MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

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Mechanical engineering is among the most diversified of the traditional engineering disciplines. The mechanical engineer builds machines to extend our physical and mental capabilities and to convert traditional and novel energy sources into useful forms.

The role of the mechanical engineer has changed dramatically over the past few decades with the extensive use of high-performance computers (in such areas as computational fluid dynamics, materials design, control, and manufacturing), the interfacing of microelectromechanical systems and actuators via microprocessors to build high-precision sensors and devices, and the advent of advanced materials (e.g., composites, shape-memory alloys, ceramics, and superconductors) for new applications (e.g., coatings, biomaterials, and computer storage). These areas offer mechanical engineering students special opportunities for creativity, demanding that they learn not only in depth but also in breadth. Demands for increased energy efficiency and reduced environmental impact—as might be realized, for example, in novel gas turbine or electric hybrid vehicles—require that students understand the fundamentals of mechanics, thermodynamics, fluid mechanics, combustion, and materials science. In all these tasks, the utmost consideration of the modern mechanical engineer is improving the quality of human life. The engineer must also be constantly aware both of the finiteness of Earth’s resources and its environment and of the burden that engineering places on them.

The educational mission of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science is to provide an excellent education that will prepare students to become members of the next generation of mechanical engineers. To implement this mission, the department adheres to the following set of educational objectives: to provide a balanced technical and nontechnical education to enable graduates to enter highly selective graduate schools and/or to pursue technical careers in industry or government laboratories; to enable graduates to improve and adapt their skills to accommodate rapid technological changes; to prepare graduates to communicate effectively and to understand the ethical responsibilities and impact on society of their profession. To achieve these objectives, the following fundamental educational goals have been established for the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science: to provide a comprehensive introduction to basic science and mathematics, which form the foundation of mechanical engineering; to provide thorough training in analytical and experimental methods and in data analysis, including problem formulation; to provide instruction in the fundamentals of the design process, including project innovation, synthesis, and management, both individually and in a team setting; to provide both a technical and a nontechnical program of study in which oral and written communication skills are developed; and to instill in students an understanding of their professional and ethical responsibilities, which affect society and their profession.

COURSES FOR NONMAJORS

Mechanics and mechanical engineering content can be found in several courses intended for those not majoring in science. See Engineering and Applied Science.

THE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING PROGRAM

At Yale, three mechanical engineering programs are offered: a B.S. degree program with a major in Mechanical Engineering, a B.S. degree program with a major in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical), and a B.A. degree program with a major in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical). Prospective majors in both B.S. programs are advised to complete introductory physics and mathematics through calculus (MATH 115) by the end of their first year.

A student’s undergraduate engineering program may include one or more special project courses (MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474), in which the student pursues a particular research interest through design-oriented projects and experimental investigations. Projects may be initiated by the student, may be performed in a team, or may be derived from the ideas of faculty members who place undergraduates in their ongoing research projects. All interested students should contact the director of undergraduate studies (DUS) for more information on special project courses.

B.S. degree program in Mechanical Engineering This is the most technically intensive mechanical engineering degree program and is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, Inc. This program is appropriate for students who plan careers as practicing engineers in industry, consulting firms, or government, as well as for students who are considering a career in research and plan to pursue an advanced degree in engineering.

B.S. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) This non-ABET degree program is suitable for students who wish to gain significant expertise within mechanical engineering while combining their engineering studies with related disciplines. For example, a number of students have taken courses in architecture while pursuing a program in mechanical engineering that emphasizes structural mechanics; similarly, a student with an interest in computer graphics might combine engineering courses in computer-aided design with programming courses from the Department of Computer Science.

B.A. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) In a society with increasing levels of technical sophistication, a well-rounded individual must have some background in science and technology. The non-ABET B.A. program is designed for students who may be planning careers in business, law, economics, medicine, journalism, or politics but need to understand the impact that science and technology can have on society at large. An understanding of engineering methods and practices, combined with a traditional liberal
arts education, provides a strong background for a variety of careers. The program is well suited for students who wish to fulfill the requirements of two majors.

The major for all three degree programs requires a group of prerequisites or equivalents; several courses beyond the prerequisites; and a senior requirement, as indicated below.

PREREQUISITES

B.S. degree program in Mechanical Engineering

Prerequisites for the Class of 2023 Students may follow the prerequisites that were in place when they declared their major.

Prerequisites for the Class of 2024 and beyond The prerequisites in mathematics are MATH 112, 115, and ENAS 151, or the equivalent. The basic science prerequisites are PHYS 180, 181, or 200, 201; one laboratory from PHYS 165L or 205L, and one from PHYS 166L or 206L, or equivalents, and one introductory lecture course in chemistry, numbered CHEM 161 or higher. The chemistry lecture course may be waived for a Chemistry AP score of 4 or 5 or an IB Higher level or Standard level score of 6 or 7.

B.S. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) The prerequisites in mathematics are MATH 112, 115, and ENAS 151, or the equivalent. The basic science prerequisites are PHYS 180, 181, or 200, 201; one laboratory from PHYS 165L or 205L, and one from PHYS 166L, 206L, or MENG 286L.

B.A. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) The prerequisites in mathematics are MATH 112 and 115. The basic science prerequisite is physics at least to the level of PHYS 170, 171.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

B.S. degree program in Mechanical Engineering requires 20 courses and 19 credits beyond the prerequisites as follows:

Requirements for the Class of 2023 If not taken as a prerequisite, one lecture course in chemistry numbered CHEM 161 or higher is required, as well as the requirements listed below. The chemistry lecture requirement may be waived for a Chemistry AP score of 4 or 5 or an IB Higher level or Standard level score of 6 or 7.

Requirements for the Class of 2024 and beyond

1. Advanced mathematics: ENAS 194 and MATH 222 or 225
3. Technical electives: three approved technical electives chosen in consultation with the DUS; only one course from MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474 may be counted as one of the three technical electives.

The curriculum in this program is arranged in prescribed patterns, but some departures from it are possible with approval of the DUS.

B.S. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) The major requires twelve approved term courses in engineering (with only one course from MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474), beyond the prerequisites and including the senior project, which can cover a broad array of topics within the subject, provided that they contribute to a coherent program. Students should consult with the DUS at the beginning of their sophomore year.

B.A. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) The program requires eight approved term courses in engineering (with only one course from MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474), beyond the prerequisites, including the senior project. Students should consult with the DUS at the beginning of their sophomore year.

Credit/D/Fail No courses taken Credit/D/Fail may be counted toward the Mechanical Engineering major, including prerequisites.

Roadmap See visual roadmap of the requirements.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

B.S. degree program in Mechanical Engineering Students satisfy the senior requirement by taking MENG 487L (full-credit) and MENG 488L (half-credit) in the senior year.

B.S. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) Students satisfy the senior project requirement by completing MENG 404; MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474; or another upper-level design course (taken during the senior year) chosen in consultation with the DUS. Only one course from MENG 471–474 may be counted toward the requirements of the major.

B.A. degree program in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) Students satisfy the senior project requirement by completing MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474; or another upper-level design course (taken during their senior year) chosen in consultation with the DUS. Only one course from MENG 471–474 may be counted toward the requirements of the major.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, B.S.
Prerequisites  MATH 112, 115, and ENAS 151, or equivalent; PHYS 180, 181, or 200, 201, and 2 labs (1 from PHYS 165L or 205L; 1 from PHYS 166L or 206L, or equivalents), and 1 introductory chemistry lecture course

Number of courses  20 term courses and 19 credits beyond prerequisites (including senior req)

Specific courses required  ENAS 130 and 194; EENG 200; MATH 222 or 225; MENG 185, 211, 280, 285, 286L, 325, 361, 363L, 383, 389, 390

Distribution of courses  3 technical electives chosen in consultation with DUS (only one of MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474)

Substitution permitted  With DUS approval

Senior requirement  MENG 487L and MENG 488L taken in senior year

ENGINEERING SCIENCES (MECHANICAL), B.S.

Prerequisites  MATH 112, 115, and ENAS 151, or equivalent; PHYS 180, 181, or 200, 201, and 2 labs (1 from PHYS 165L or 205L; 1 from PHYS 166L, 206L, or MENG 286L)

Number of courses  12 term courses beyond prerequisites (incl senior req)

Substitution permitted  With DUS approval

Senior requirement  MENG 404; MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474; or another upper-level design course chosen in consultation with the DUS

ENGINEERING SCIENCES (MECHANICAL), B.A.

Prerequisites  MATH 112, 115; PHYS 170, 171 or higher

Number of courses  8 term courses beyond prerequisites (incl senior req)

Substitution permitted  With DUS approval

Senior requirement  MENG 471, 472, 473, or 474; or another upper-level design course chosen in consultation with the DUS

Mechanical engineering is among the most diversified of the traditional engineering disciplines. Mechanical engineers build machines to extend our physical capabilities, develop techniques to efficiently convert existing and novel energy sources into useful forms, and design functional materials with targeted properties.

The role of the mechanical engineer has changed dramatically in recent decades with the extensive use of large-scale computing, nanoscale sensors and actuators, and novel materials (e.g., carbon nanotubes, biologically inspired materials, and metamaterials). Demands for increased energy efficiency, enhanced performance of materials on smaller length scales and faster timescales, and reduced environmental impact require that students understand the fundamentals of mechanics, thermodynamics, fluid mechanics, and materials science.

In all these tasks, the utmost consideration of the modern mechanical engineer is improving the quality of human life. Engineers must be constantly aware both of the finiteness of Earth’s resources and of the impact of progress in science and engineering on the environment.

The program in Mechanical Engineering provides a broad education in the foundations of the disciplines mentioned above and prepares students both for graduate studies in these areas and for entry into appropriate positions in research laboratories, industry, or government.

Mechanical Engineering offers three degree programs. The B.S. in Mechanical Engineering is the most intensive program and is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, Inc. The B.S. in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) requires fewer courses, but also allows greater flexibility. Students seeking a strong background in mechanical engineering along with the opportunity to take additional courses in other scientific and engineering disciplines, the liberal arts, or social sciences should choose this program. The B.A. in Engineering Sciences (Mechanical) is less intensive. It is appropriate for students who would like some background in mechanical engineering but whose career plans lie in other fields, such as law, medicine, or business.

Prospective majors should take MATH 112, MATH 115, and ENAS 151, or the equivalent; two terms of PHYS 180, 181, or PHYS 200, 201; two terms of physics laboratory (PHYS 165L, 166L or PHYS 205L, 206L), and an introductory chemistry lecture. The sequence PHYS 170, 171 without a laboratory is acceptable for the B.A. degree.

Further details of the program can be found on the department website. The director of undergraduate studies (DUS) welcomes consultation with students about their program of study at any time.

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND MATERIALS SCIENCE

Professors  Charles Ahn, Ira Bernstein (Emeritus), Aaron Dollar, Juan Fernández de la Mora, Alessandro Gomez, †Sohrab Ismail-Beigi, †Shun-Ichiro Karato, Marshall Long (Emeritus), Corey O’Hern, †Vidvuds Ozolins, †Brian Scassellati, Jan Schroers, Udo Schwarz (Chair), Mitchell Smooke

Associate Professors  Rebecca Kramer-Bottiglio, Madhusudhan Venkadesan

Assistant Professors  Ian Abraham, Amir Pahlavan, Diana Qiu, †Daniel Wiznia

Senior Lecturer  Beth Anne Bennett

Lecturers  Joran Booth, Lawrence Wilen, Joseph Zinter

†A joint appointment with primary affiliation in another department or school.

View Courses
Courses

* MENG 099b / MB&B 099b / MCDB 099b / PHYS 099b / SCIE 099b, Introduction to Research Methods in Physics and Biology: Preparing for a First Research Experience  Staff  
Spanning both the classroom and laboratory, this seminar course provides an immersive introduction to scientific research. Students build practical laboratory skills, computational competency, and begin to build fluency in the structures and modes of communication that define modern research. The course also facilitates identification of a laboratory mentor and devising a research proposal (with mentorship) for competitive summer research fellowship applications. This class is open to first-year students, interested in any STEM major, who have no prior research experience. This course does not count toward major requirements. Enrollment limited to first-year majors. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.

MENG 185a or b, Mechanical Design  Staff  
A course designed for potential majors in mechanical engineering, with units on design methodology, statics, mechanics of materials, and machining. Includes a design project. Prerequisite: physics at the level of PHYS 180, or permission of instructor.  SC o Course cr

MENG 211a or b, Thermodynamics for Mechanical Engineers  Staff  
Study of energy and its transformation and utilization. First and Second Laws for closed and open systems, equations of state, multicomponent nonreacting systems, auxiliary functions (H, A, G), and the chemical potential and conditions of equilibrium. Engineering devices such as power and refrigeration systems and their efficiencies. Prerequisites: PHYS 180 or 200, and MATH 115.  Q8, SC RP

MENG 280a, Mechanical Engineering I: Strength and Deformation of Mechanical Elements  Diana Qiu  
Elements of statics; mechanical behavior of materials; equilibrium equations, strains and displacements, and stress-strain relations. Elementary applications to trusses, bending of beams, pressure vessels, and torsion of bars. Prerequisites: PHYS 180 or 200, and MATH 115.  Q8, SC RP

MENG 285a, Introduction to Materials Science  Jan Schroers  
Study of the atomic and microscopic origin of the properties of engineering materials: metals, glasses, polymers, ceramics, and composites. Phase diagrams; diffusion; rates of reaction; mechanisms of deformation, fracture, and strengthening; thermal and electrical conduction. Prerequisites: elementary calculus and background in basic mechanics (deformation, Hooke’s law) and structure of atoms (orbitals, periodic table).  QR, SC RP

MENG 286La or b, Solid Mechanics and Materials Science Laboratory  Staff  
Experiments that involve either structural mechanics or materials science. Comparisons between structural theories and experimental results. Relationships among processing, microstructure, and properties in materials science. Introduction to techniques for the examination of the structure of materials.  SC RP ½ Course cr

* MENG 320a / ENRG 320a / ENVE 320a, Energy, Engines, and Climate  Alessandro Gomez  
The course aims to cover the fundamentals of a field that is central to the future of the world. The field is rapidly evolving and, although an effort will be made to keep abreast of the latest developments, the course emphasis is on timeless fundamentals, especially from a physics perspective. Topics under consideration include: key concepts of climate change as a result of global warming, which is the primary motivator of a shift in energy supply and technologies to wean humanity off fossil fuels; carbon-free energy sources, with primary focus on solar, wind and associated needs for energy storage and grid upgrade; traditional fossil-fuel power plants and engines, that are currently involved in 85% of energy conversion worldwide and we can’t “turn on a dime”. Elements of thermodynamics are covered throughout the course as needed, including the definition of various forms of energy, work and heat as energy transfer, the principle of conservation of energy, first law and second law, and rudiments of heat engines. We conclude with some considerations on energy policy and with the "big picture" on how to tackle future energy needs. Designed for juniors and seniors in science and engineering. Prerequisite: MENG 211 or permission from the instructor.  QR, SC

* MENG 325a, Machine Elements and Manufacturing Processes  Joran Booth  
This course provides students a working knowledge of two fundamental topics related to mechanical design: machine elements and manufacturing processes. Machine elements refer one or more of a range of common design elements that transmit power and enable smooth and efficient motion in mechanical systems with moving parts. This course introduces the most common of these elements and gives students the tools to systems design with them. Topics include common linkages, gearing, bearings, springs, clutches, brakes, and common actuators such as DC motors. Manufacturing processes are necessary for the mechanical design engineer to effectively perform her or his duties; they provide an understanding of how the parts and systems that they design are fabricated, allowing “Design for Manufacturing” principles to be taken into account in the product development process. Students learn the basics of common commercial manufacturing processes for mechanical systems, including low-volume processes such as machining to high-volume processes such as casting (metal parts), molding (plastic parts), and stamping (sheet metal parts). Prerequisites: Extensive CAD experience. MENG 185 and MENG 280 recommended.

MENG 361a, Mechanical Engineering II: Fluid Mechanics  Mitchell Smooke  
Mechanical properties of fluids, kinematics, Navier-Stokes equations, boundary conditions, hydrostatics, Euler’s equations, Bernoulli’s equation and applications, momentum theorems and control volume analysis, dimensional analysis and similitude, pipe flow, turbulence, concepts from boundary layer theory, elements of potential flow. Prerequisites: ENAS 194 or equivalent, and physics at least at the level of PHYS 180.  QR, SC RP
* MENG 363Lb, Fluid Mechanics and Thermodynamics Laboratory  Staff
Hands-on experience in applying the principles of fluid mechanics and thermodynamics. Integration of experiment, theory, and simulation to reflect real-world phenomena. Students design and test prototype devices. Prerequisites: MENG 211 and 361. WR, SC, RP

MENG 389b, Mechanical Engineering IV: Fluid and Thermal Energy Science  Staff
Fundamentals of mechanical engineering applicable to the calculation of energy and power requirements, as well as transport of heat by conduction, convection, and radiation. Prerequisites: MENG 211, 361, and ENAS 194; or permission of instructor. QB, SC

MENG 390Lb, Mechatronics Laboratory  Staff
Hands-on synthesis of control systems, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. Review of Laplace transforms, transfer functions, software tools for solving ODEs. Review of electronic components and introduction to electronic instrumentation. Introduction to sensors. Mechanical power transmission elements. Programming microcontrollers. PID control. ½ Course cr

MENG 400b, Computer-Aided Engineering  Staff
Aspects of computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM). The computer's role in the mechanical design and manufacturing process; commercial tools for two- and three-dimensional drafting and assembly modeling; finite-element analysis software for modeling mechanical, thermal, and fluid systems. Prerequisite: ENAS 130 or permission of instructor. QR

MENG 404b / BENG 404b, Medical Device Design and Innovation  Staff
The engineering design, project planning, prototype creation, and fabrication processes for medical devices that improve patient conditions, experiences, and outcomes. Students develop viable solutions and professional-level working prototypes to address clinical needs identified by practicing physicians. Some attention to topics such as intellectual property, the history of medical devices, documentation and reporting, and regulatory affairs. 0 Course cr

MENG 425b, Advanced Design and Analysis of Machines  Staff
There are many useful, classic mechanisms that require a single actuator to operate. These include four-bar mechanisms, slider-cranks, cam-followers, and scotch-yokes. In this course, students learn to design (synthesize) classic mechanisms. They also learn how to analyze the kinematics and kinetics of important machines. While systems based on single actuators are common, the course then introduces the dynamics of multiple degree-of-freedom machines such as robotic actuators. This course focuses on planar systems and students learn to write equations of motion of robots that can roll forward with multiple articulating linkages. Students design and analyze using SolidWorks and solve equations with Matlab. A project is designed, analyzed, built, and tested utilizing a microcontroller and 3D printer. Prerequisites: ENAS 130, MENG 325.

MENG 440a / ENAS 440a, Applied Numerical Methods for Algebraic Systems, Eigensystems, and Function Approximation  Beth Anne Bennett
The derivation, analysis, and implementation of various numerical methods. Topics include root-finding methods, numerical solution of systems of linear and nonlinear equations, eigenvalue/eigenvector approximation, polynomial-based interpolation, and numerical integration. Additional topics such as computational cost, error analysis, and convergence are studied in several contexts throughout the course. Prerequisites: MATH 115, and 222 or 225, or equivalents; ENAS 130 or some experience with Matlab, C++, or Fortran programming. QR

MENG 443a, Introduction to Robotics, Control, and Learning  Ian Abraham
This course introduces fundamental concepts of robotics, optimal control, and reinforcement learning. Lectures cover topics on state representation, manipulator equations, forward/inverse kinematics/dynamics, planning and control of fully actuated and underactuated robots, operational space control, control via mathematical optimization, and reinforcement learning. The topics focus on connecting mathematical formulations to algorithmic implementation through simulated robotic systems. Coding assignments provide students experience setting up and interfacing with several simulated robotic systems, algorithmic implementation of several state-of-the-art methods, and a codebase for future use. Special topic lectures focus on recent developments in the field of robotics and highlight core research areas. A final class project takes place instead of a final exam where students leverage the codebase they have built throughout the course in a robot problem of their choosing. Experience with differential equations, linear algebra, and basic understanding of dynamics is required. Basic coding experience in e.g., python, c++, c, are also required. Juniors and seniors preferred.

* MENG 450b / APHY 450b / ENAS 450b, Advanced Synchrotron Techniques and Electron Spectroscopy of Materials  Charles Ahn
Introduction to concepts of advanced x-ray and electron-based techniques used for understanding the electronic, structural, and chemical behavior of materials. Students learn from world-leading experts on fundamentals and practical applications of various diffraction, spectroscopy, and microscopy methods. Course highlights the use of synchrotrons in practical experiments. Prerequisites: physics and quantum mechanics/physical chemistry courses for physical science and engineering majors, or by permission of instructor. QR, SC

MENG 459b / BENG 459b, Neuromuscular Biomechanics  Staff
Mechanics and control of animal movement, including skeletal muscle mechanics, systems-level neural and sensory physiology, elements of feedback control, and optimal control. Deriving equations of motion for multibody mechanical systems that are actuated by muscles or muscle-like motors; incorporating sensory feedback; analyzing system properties such as stability and energetics. Prerequisites: MENG 383 and MATH 222 or equivalents, and familiarity with MATLAB or a similar scientific computing environment. QR, RP

MENG 464b, Forces on the Nanoscale  Staff
Modern materials science often exploits the fact that atoms located at surfaces or in thin layers behave differently from bulk atoms to achieve new or greatly altered material properties. The course provides an in-depth discussion of intermolecular and surface forces, which
determine the mechanical and chemical properties of surfaces. In the first part, we discuss the fundamental principles and concepts of forces between atoms and molecules. Part two generalizes these concepts to surface forces. Part three then gives a variety of examples. The course is of interest to students studying thin-film growth, surface coatings, mechanical and chemical properties of surfaces, soft matter including biomembranes, and colloidal suspensions. Some knowledge of basic physics, mathematics, chemistry, and thermodynamics is expected.  

* MENG 469a, Aerodynamics  Juan de la Mora  
Review of fluid dynamics. Inviscid flows over airfoils; finite wing theory; viscous effects and boundary layer theory. Compressible aerodynamics: normal and oblique shock waves and expansion waves. Linearized compressible flows. Some basic knowledge of thermodynamics is expected. Prerequisite: MENG 361 or permission of instructor.  

* MENG 471a and MENG 472b, Special Projects I  Staff  
Faculty-supervised one- or two-person projects with emphasis on research (experiment, simulation, or theory), engineering design, or tutorial study. Students are expected to consult the course instructor, director of undergraduate studies, and/or appropriate faculty members to discuss ideas and suggestions for topics. Focus on development of professional skills such as writing abstracts, prospectuses, and technical reports as well as good practices for preparing posters and delivering presentations. Permission of advisor and director of undergraduate studies is required. Students are required to attend a 75-minute section once per week.  

MENG 488Lb, Mechanical Design: Process and Implementation II  Staff  
This course is the second half of the capstone design sequence (students take MENG 487 in the fall semester of the same academic year) and is a unique opportunity to apply and demonstrate broad and detailed knowledge of engineering in a team effort to design, construct, and test a functioning engineering system. The lecture portion of the class provides guidance in planning and managing your project, as well other topics associated with engineering design. This course sequence requires quality design; analyses and experiments to support the design effort; and the fabrication and testing of the engineered system; as well as proper documentation and presentation of results to a technical audience. Prerequisites: MENG 487, MENG 280, and MENG 361. MENG 185 and MENG 325 are strongly suggested.  

½ Course cr