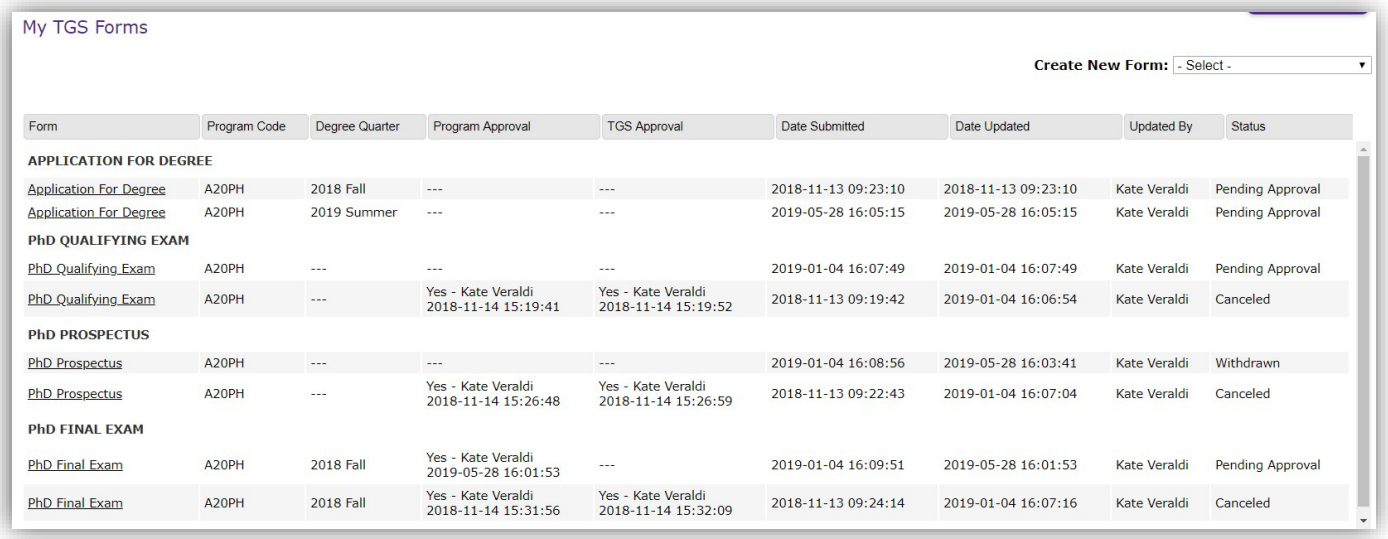
Form Name	Audience	Use
Application for Degree	Master's and PhD students	Use this form to petition to graduate for a future quarter, indicate the name as it should appear on the diploma, and the address where the diploma should be mailed. The diploma mailing address can be updated even after the form is submitted and approved.
Master's Degree Completion	Master's students	Use this form to indicate that you are completing master's degree requirements, your faculty committee members, your advisor and whether or not you completed a master's thesis (and if so, the title).
PhD Qualifying Exam	PhD students	Submit this form once you have passed the qualifying exam.
PhD Prospectus	PhD students	Submit this form once you have passed the prospectus.
PhD Final Exam	PhD students	Submit this form leading up to your dissertation defense.
Petition for Absence	Master's and PhD students	Submit this form to request a general or family leave of absence, or a parental accommodation.
Program Withdrawal Request	Master's and PhD students	Submit this form to request to withdraw from your graduate program.
Masters in Primary PhD	PhD students	Submit this form to request a master's degree along the way to the PhD in the same program.

Fill out the required information per the form instructions and click the "Submit for Approval" button:



After you submit the form it will be routed to your program, then The Graduate School for review.

To <u>make changes to a form you have already submitted,</u> click on the form you want to update on the "My TGS Forms" list:

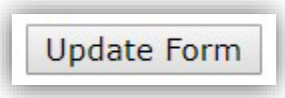


My TGS Forms

Create New Form: - Select -

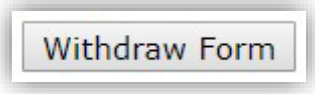
Form	Program Code	Degree Quarter	Program Approval	TGS Approval	Date Submitted	Date Updated	Updated By	Status
APPLICATION FOR DEGREE								
Application For Degree	A20PH	2018 Fall	---	---	2018-11-13 09:23:10	2018-11-13 09:23:10	Kate Veraldi	Pending Approval
Application For Degree	A20PH	2019 Summer	---	---	2019-05-28 16:05:15	2019-05-28 16:05:15	Kate Veraldi	Pending Approval
PhD QUALIFYING EXAM								
PhD Qualifying Exam	A20PH	---	---	---	2019-01-04 16:07:49	2019-01-04 16:07:49	Kate Veraldi	Pending Approval
PhD Qualifying Exam	A20PH	---	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:19:41	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:19:52	2018-11-13 09:19:42	2019-01-04 16:06:54	Kate Veraldi	Canceled
PhD PROSPECTUS								
PhD Prospectus	A20PH	---	---	---	2019-01-04 16:08:56	2019-05-28 16:03:41	Kate Veraldi	Withdrawn
PhD Prospectus	A20PH	---	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:26:48	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:26:59	2018-11-13 09:22:43	2019-01-04 16:07:04	Kate Veraldi	Canceled
PhD FINAL EXAM								
PhD Final Exam	A20PH	2018 Fall	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2019-05-28 16:01:53	---	2019-01-04 16:09:51	2019-05-28 16:01:53	Kate Veraldi	Pending Approval
PhD Final Exam	A20PH	2018 Fall	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:31:56	Yes - Kate Veraldi 2018-11-14 15:32:09	2018-11-13 09:24:14	2019-01-04 16:07:16	Kate Veraldi	Canceled

Make the necessary changes to the form, then click the "Update Form" button:



Note: For most forms, this can only be done **before** your program has reviewed the form. You may update your diploma name and diploma mailing address on the Application for Degree form **after** it has been approved and through the "Editing Deadline" listed on the form (typically the day of degree conferral).

To <u>withdraw a form you submitted</u> in error, click the "Withdraw Form" button located on the top right corner of the form:



Note: For most forms, this can only be done before your program has reviewed the form.

Withdrawing the form will move it to "withdrawn" status. You'll need to create a new form from the drop-down menu when you are ready to submit the form again.

Contacts for Frequently Asked Questions

Questions

Students should consult with their academic advisers regarding academic and professional issues such as course selections and career guidance. The MS coordinator will assist the academic coordinator when procedural issues arise. The list below is intended to help you identify resources that could address your questions.

Staff Contact Information

Academic Coordinator	Logan Hart (Tech A236)
CEE IT	help@mccormick.northwestern.edu
Laboratory (dry) coordinator & Lab safety coordinator	
Environmental laboratory & safety coordinator	Chan Xiong (Tech A254)
Payroll	Mounir Affoun (Tech A236)

University Contact Information

Question/Topic:	Whom to see / Resource:
Academics – requirements, progress	Your Academic Advisor, TGS Central Admin (Bianca West, Kate Veraldi)
Academic Calendar	http://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/index.html
CAESAR – reference materials, how to register	http://www.northwestern.edu/caesar/
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	http://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/
Course listings – current academic year	http://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/courses/index.html
General MS Degree Requirements	Dr. Casey Ankeny, Assistant Dean for TGS Master's Programs, McCormick
MS in CEE Degree Requirements	Your Academic Advisor and Area Coordinator
Reduced Course Form	OISS, https://northwestern.edu/international/index.html
OPT Training Forms	https://www.northwestern.edu/international/international-students/student-employment/opt-f1-students/
CPT Training Forms	https://www.northwestern.edu/international/international-students/student-employment/cpt-for-f1-students.html
GSP	Academic Coordinator
Health Service	http://www.northwestern.edu/health/
Internships, Co-ops	https://www.mccormick.northwestern.edu/civil-environmental/students/career-resources/internships.html
Parking – rates, pass, shuttle, CTA U-Pass	http://www.northwestern.edu/up/parking/
Registration Hold	Academic Coordinator
Transportation Center and Library	http://www.transportation.northwestern.edu/
Transportation Library	http://www.library.northwestern.edu/libraries- collections/evanston-campus/transportation-library
Visa	OISS, https://northwestern.edu/international/index.html
WildCard	https://www.northwestern.edu/wildcard/