ECE Graduate Student Orientation

Electrical and Computer Engineering
Auburn University

Revised April 2016
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Websites – *ECE Graduate*

- ECE Graduate Program website includes the information on:
  - ECE graduate courses
  - Research areas
  - For each degree program (M.E.E., M.S., Ph.D.)
    - Course Requirements
    - Advisory Committee
    - Procedures
  
  - [http://www.eng.auburn.edu/elec/programs/graduate/index.html](http://www.eng.auburn.edu/elec/programs/graduate/index.html)
Websites – Others

• Student Policy eHandbook
  -  http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/

• Graduate School
  –  http://www.grad.auburn.edu
  –  Forms (Graduate Assistant Award Statement Form, Curriculum Change Form, Master Thesis Final Exam Form, PhD General Exam Application Form, Travel Grant Application Form, etc.)
    http://grad.auburn.edu/cs/forms_directory.html

• Office of International Programs
  –  http://www.auburn.edu/academic/international/
People

• Department Chair
  - Professor Mark Nelms
  - Office: Broun 210
  - Email: nelmsrm@auburn.edu

• Assistant for Department Chair
  – Ms. Linda Allgood
  – Office: Broun 211
  – Email: allgolc@auburn.edu
People

• Graduate Program Officer
  - Professor Soo-Young Lee
  - Application and academic issues
  - Office: Broun 304
  - Email: leesooy@auburn.edu

• Assistant for Graduate Program Officer
  – Ms. Laura Pattillo
  – Application materials
  – Office: Broun 215
  – Email: ecegrad@eng.auburn.edu
People

• Professor Stuart Wentworth
  - GTA assignment
  - Woltosz Fellowships
  - Office: Broun 305
  - Email: stuartw@auburn.edu

• Professor John Hung
  – Laboratory chairman
  – Office: Broun 213
  – Email: j.y.hung@ieee.org
People

• Ms. Jo Ann Loden
  - Course registration and guidance
  - GRA and GTA appointment administration
  - Background Check
  - Office: Broun 229
  - Email: lodenja@auburn.edu
People

- Ms. Jennifer Head
  - Packing slips and invoices
  - Department copiers
  - Office: Broun 202
  - Email: jch0012@auburn.edu

- Ms. Mary Lloyd
  - Paychecks, building keys
  - Copier access code
  - Day-to-day needs
  - Office: Broun 200
  - Email: lloydma@auburn.edu
People

• Mr. Joe Haggerty
  - Hardware Equipment
  - Broun Hall Access Code
  - Office: Broun 251
  - Email: haggejk@auburn.edu

• Mr. John Newton
  – Computer and Software
  – Office: Broun 321
  – Email: jbn0002@auburn.edu
Degrees – Ph.D.

- 60 credit hours beyond B.S.
- Need to pass the Ph.D. qualifying exam.
- Dissertation required
- Advisory Committee:
  - Major professor (research advisor) + 3 members
Degrees – *Ph.D.*

- Those who do not have a master’s degree or have a master’s degree in a non-ECE field have an option to receive the MEE degree along with the PhD degree.
- Submit a separate plan of study for the MEE degree to the graduate school.
  - Before or at the time of completing the PhD degree
  - The plan of study must meet all the course requirements of the MEE degree.
Degrees – Master

- Master of Science (M.S.)
  - 30 credit hours
  - Thesis required
  - Advisory Committee
    - Major Professor (research advisor) + 2 members

- Master of Electrical Engineering (M.E.E.)
  - 33 credit hours
  - Coursework-only
  - Online option available
  - An advisor (major professor)

- Choice between MS and MEE becomes official when the plan of study is submitted and approved.
Degrees – Master

• Applying for the Auburn ECE PhD program
  – Do not submit an official application to the graduate school.
  – Submit the following materials (in a single PDF file if possible) to the GPO Assistant:
    • Current AU transcript (an unofficial copy is acceptable)
    • Recommendation letters (at least from the current and future advisors)
    • Statement of purpose
    • Resume
  – After admitted, you need to submit the curriculum change form to the graduate school.
Academic – Course Registration

• Register for courses online until the 5th class day.

• After the 5th class day, until the 15th class day:
  – Requires a form/Need to pay a fine.

• Register as early as possible.
  – A course may become full or may be cancelled (low enrollment).

• A class is full.
  – Get the approval from the instructor.

• Independent Study (7900, 8900)
  – See the instructor and Ms. Jo Ann Loden.
Academic – *Course Registration*

- International students must be enrolled for at least 9 credit hours in each semester (except summer).
  - The *Gold Form* needs to be submitted for the semester in which you register for less than 9 credit hours.
  - The Gold form is due by the 8th class day.
• Research Advisor
  - Identify a major advisor (professor) as soon as possible.
  - Develop and submit a plan of study (by the second last semester).
  - Meet regularly and frequently.

• Teaching Supervisor (Instructor)
  – Once assigned, meet your supervisor immediately.
  – Laboratory grades are due before final exams.
  – Course grades are due as indicated on the final exam schedule.
Academic – Plan of Study

- Required for all graduate students.
- A list of courses required for your degree.
- Develop with your major advisor (professor)
  - Refer to the course requirements (for each degree option) posted in the department website.
- Submit using DegreeWorks no later than the second last semester.
- Can be revised later.
Academic – *Credit Transfer*

- Graduate credit taken at other institutions (domestic or foreign) may be transferred to AU.
  - Up to 6 credit hours for MS
  - Up to 9 credit hours for MEE
  - Up to 29 credit hours for PhD

- List the courses to be transferred in the plan of study.

- No course with a grade lower than B can be transferred.
Academic – **Qualifying Exam**

- All PhD students must pass (two chances).
- Required to take by the second semester.
- Test undergraduate materials.
- Choose 8 out of 12 problems.
- Passing threshold: 70% (560/800)
- Offered in Fall and Spring semesters.
“Graduation check” needs to be done by the second last semester.

A bound copy of Thesis / Dissertation must be submitted to the department within 2 weeks after the final electronic copy is submitted to the graduate school online.

Keys should be returned to the department before your departure (see Ms. Mary Lloyd).
Financial – Graduate Teaching Assistant

- Students must apply every term.
- Wait for the announcement from Professor Wentworth:
  - March for Fall
  - October for Spring
- GTA’s are reviewed every semester.
- Appointment
  - Duration
    - Fall: August 16 -- December 31
    - Spring: January 1 – May 15
  - Pay level
    - Set by the department
Financial – Graduate Teaching Assistant

- Factors considered in selection:
  - Newer students favored
  - Ph.D. students favored
  - Academic progress (plan of study, Q-exam, etc.)
  - Faculty support
  - Language skills
Financial – *Graduate Research Assistant*

- GRA’s are offered by individual professors.

- Contact professors in your area of interest.

- Appointment
  - Duration
    - Determined by your research advisor (sponsoring professor)
    - Semester by semester including summer
  - Pay level
    - Set by the research advisor
Financial – *Tuition Waiver*

- GTA/GRA with a minimum of 33% appointment ($808/month) receives a full tuition waiver.
- GTA/GRA with a 25% ~ 32% appointment receives a 50% tuition waiver.
  - May request a full tuition waiver (Department Waiver)
- GTA/GRA with a less than 25% appointment receives no tuition support.
- Tuition waiver covers up to 33, 36 and 66 credit hours for MS, MEE and PhD degrees, respectively.
  - Exceptions can be made.
Financial – *Woltosz Fellowship*

- An appointment of GTA or GRA is combined with a supplement from the College of Engineering.
- Three levels:
  - Dean’s fellowship: $32,000/year for three years
  - College fellowship: $24,000/year for three years
  - Departmental fellowship: $20,000/year for two years
- Need a recommendation from your major professor (GRA) or the department chair (GTA).
Financial – *Background Check*

- Before a graduate student can be employed (e.g., GTA, GRA) for the first time, a *background-check* report must be provided.
  
  [https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/GraduateStudentEmployeeBackgroundCheckPolicy.pdf](https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/GraduateStudentEmployeeBackgroundCheckPolicy.pdf)

- Students initiate the background check:
  
  [http://scholar.verifiedcredentials.com/auburngradassistants](http://scholar.verifiedcredentials.com/auburngradassistants)

- ECE students need to pay the fee for the background check.

- See Ms. Jo Ann Loden
Others – *Professionalism, etc.*

- You are a practicing professional:
  - Be on time for classes and appointments.
  - Prepare for classes, teaching and research:
    - GTA’s should check laboratories ahead of time.

- Obtain appropriate permissions *before* moving equipment or furniture from a room.

- Never remove teaching laboratory equipment without consent of professor in charge of that facility.
**Others - Resources**

- A desk (in a graduate student office) may be requested if you are a GRA or GTA, or your major professor can justify.
- Check your mailbox daily (each box is shared by 2-3 students).
- Copiers and telephones are for professional activities.
- Computer and Internet access is a privilege that carries responsibility.
Others - Safety

• Visit the website:
  http://www.auburn.edu/administration/public_safety/

• Learn escape routes for office and laboratory.

• If you discover a fire,
  – Activate fire alarm system
  – AND dial 911 to report the fire (alarm system does not dial 911).

• When alarm sounds, evacuate building immediately.
• DO NOT loan keys.
• DO NOT share door codes.
• DO NOT prop open doors.