

APPENDIX A: Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Students
Adopted, September 1994

Preamble

The list of rights and responsibilities, which follows, is an outgrowth of discussions between individual graduate students and faculty of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering. The primary intent of producing such a list is to make both graduate students and faculty aware of their individual and collective responsibilities as they interact on a day-to-day basis. In addition, it was created to make new students aware of their rights within the framework of the Department and the procedures available to guarantee that fellow students and faculty do not ignore those rights. This is not intended as a legal document which supersedes standard university practice but, rather, as an expression of what many would consider to be common sense guidelines for effective interaction between students and faculty. Our goal is to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and collective productivity within our department.

I. Research Performance Evaluation

Right: The student has the right to expect his/her progress to be evaluated by an advisor. Evaluation should include mutual discussion of the work to be performed and suggestions as to methods, explanation of grading criteria for research credit hours prior to the semester, discussion of gradeable work during the semester, and explanation of the grade after the semester.

To ensure that this right is upheld: The student has the right to a written warning that the work performance is not acceptable at least two months before any action is taken, and has the right to a one-month written notice before project funding is withheld. Copies of these notices must be sent to the chairman of the Graduate Committee. If a student is dismissed during a semester for which they are enrolled, the advisor will be responsible for outstanding financial obligations such as tuition and associated fees, medical benefits, etc., until the end of that semester.

In rare circumstances a student will, with impunity, cease to discharge in any meaningful way the research responsibilities he/she assumed with the acceptance of a research assistantship. Examples of such behavior include failure to attend research group meetings, withholding of research data from the advisor, and refusal to perform required research. If such circumstances arise, the faculty reserves the right to review these cases and to determine if further support is warranted.