ITU/UB Dual-Diploma Program

New Student Orientation

Fall, 2015

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Civil Engineering Curriculum

Section 3: Tips for Success at UB

Section 4: Graduation Requirements

Section 5: Important Academic Policies

Section 6: Overcoming Academic Problems

Section 7: Sources of Help
Section 1: Introduction

Welcome to UB! We are very excited that you are here to learn about civil engineering, UB, and our country. We look forward to learning from you as well.

Every student must earn their degree. To navigate the path to graduation, you must excel in the classroom and understand the rules of the university. At UB, students are responsible for understanding university regulations. Some of these rules may be similar to the rules at ITU and others may be very different. *You must master both the Turkish and US higher education systems.*

The purpose of this handbook is to help you succeed academically. In this handbook, you will find the requirements for graduation, a list of the most important academic policies, some tips for academic success at UB, advice for what to do if you have academic problems, and a list of people who can help you.

Please read this handbook and refer to it often. Let us know how we can help you become a UB engineering graduate.
Section 2: Civil Engineering Curriculum

A flowsheet showing all the required courses, both here and at ITU, can be found on the engineering website. The flowsheet shows the required course co-requisites (pink), pre-requisites (yellow), and post-requisite sequence (green). Pre-requisites and co-requisites are strictly enforced both here and at ITU.

The screen capture below shows the pre-requisites and post-requisite sequence of EAS209, obtained by placing your cursor over EAS209. This tool will help you understand the significance of a particular course in the curriculum.

What courses will I take in my first semester at UB?

Students admitted conditionally
If you are admitted conditionally, you need to take ESL 407 and ESL 411 this fall. Since students who are admitted conditionally are limited to four courses, you can only take two technical courses. You will be registered for EAS207 and MTH306.

In order to remove the conditional status, you must get a C grade or better in both ESL 407 and ESL 411 and have a UB (overall) GPA of 2.0 after your first semester. Once the conditional admittance status is removed, you can proceed with your program as planned. Remember to take the courses you did not take in fall because of the conditional status. You should plan to remain at UB over the summer to complete these courses.
If your conditional status is not removed, you will be limited to 12 credits (or 4 courses) during the Spring semester. In addition, if your grade in ESL 407 and/or ESL 411 is below a C, the course (or courses) must be repeated. ESL 407 can be repeated in Spring. However, ESL 412 (Spring only) must be taken in place of ESL 411 (Fall only).

**Students who are not conditional**
You will be registered for ESL 407 (you can request permission to take ENG 101 if you would prefer), CIE 308, EAS 230, EAS 207 and MTH 306.

**What if I don’t like the schedule that I have been given?**

Your schedule has been chosen so that you can take the required classes and progress towards graduation. The HUB is the University at Buffalo's student information system. Once you have your UBIT name and password, you can technically make changes to your schedule through HUB (http://www.buffalo.edu/hub/). However, please do not do this. If you drop one section of a course, there is no guarantee that you will be able to register in a different section as most classes are now full. In addition, because of delays entering the courses that you took at ITU, HUB may not recognize your course prerequisites. Remember that failure to take the required classes this semester may result in delayed graduation.

If you would like to check whether a course could be swapped out for another course, HUB has a feature called ‘Swap’. Go to the Academics Area section in your HUB portal and from the drop down box select ‘Enrollment Swap’. For details on how to use this feature go to http://blogs.advising.buffalo.edu/beadvised/files/2014/03/EnrollmentSwap.pdf.
Section 3: Tips for Success at UB

University students all over the world learn in the same way: by going to class, asking questions, and working hard. Here are a few tips for academic success at UB.

How do I stay informed?

Read the course syllabus, and use UB Learns (the online course management system, also called Blackboard) to stay informed. In addition, please note that e-mail is the official form of communication at UB. Now that you have a UB email account, use this for all university communication. You will be added to a number of listservs, including a listserv for dual diploma program students, so read your UB e-mail frequently for important news and information about individual courses and the program. When writing an email, use an informative subject and make sure you use an appropriate salutation, such as Dear Prof XXXXX. Please remember to check your grammar and spelling before you hit ‘send’.

Should I attend class, recitation, and laboratory session?

Absolutely yes! You should consider attendance in class, recitation, and laboratory sessions to be mandatory. Professors say that there is a direct relationship between thoughtful attendance and performance. Therefore, come to class prepared to learn, including doing the required reading before the lecture.

Do I need to do the homework?

Again, Absolutely yes! In the US homework is used as preparation for the exams. To do well in your classes you need to do ALL the homework (see Section 5 on academic integrity). This applies to ALL students. US students are used to this system and take all classwork very seriously. You will need to adopt a similar work ethic to succeed.

How much should I study?

In the US it is expected that you study or do homework for at least two to three hours for each hour in class (6 to 9 hours per week for a 3-credit course).

How can I get help if I am struggling in a class?

If you are struggling with the class material, seek help from the teaching assistant (TA) and/or instructor. Make sure that you seek help immediately so that you do not fall behind in the course.
What else can I do to improve my experience at UB?

While a big part of coming to UB is to be successful academically, you are also here to learn a new culture and to make new friends.

**Student Clubs:** A good way to make friends with other students is to join student clubs. Within engineering, ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers) and ESW (Engineers for a Sustainable World) are great clubs to join. There are 100+ student clubs, so you should be able to find one that you enjoy.

**Center For Excellence in Writing (CEW):** It is important to take every opportunity to improve your English, both spoken and written. The Center for Excellence in Writing (209 Baldy Hall) organizes a daily English conversation corner to give new international students an opportunity to practice their spoken English and make new friends. For Fall 2014 these events will take place Monday to Thursday from 12:00 to 1:30 pm. See the CEW [website](http://example.com) for more information. Additional services offered by the CEW include Individual Consultations and Ongoing Writing Support.

**International Students and Scholar Services (ISSS):** While ISSS provides immigration and visa information to international students, it offers many more opportunities including worships, trips and special events. Buffalo is certainly a small city compared to Istanbul. However, there are still many things to do, so check out some of the activities organized by ISSS.
Section 4: Graduation Requirements

You need to think about the requirements for graduation now, as you enter your first year at UB.

What do I need to do to graduate?

You must:

- pass all the required courses (including required electives)
- have an overall UB grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0
- have technical GPA of at least 2.0
- complete 30 undergraduate credit hours of junior/senior level courses required in your major at UB (built into the curriculum).
- complete the Library Skills Workbook (http://library.buffalo.edu/help/instructional/libraryskilsworkbook.html).

Your technical GPA is based on engineering (CIE, EAS, EE, IE, MAE), math (MTH), and science courses taken at UB that are required in your major (including technical electives). For details, please see:

http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/eas_degrees.shtml

Plan to complete the Library Skill Workbook ASAP as it will help you use the university libraries and online resources.

Do I need to complete all the ITU requirements before I can graduate from UB?

YES. Students need to complete the requirements of both institutions before they can graduate. This includes the ITU internship requirement of 30 days.
Section 5: Important Academic Policies

According to the ITU-UB agreement, you must follow UB rules when you are at UB and ITU rules when you are at ITU. All policies may be found in the university catalog at [http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu](http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu). The most common policies that may affect you are listed below.

**How many credits can I take?**

Students typically take fewer credits at UB compared to ITU. This is because the US system is based upon continuous assessment with most classes requiring weekly homework assignments. The maximum number of credits UB students are allowed to take is 19 per semester unless their overall GPA is at least 3.00. If your GPA>3.0, you will need to apply for a credit override if you want to take more than 19 credits. There is a minimum; international students must take at least 12 credits each semester.

**How will my grade in a course be calculated?**

The instructor will tell you how your grade is calculated in the course syllabus. Homework assignments usually only make up 10-30% of the final grade. However, in the U.S. system, you will likely fail the exams and fail the course if you do not do the homework assignments. Why? In the U.S. system, you practice for the exams and learn the material through the homework assignments. Many students have fared poorly at UB because they did not take homework seriously!

**What is UB’s academic integrity policy?**

While studying at UB you are obligated to follow UB’s academic integrity policy found at [http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml](http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml). Examples of academic dishonesty are given in the university catalog and include:

- Re-submitting previously submitted work
- Plagiarism
  Copying or receiving material from any source and submitting that material as one’s own, without acknowledging and citing the particular debts to the source (quotations, paraphrases, basic ideas), or in any other manner representing the work of another as one’s own.
- Cheating
  Soliciting and/or receiving information from, or providing information to, another student or any other unauthorized source (including electronic sources such as cellular phones), with the intent to deceive while completing an examination or individual assignment.
- Falsification of academic materials
  Fabricating laboratory materials, notes, reports, or any forms of computer data; forging an instructor’s name or initials; resubmitting an examination or
assignment for reevaluation which has been altered without the instructor’s authorization; or submitting a report, paper, materials, computer data, or examination (or any considerable part thereof) prepared by any person other than the student responsible for the assignment.

• Buying or selling academic assignments

Please remember that when you submit homework with your name on it, you are indicating that it is YOUR work. Copying homework assignments from others, whether a friend or from the internet, is not tolerated. Punishment for violations of academic integrity can be severe and may include receiving a failing grade in the course or being dismissed from the University. Be aware that speaking to a class-mate in Turkish during an exam will be seen as cheating and punished accordingly.

In addition, engineers have special ethical obligations. As per the NSPE Code of Ethics, “engineers shall avoid deceptive acts” and “shall conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession.” For additional information about the procedures in place within the CSEE department, see the academic integrity section of the departmental website (http://www.csee.buffalo.edu/undergraduate/current-students/academic-integrity/).

How do I know if we can collaborate (work together) on homework assignments?

If it is not clear on the syllabus, ask your instructor since each course has different rules. In some classes you are encouraged to discuss the problems, but are required to submit your own solution. In other classes, you are expected to do all work independently. If in doubt, DON’T collaborate.
Section 6: Overcoming Academic Problems

The best way to deal with academic problems is to avoid them in the first place. Section 3 discusses how to avoid problems. Steps you can take if you do poorly in a course are discussed in this section.

Can I repeat a course?

The most efficient way to raise your GPA is to retake one or more courses to bring your GPA above 2.0. Retaking a technical course will increase both your UB and technical GPA. Successful completion of the course on the second attempt will replace the first grade. However, some courses at UB limit access to students who have already taken the course. For details, please see UB course repeat policy:

http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/repeat.shtml

What if I fail a course more than once?

If you repeat a course that you previously failed, the first F grade will not count toward your GPA. However, the second time you fail a class, the F grade becomes PERMANENT and negatively affects your GPA. This is different to ITU where all F grades are forgiven once you pass the class. For details, please see UB course repeat policy:

http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/repeat.shtml

Will I be able to take a course at UB over the summer?

Yes. Please be sure that you check with International Student Scholar Services (ISSS) in 210 Talbert Hall to insure that you have the necessary paperwork. Please be aware that very few (if any) upper-division (third or fourth year) courses are taught over the summer.

What happens if I fail a course in my senior year?

Many courses at UB are offered only once per year, especially senior year courses. In addition, senior year courses are generally not offered in the summer. If you fail a course in your senior year, you will most likely not be able to graduate on time. Students may be able to take an equivalent course at ITU (see below).

Can I take a course at ITU that I am supposed to take at UB?

Perhaps. You are allowed to take up to two courses at ITU that you were supposed to take at UB, but you need to obtain the permission of both the UB and ITU program directors. On a few occasions, students have been given permission to take a course in the
U.S., outside UB. You need to contact your UB program director if you want to seek this permission. If you take a course outside UB, the grade you receive will not count toward your UB grade point average.

**Can I repeat a course at ITU that I failed at UB?**

Perhaps. Again you are limited to a maximum of two courses and you must obtain the permission of the UB and ITU program directors. However, while a course repeated at ITU may fulfill a UB requirement, it will not replace the grade from the UB course. Consequently, the F will remain on your UB transcript, which will negatively impact your GPA.

**Can I take a course at UB that I am supposed to take/or failed at ITU?**

Perhaps. Again you are limited to a maximum of two courses and you must obtain the permission of the UB and ITU program directors. A course repeated at UB will replace the grade at ITU. However, be aware that if you repeat a course at UB that you have already failed at ITU, the first attempt at UB will be counted as your ‘second’ attempt. As such, the grade will be permanent.

**What is academic probation?**

The university and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) have different requirements for probation. The university looks at your overall GPA and SEAS looks at your technical GPA.

In engineering, a student who is not in academic good standing is on SEAS academic probation. Academic good standing in SEAS is defined as:

- cumulative Technical Grade Point Average (Technical GPA) is 2.0 or greater, and
- most recent semester Technical GPA is 2.0 or greater.

**What happens if I am placed on academic probation?**

After the first occurrence of SEAS academic probation, students will receive an advising hold that will limit the ability to register in courses until they attend a required advisement session with an engineering advisor in 410 Bonner Hall.

If you are placed on academic probation you will be expected to raise your grade point average back up to a 2.0. You can do this by repeating courses that you did poorly in or by changing habits that may be affecting your success. It is also recommended that you seek additional help through tutoring services, class instructors, and teaching assistants.
Will I be dismissed if I am on academic probation?

There are different rules for dismissal from engineering and for dismissal from the university. If you are on engineering probation for three semesters or your Tech GPA is <1.0 after two semesters, you will be dismissed from Engineering.

For detailed information on both university and engineering probation and dismissal policies, please view the following websites:

http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/academicreview.shtml
https://www.eng.buffalo.edu/undergrad/advisement/academic-review/

You fall under the 2009 Academic Review Policy because you started your studies at ITU prior to Fall 2015. Academic review is conducted by SEAS twice per year, at the end of each semester. If you want to check your current status, please log in to:

http://www.eng.buffalo.edu/undergrad/advisement/academic-review/

What happens if I am dismissed from Engineering?

Dismissals from engineering and possible readmission to engineering are handled by the main engineering office in 410 Bonner, not your academic coordinator. While you may want to seek advice from your academic coordinator, you must read your dismissal letter carefully for details.

What happens if I am dismissed from UB?

If you are dismissed from the university, it is recommended that you speak with your academic advisor and an SEAS engineering advisor in 410 Bonner Hall.
Section 7: Sources of Help

Every student needs help to graduate. Many people at UB can help you. Your primary source of help is the departmental Undergraduate Studies Office in 212 Ketter Hall. A detailed list of all UB offices that can help you is included below.

Where do I go for help in a course?
For help in a course, please contact the course instructor or course teaching assistant.

Where do I go for help on academic and professional issues?
For academic or professional help, contact your academic coordinator: Christine Human, 242 Ketter Hall / 412L Bonner Hall.

Where do I go for help with course registration and other issues?
Contact the Undergraduate Academic Coordinator: Éva McGovern, 212 Ketter Hall.

Where do I go for help on international student admission issues?
Contact Program Coordinator for Dual Degree Programs: Steven Shaw, 17 Capen Hall.

Where do I go if I am feeling depressed?
If you need to talk with a trained professional, please contact the Counseling Center (645-2720, 120 Richmond Quad, Ellicott Complex).

What if I have an immigration (e.g. I-20) question?
Contact International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS): 210 Talbert Hall.

What if I have an immunization or health related question?
Contact UB Health Services: Michael Hall, South Campus. When filling out the UB Health Background Form, please ensure that your doctor puts the date of immunization in the American date format: “mm/dd/yy” to avoid having to fill out and fax the form again. The fax number for UB Student Health Services is 716-829-2564. Please also note that this form is required of all students enrolled at UB (domestic and international). Consequently, processing time will take longer if you wait until close the beginning of the semester to submit your form to UB Health Services. It is recommended that you print, fill out and submit this form in mid-July to avoid last-minute complications. Until this form is processed, we cannot help you register for your classes. Once you fax the form, please allow a few business days for processing. After your form is processed by Health Services and your health holds are removed, your Academic Coordinator will still have to work with other departments on getting additional holds lifted on your account (such as your TOEFL hold and ISSS hold). Only after these additional holds are removed can course registration begin. Therefore, we ask that you submit your health background form in a timely manner to avoid future complications with registration.
Where do I go if have a housing question?
Contact University Residence Halls and Apartments: Campus Living, 106 Spaulding Quad., Ellicott Complex.

Who can help me with billing?
Contact Student Response Center: 232 Capen Hall, North Campus
Another useful website is the UB Student Accounts: http://studentaccounts.buffalo.edu/
Here you can check on tuition and fee amount for a given semester by clicking on the “Tuition and Fees” link on the left navigation panel. Please don’t miss in the small print:
**Matriculated international students also pay the International Student Fee ($100/semester). Please contact International Student Scholar and Services with questions.

Where do I go to get UB ID card?
UB Card Office: 228 Student Union, North Campus

Where do I go to get UB Transcript?
Student Response Center: 232 Capen Hall, North Campus

Where do I go to pay a parking ticket?
Parking and Transportation Office: 102 Spaulding, North Campus

Other Important Locations / Personnel

- **SEAS Office of Undergraduate Education**: 410 Bonner Hall
- **Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering**: Prof. M. Sivaselvan (civil engineering), 238 Ketter Hall; Prof. Jim Jensen (environmental engineering), 232 Jarvis Hall
- Dr. Christine Human, Lecturer, Associate Dean for Accreditation and Student Affairs: 242 Ketter Hall / 412L Bonner Hall
- Éva McGovern, Undergraduate Academic Coordinator: 212D Ketter Hall