Program: Biomedical Engineering M.S., Ph.D. Program
Rating: High Quality

The Biomedical Engineering PhD graduate program has a very good median TTD of 4.6 yrs (2003-2008) with a completion rate of 65% which is above the average for the Mathematical/Physical Sciences/Engineering disciplinary group. However, 19% leave the University of Iowa with no degree which seems high. The program reports partial support for students, including a T32 training grant in bioinformatics. The focus on informatics seems timely. The program is ranked 43rd and 19th among public universities and the goal is to move into the top ten. About 70% of the students have received honors and awards for outstanding scholarship, presentations or papers at national conferences. No specific information was provided on graduate student placements, but the Graduate College data shows 33% postdoctoral, 27% industry and 27% academics as the top categories. The program assessment acknowledged that the large undergraduate student to faculty ratio sometimes has a negative impact on faculty research programs. If this continues, it could impact the graduate program. The TF was concerned about the graduate student/faculty ratio of 5.4 (76/14) which seemed high considering that there seems to be only partial financial support for the students. The TF noted the interdisciplinary work of the graduate program, with strong links and research support with the health science college. However, the TF wondered whether the program had grown too quickly and student demand was greater than the financial base (i.e. external grant support).