### Doctoral Timeline

#### Year One
- **Consult with faculty - select an advisor**
- **Submit “Track and Advisor Declaration form” to the BIOE program assistant**
- **Begin research - Select a dissertation project**
- **Start reading relevant literature and developing approaches to your dissertation research**
- **Complete 2-3 classes per semester**
- **Take PhD Qualifying Exam**
  - Taken at the conclusion of the spring semester
  - 3 Depth classes completed with a minimum 3.5 GPA
- **Start forming your dissertation committee**
- **Complete and submit your Plan of Study for committee approval**
- **Secure funding for upcoming semesters by mid-spring**
- **Utilize the summer break to conduct research and develop your project**

#### Year Two
- **Complete 2-3 more classes per semester**
- **Consult your advisor for preferences on coursework vs. research hours**
- **Update your Plan of Study as needed**
- **Try to complete a journal manuscript, conference abstract, poster competition, etc.**
  - Projects vary greatly, and you may not be ready for this yet but if you have made significant progress don't be afraid to act on it.
  - Remember, manuscripts are a basis for dissertation chapters. You can be making progress on your dissertation while developing recognition in the field.

#### Year Three
- **Continue in steps from year two**
- **You should be completing all coursework**
- **Prepare for and complete the Comprehensive Exam**
  - This is your opportunity to get committee feedback and make critical changes that may be necessary for experiments and analysis. Don’t delay this unless necessary.
  - At least 5 months must pass between your comprehensive and your defense
  - Upon completion of 18 post-comp credits, you may become eligible for 1 cr/hr enrollment for every semester
- **Continue your dissertation research**
  - Your work should be becoming more "self-contained." Overcome the complexities and modify your project accordingly.
  - Contact your committee members to discuss your progress and/or problems to see if they have any advice

#### Year Four
- **Get actively involved in your field by attending conferences and society meetings**
- **Present your research and make a name for yourself**
- **Network with those around you and start making steps towards your career goals**
- **Actively seek out employment opportunities**
- **Publish your research in applicable journals**
  - Don’t wait until your project is completed, publish as your findings become conclusive - file for patents where applicable
  - Publications make you more marketable and offer leverage over other job applicants
- **Finalize your dissertation**
  - Submit it for your committee to review and schedule your oral defense
  - Leave yourself enough time to make revisions prior to the semester deadlines
- **Apply for graduation to the applicable semester prior to university deadlines - consult BIOE website for a complete list of steps toward graduation**