The Schools of Engineering and Science have established a
gradient-level Program in Polymers and Soft Matter (PPSM). It is
open to qualified students admitted to the graduate program(s) of
one of the following five MIT departments: Biological Engineering,
Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Materials Science and
Engineering, and/or Mechanical Engineering.

PPSM consists of an initial academic phase in which all students
participate (regardless of previous background and research
interest); followed by research in a selected area of specialization.
The program leads to the doctoral degree; if desired, a master’s
degree can be obtained through the student’s home department.

The core curriculum, taken by all students, provides a common base
in the field of polymers and soft matter. It is broad, rigorous, and
covers both elementary and advanced subjects spanning the entire
range from the molecular level to the continuum. This curriculum
takes up the first two terms in the graduate program.

The transition from the academic phase to research is marked by the
qualifying exam, which consists of both oral and written sections.
The exams are offered at the end of each spring term and are based
on the PPSM core curriculum. Successful completion of the exam
leads to selection of a research project and the preparation and
defense of a thesis proposal.

Any participating faculty member at MIT can act as a research
supervisor. The thesis supervisor(s) advises the graduate student
on a continuing basis throughout the time of the research project.
Completion and successful defense of the thesis before PPSM and
departmental faculty fulfill the requirements for the doctoral degree.

For more information, including admission and financial aid
procedures, contact the director, Professor Darrell J. Irvine,
Room 76-261C, 617-452-4174, or visit the website (http://
polymerscience.mit.edu).