

Year One

- **Consult with faculty - select an advisor**
 - Submit "Track and Advisor Declaration form" to the BIOE program assistant
- **Begin research - Select a dissertation project**
 - Start reading relevant literature and developing approaches to your dissertation research
- **Complete 2-3 classes per semester**
- **Take PhD Qualifying Exam**
 - Taken at the conclusion of the spring semester
 - 3 Depth classes completed with a minimum 3.5 GPA
- **Start forming your dissertation committee**
- **Complete and submit your Plan of Study for committee approval**
- **Secure funding for upcoming semesters by mid-spring**
- **Utilize the summer break to conduct research and develop your project**



Year Two

- **Complete 2-3 more classes per semester**
 - Consult your advisor for preferences on coursework vs. research hours
- **Update your Plan of Study as needed**
- **Try to complete a journal manuscript, conference abstract, poster competition, etc.**
 - Projects vary greatly, and you may not be ready for this yet but if you have made significant progress don't be afraid to act on it.
 - Remember, manuscripts are a basis for dissertation chapters. You can be making progress on your dissertation while developing recognition in the field.

Year Three

- **Continue in steps from year two**
 - You should be completing all coursework
- **Prepare for and complete the Comprehensive Exam**
 - This is your opportunity to get committee feedback and make critical changes that may be necessary for experiments and analysis. Don't delay this unless necessary.
 - At least 5 months must pass between your comprehensive and your defense
 - Upon completion of 18 post-comp credits, you may become eligible for 1 cr/hr enrollment for every semester
- **Continue your dissertation research**
 - Your work should be becoming more "self-contained." Overcome the complexities and modify your project accordingly.
 - Contact your committee members to discuss your progress and/or problems to see if they have any advice

Year Four

- **Get actively involved in your field by attending conferences and society meetings**
 - Present your research and make a name for yourself
 - Network with those around you and start making steps towards your career goals
 - Actively seek out employment opportunities
- **Publish your research in applicable journals**
 - Don't wait until your project is completed, publish as your findings become conclusive - file for patents where applicable
 - Publications make you more marketable and offer leverage over other job applicants
- **Finalize your dissertation**
 - Submit it for your committee to review and schedule your oral defense
 - Leave yourself enough time to make revisions prior to the semester deadlines
 - Apply for graduation to the applicable semester prior to university deadlines - consult BIOE website for a complete list of steps toward graduation