Degrees Offered: BA, BSChE, MChE, MS, PhD

This major gives undergraduates a sound scientific and technical grounding for further development in a variety of professional environments. Courses in mathematics, chemistry, physics, and computational engineering provide the background for the chemical engineering core, which introduces students to chemical process fundamentals, fluid mechanics, heat and mass transfer, thermodynamics, kinetics, reactor design, process control, product and process design. Course electives may be used to create a focus area in one of the following four disciplines: biotechnology/bioengineering, environmental engineering, materials science/engineering, and computational engineering. Upon completing either the flexible BA requirements or the more scientific and professional BSChE requirements, students may apply for a fifth year of study leading to the nonthesis Master of Chemical Engineering (MChE) degree. A joint MBA/MChE degree also is available in conjunction with the Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Management.

Students admitted for graduate studies leading to the MS or PhD degrees must complete a rigorous program combining advanced course work and original research that must be formalized in an approved thesis. Graduate research is possible in a number of areas, including catalysis and nanotechnology, thermodynamics and phase equilibria, interfacial phenomena, colloids, microemulsions, rheology and fluid mechanics, biosystems engineering, biocatalysis and metabolic engineering, cell population heterogeneity and
biological pattern formation, cellular and tissue engineering, energy and sustainability, gas hydrates, enhanced oil recovery, reservoir characterization, and pollution control.

Degree Requirements for BS in Chemical Engineering

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements. The BS degree is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Through careful selection of other engineering and science courses, a student can develop a focus (or concentration) area in any of the following four engineering disciplines: biotechnology/bioengineering, environmental engineering, materials science/engineering, and computational engineering. These elective programs can be completed within the framework of a BS in chemical engineering. Students majoring in chemical engineering must complete 96–100 hours in the courses specified below for a minimum of 132 hours at graduation.

The undergraduate curriculum is designed so that outstanding students interested in careers in research and teaching may enter graduate school after earning either bachelor's degree.

Engineering Breadth and Focus Area Options

To complete their technical education, Rice students seeking a BS degree in chemical engineering take course electives in at least two other engineering disciplines to satisfy a “breadth” requirement.

Alternatively, students can use their electives to create a focus (or concentration) area in one of the following four disciplines:

- biotechnology/bioengineering
- computational engineering
- environmental engineering
- materials science/engineering

Consult our department web page for a detailed list of courses that can be used to satisfy the engineering breadth or focus area requirements.

Degree Requirements for BSChemE in Chemical Engineering

Chemistry

CHEM 121/122 General Chemistry with Laboratory
CHEM 211 Organic Chemistry
CHEM 217 or 215 Organic Chemistry Lab
CHEM 311/312 Physical Chemistry
Any 2 of CHEM 212, CHEM 310, CHEM 330, or CHEM 360

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

CHBE 301 Chemical Engineering Fundamentals
CHBE 303 Computer Programming in Chemical Engineering
CHBE 305 Computational Methods for Chemical Engineers
CHBE 310 Introduction to Biomolecular Engineering
CHBE 343 Chemical Engineering Lab I
CHBE 390 Kinetics and Reactor Design
CHBE 401/402 Transport Phenomena I and II
CHBE 403 Design Fundamentals
CHBE 404 Product and Process Design
CHBE 411/412 Thermodynamics I and II
CHBE 443 Chemical Engineering Lab II
CHBE 470 Process Dynamics and Control

Mathematics

MATH 101/102 Single Variable Calculus I and II
MATH 211 Ordinary Differential Equations and Linear Algebra
MATH 212 Multivariable Calculus or equivalent honors courses
CAAM 336 Differential Equations in Science and Engineering or
Degree Requirements for MChE, MS, and PhD in Chemical Engineering

For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees.

**MChE Program**—For the MChE degree, students must complete at least 30 hours of courses beyond those counted for their undergraduate degree. At least six of the courses taken must be upper-level courses in chemical engineering and one must be an approved mathematics course. The chemical engineering courses selected should include process design (two semesters) and process control, unless courses in these subjects were taken during the student’s undergraduate studies.

**MChE/MBA Program**—For the MChE/MBA degree, students must complete at least 24 hours of courses beyond those counted for their undergraduate degree. At least six of the courses taken must be upper-level courses in chemical engineering and one must be an approved mathematics course. The chemical engineering courses selected should include process design (two semesters) and process control, unless courses in these subjects were taken during the student’s undergraduate studies.
MS Program—Candidates for the MS degree must:

- Complete at least 18 approved semester hours with high standing
- Submit an original research thesis
- Defend the thesis in a public oral examination
- Complete a teaching requirement

PhD Program—Candidates for the PhD degree must:

- Satisfactorily complete 36 semester hours of advanced course work, including both general and specialized topics (students who already have an MS degree in chemical engineering can request departmental approval for a reduction in the number of required courses)
- Pass qualifying examinations demonstrating a general understanding of reaction engineering, thermodynamics, transport phenomena, and applied mathematics
- Prepare and present a thesis proposal
- Complete a publishable thesis representing research that is an original and significant contribution to the field of chemical and biomolecular engineering
- Pass a public oral examination in defense of the thesis
- Fulfill a residency requirement
- Complete a teaching assignment

See CHBE in the Courses of Instruction section.