Polymer Science and Engineering

Lehigh has a diverse group of faculty members with strong, primary interest in polymer science and engineering. In order to provide better opportunities for courses and research in this interdisciplinary field, activities are coordinated through the Center for Polymer Science and Engineering (CPSE), and its academic Polymer Education Committee. Polymer faculty from traditional departments of chemical engineering, chemistry, materials science and engineering, physics, and mechanical engineering and mechanics, are participants of the CPSE.

There are two ways in which qualified graduate students, with degrees in the above or related fields, may participate. Students may pursue graduate studies within an appropriate department. Departmental procedures must be followed for the degree sought. The student's adviser must be in that department and the student receives a normal departmental degree, with emphasis in polymer courses and research. Such students are encouraged to pursue a graduate certificate in polymer science and engineering.

Alternatively, students may elect to pursue studies toward an interdisciplinary M.S., M.E., or Ph.D. degree in polymer science and engineering. The procedures for this latter case are summarized as follows.

Students are admitted through one of the participating departments and must meet that department's admissions criteria. When the student is ready (must have taken/be taking at least one polymer course and be in good standing in the department), the student petitions to transfer to the Polymer Science and Engineering graduate program. After the petition is approved, his/her degree program becomes Polymer Science and Engineering, but the student remains in the home department.

Master of Science Degree in Polymer Science and Engineering
Master of Science Degree in Polymer Science and Engineering requires a total of 24 credits in course work and six credits in research. The masters thesis is directed and signed by a faculty member of the Center for Polymer Science and Engineering and co-signed by the chairman of the Polymer Education Committee or the director of the CPSE.

Master of Engineering Degree in Polymer Science and Engineering
Master of Engineering Degree in Polymer Science and Engineering requires a total of 30 credits of course work. This option is intended for those students who do not work in a laboratory setting, or for whom thesis research is not practical, but who wish to obtain an advanced education in polymer science and engineering.

Ph.D. in Polymer Science and Engineering
For the Ph.D., the student must satisfactorily complete a qualifying examination administered by the Polymer Education Committee; satisfactorily complete graduate course work determined in consultation with the doctoral committee; pass a general examination administered by the Polymer Education Committee; and defend to the satisfaction of the doctoral committee, a dissertation in the field of polymer science and engineering. Students deficient in polymer science or related topics may be required by their committee to take remedial course work.

The doctoral committee consists of the research adviser, at least two other members of the center for polymer science and engineering, and at least one outside person. The committee’s composition is subject to approval by the Polymer Education Committee and the Graduate and Research Committee of the university.

For more information, write to Dr. Raymond A. Pearson, Director, Center for Polymer Science and Engineering, Whitaker Laboratory, 5 E. Packer Avenue, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015, or Dr. James E. Roberts, Seeley G. Mudd Building #6, Chairman, Polymer Education Committee, Lehigh University, 6 E. Packer Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18015 or Ms. Lisa Arechiga, Graduate Coordinator Whitaker Laboratory, 5 E. Packer Avenue, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Please address applications to one of the participating departments.