



To: Incoming Industrial Hygiene Students

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Date: 4 August '06

Re: Information for the fall semester

We look forward to the fall semester. We are very pleased with the students we have admitted. We will have an orientation at 3 pm on Monday, August 21 in Room 246 of the Mineral Resources Building.

This communication is intended to help you prepare and to orient you. I sent the curriculum and recommended fall classes earlier in an email. Some preliminary advice follows.

Academic Advisor

As the program director, I am the academic advisor to all IH students. By the end of the first year, you should have chosen a thesis or project advisor, but I still will advise you and make decisions regarding course requirements.

Signing Up for Courses

WVU doesn't require graduate students to have prior approval before registering for their *first* semester of courses unless you were a WVU student last semester. My signature and a PIN number are required for subsequent semesters.

If you wish to register for any courses I have not recommended for this fall, email me first and discuss it with me.

If you were accepted as a "Provisional" student, contact me to discuss whatever additional courses are required and how that should affect which other courses you should take this fall.

Unless you are working part time, you should register for 12-14 hours. If you are a NIOSH trainee, you **MUST** register for 12-14 hours. If you will have a part-time job of more than 5-7 hours/week, you should register for fewer hours (e.g., 9-10).

Note that all of you should add IENG 493 after you get here. Dr. Iskander is the nominal instructor for that course, so he will have to sign a permission slip for each of you. All of you should attend classes for IENG 213, which I teach. You do NOT register for 213.

You can take courses not listed on our “Typical Curriculum,” but none can be substituted for required courses without agreement from me and the Associate Dean. That will be forthcoming only if we agree that your previous training obviates the need for you to take the substituted course. Likewise, prior approval is required to get credit for technical electives not on our list, so please seek my approval *before* taking them.

It is a good idea to take the courses in the order listed, but it is possible to take some of them out of order, if necessary. It is especially important to take IENG 561, IH&S 528, and IENG 493 the first semester.

You can register up to the time fall classes begin, but it is better to register much earlier, especially for courses taught in other departments (e.g., CMED, PUBH). Prefixes within the department include IENG, IH&S, and SAFM.

You can register for courses online. See <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/admissions/registration.html> for specific information on telephone and online registration. Note that you have to have a “PIN” number to register for the spring and subsequent semesters. If you have questions about registering, Mickie McIntosh (mickie.mcintosh@mail.wvu.edu) often is your best first resort.

Looking at the “typical” schedule, you will see a relatively light schedule for the second year. Many of our students obtain half-time positions at NIOSH or with campus Safety and Health for their second year. A student with a half-time position should take no more than 9-10 hours per semester. Electives and research hours can be taken anytime, so you can be registered for them either in the spring or fall, whichever fits your schedule best. You may also want to take a course in organic chemistry, if you have not had it already.

Preparing Over the Summer

If you can find the time during the summer, you can reduce some of the load you will otherwise encounter for the fall semester.

Making Up Deficiencies

Some of you received a notice with your acceptance that you lack a required course on entry, usually statistics (e.g., IENG 213) or computer applications (CS 101) or physics. We strongly recommend human physiology and organic chemistry, but we usually *require* them only if we think you particularly need them. If you can find a way to take these courses over the summer, it will be very helpful to you to do so.

Statistics

If you want to really help yourself, learn how to use the statistics functions in MS Excel.

Computer Applications for Analyses and for Report Writing and Presentation

We do not require that you own a computer, and we do have computers in a room for student use. Hence, it is quite possible to get by without having a personal computer. However, it certainly is helpful if you have access to one where you will live while a graduate student here.

My advice is to purchase a middle-weight laptop you can carry easily. When you use it at home, consider hooking it to an external monitor and an external keyboard. Not all laptops will connect to an external monitor. If your laptop can do it, you have the portability of a laptop with the screen size and ergonomics of a desktop computer.

It is a good idea to improve your competence with a word processor and a spreadsheet program before coming in. Competency with a slide presentation program (e.g., MS Powerpoint) is also good. Almost everyone here using Microsoft products for these, but you can choose others, if you wish.

For each application, you should have reasonable facility with:

1. All basic functions of the program (e.g., selecting, cutting and pasting, print setup, etc.),
2. Intermediate level functions.

Listed below are what I consider intermediate skills for each type of application.

Intermediate Level skills For Spreadsheets

1. Create a table with summation across rows and across columns,
2. Use named ranges (Insert-Name-Define or Create), so that your equations can look like this:
$$\text{Profit} = \text{Income} - \text{Expenses}$$
instead of: $C13 = C12 - C11$
3. Use equation editor
4. Use statistical functions (computer std dev, look up t-value, F-value, and Z-value)

Intermediate Level Skills For Word processing

1. Apply Styles (e.g., heading 1, heading 2, normal, etc.)
2. Create an outline (just apply styles for heading 1, heading 2, etc. to the headings and subheadings in the document)
3. Create a table
4. Use equation editor
5. Insert a figure

Intermediate Level Skills For Powerpoint:

1. Create a Master slide
2. Insert a table
3. Insert a figure
4. Use animation
5. Use equation editor

Drawing:

Ideally, you would be able to use the drawing tools in these programs or in a dedicated drawing program. A paint program also is useful.

Getting through the program successfully

A few fail to get through the IH program due to poor grades and a few experience personal problems that force them to quit, but most who fail to obtain a M.S. fail because they took a full time job before graduating. They think they will finish their Masters Project or thesis after starting work. Some do, but some don't. All find it very, very difficult to find time to finish their project or thesis. Some never finish, and others are delayed for years.

You will be tempted to take the job before graduating because it will provide a sharp increase in your standard of living. You will get offers because companies know that: 1) you have valuable skills even before graduating, and 2) you would cost them much more if you have your degree in hand. It is a win-win deal for them. It is a win-some-now, lose-more-later deal for you. We strongly urge you to keep on track to finish within two years and do not take a full-time job until you are finished.

The second biggest problem is procrastination. You are the only one who can complete your project or thesis. Your research advisor can advise you and may even prod you from time to time, but no one is going to force you to work on it or finish it. You must do it, yourself. Likewise, if you wish to finish within two years, you have to get on task and stay on task.

If you miss the deadlines for defending your work, your graduation will be delayed until the end of the next semester. Some of those deadlines are institutional; others are matters of giving your Committee Chair time to review your work before you present it to the full Committee. Trying to rush your Committee so you can meet a deadline is almost always risky.

Your Chair will expect to receive a well-written draft at least one month prior to your desired defense date. Some expect two months. If your draft has problems, extensive revisions may delay you several weeks.

Concluding Remarks

Although we have many duties that keep us extremely busy, the IH faculty all chose to be academics because we enjoy working with and interacting with students. In addition, without students, there is no academy.

Do not hesitate to contact me or visit my office if you have problems. However, please use email instead of leaving phone messages. If you wish for me to take some action or schedule a meeting with you, email is always better since it serves as a reminder and the information is in front of me when I need it.

Finally, we are happy to advise you, but it is *your* responsibility to make sure you meet all graduation requirements. Indeed, you must present evidence that you have met all requirements in a “Plan of Study” before you can graduate. In graduate school you are treated as an adult who is fully capable of looking after yourself. It is your responsibility to know about deadlines and to do the required paperwork for graduation.

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Course listings:<http://www.arc.wvu.edu/courses/index.html>

Register at: <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/admissions/registration.html>