



**UNIVERSITY  
OF ALBERTA**

**Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
University of Alberta**

**Graduate Student Handbook**

**August 2024**

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## I Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to provide graduate students in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) with information that will be helpful during their stay at the University of Alberta. Throughout this booklet, you will find information concerning university as well as department regulations applicable to the various degree programs. You should carefully read this information to be aware of all the requirements for your program since you are responsible for ensuring that all components are met. Under *Responsibilities Related to Graduate Students* section in the University of Alberta Calendar, it says:

*Graduate students are ultimately responsible for their own programs. They are expected to read the Calendar and any other relevant documents to become familiar with all regulations and deadlines relating to their programs. The students' fundamental responsibilities include ensuring that their registration is accurate and does not lapse, submitting appropriate forms to the department for signature and processing, and paying all fees required by the deadline dates set out in the Calendar.*

## II Guidelines and General Information

This document contains most of the information you will need for your program. The link to this document can be found on the Graduate Students page in the ECE website:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/engineering/electrical-computer-engineering/graduate-studies/current-student-resources/index.html>.

However, in situations where you cannot find the information you need in this handbook, consult the UA Calendar and the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Program Manual. All information is on-line and there are search engines where you may enter keywords.

The UA Calendar link is

[https://calendar.ualberta.ca/preview\\_program.php?catoid=44&poid=54905](https://calendar.ualberta.ca/preview_program.php?catoid=44&poid=54905)

The GPS Program Manual link is

<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/graduate-program-manual>

It is left to the individual departments to supplement and interpret these regulations wherever flexibility is permitted. This document outlines the policies and procedures now in effect in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, Dr. Manisha Gupta, the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor, Dr. Gregory Kish, the M.Sc. and Ph.D. Graduate Student Advisor, Ms. Pinder Bains, and the M. Eng Graduate Program Advisor, Mrs. Selina Ertman, are responsible for ensuring that administrative details pertaining to your program are handled properly. They are available to assist you throughout the duration of your program. Remember, however, that it is your responsibility to ensure that all of the requirements of your particular degree program are met within the proper time frame.

### III Degrees Offered and Requirements

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering offers the following graduate degrees:

- Master of Engineering (M.Eng.)
- Master of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering (M.Sc.)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Electrical and Computer Engineering (Ph.D.)

The descriptions and requirements for these programs are summarized next.

- (a) **Master of Engineering (M.Eng.):** The M.Eng. degree is the only course-based (non-thesis) postgraduate degree offered by the department. There are two basic options:

**Option I:**

- Take INT D 710, “Ethics and Academic Citizenship.”
- Complete 8 graduate level courses (comprised of a set of core courses and another set of elective courses); all courses must be approved by the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor; achieving a minimum GPA of 2.7.
- Complete the M.Eng. project course ECE910.
- Complete the Professional Development requirement. See Page 18 for details.

**Option II: Combined M.Eng./MBA**

- Complete MBA courses specified by the School of Business <https://www.ualberta.ca/business/programs/mba/degree-programs/mba-masters-of-engineering.html>
- Take INT D 710, “Ethics and Academic Citizenship.”
- Complete 5 graduate level ECE courses (comprised of a set of core courses and another set of elective courses); all courses must be approved by the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor; achieving a minimum GPA of 2.7.
- Complete a combined business/engineering project ECE 900.
- Complete the Professional Development requirement. See Page 18 for details.

Students should send a pdf of the capping project report to the M.Eng Graduate Program Advisor for possible posting on the ECE web site.

- (b) **Master of Science (M.Sc.):** The requirements are ...

- Take INT D 710, “Ethics and Academic Citizenship.”

- Complete at least 5 graduate level courses as recommended by the thesis supervisor and approved by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0.
  - Complete the Professional Development requirement. See Page 18 for details.
  - Deliver a Graduate Seminar on the thesis topic.
  - Complete an M.Sc. thesis. This thesis should “... reveal that the candidate is able to work in a scholarly manner and is acquainted with the principal works published on the subject of the thesis. As far as possible it should be an original contribution”.
- (c) **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.):** The Ph.D. is the highest degree offered by the University of Alberta, and therefore comprises the highest requirements. The requirements are ...
- Take INT D 710, “Ethics and Academic Citizenship,” AND INT D 720, “Advanced Ethics and Academic Citizenship.”
  - Take graduate level courses as recommended by the student’s thesis supervisor and approved by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Students who have not previously obtained a M.Sc. at the University of Alberta are normally expected to take at least 6 graduate level courses during the duration of the graduate program. Additional courses may be required and specified by the student’s supervisory committee. Students holding an M.Sc. degree from our Department may, with the support of their thesis supervisor, receive credit for all or a portion of the courses taken during their M.Sc. degree. Students holding an M.Sc. degree from another recognized Canadian university may, with the support of their thesis supervisor, receive credit for up to two courses taken during their M.Sc. degree. To be considered for a possible transfer of credit, the request should be made in writing to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies *during the first year of studies*.
  - Achieve a minimum GPA of 3.3 in their coursework. Students should, however, be aware that a higher GPA is typically expected. Students who only marginally satisfy the minimum requirements may have difficulties passing the candidacy examination.
  - Complete the Professional Development requirement. See Page 18 for details.
  - Pass an oral Candidacy Examination (see Section IX of this booklet) within the first two years.
  - Complete and successfully defend a Ph.D. thesis. This thesis “... *must embody the results of original investigations and analyses and be of such quality as to merit publication; furthermore, it must constitute a substantial contribution to the knowledge of the candidate’s field of study*” (from thesis requirement section of the U. of A. Calendar).

## IV Program Category Changes

Graduate students in the Department may be considered for a transfer to a different degree. The following restrictions will apply:

- Transfer from M.Eng. to M.Sc.: M.Eng. students may apply for a transfer to the M.Sc. program *after completing a minimum of 5 technical graduate level courses in the M.Eng. program*. To be considered, students must be sponsored by a faculty member in the Department who is willing to supervise their M.Sc. program and *must have a GPA that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements in the M.Sc. program – typically 3.0 or higher*.
- Transfer from M.Sc. to Ph.D.: Outstanding M.Sc. students may be considered for a transfer to the Ph.D. program *after a minimum of two terms of study* in the M.Sc. program. Transfers into the Ph.D. program can only be considered at the recommendation of the student's supervisor and *provided that the student's GPA significantly exceeds the minimum requirements in the Ph.D. program – typically 3.5 or higher*.
- Transfer from a higher degree program to a lower one: Students may be asked or may request to be transferred from the Ph.D. program to the M.Sc. or M.Eng. program, or from the M.Sc. program to the M.Eng. program. Consult with the Associate for Graduate Studies and the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor if this situation arises.

## V Supervisory Committees

For thesis-based programs the supervisor is chosen at the time of acceptance of the student into the program. *The Ph.D. supervisory committee must be appointed before the Candidacy Exam and within the first year of the Ph.D. program*. In some cases, there may be more than one supervisor.

- M.Eng.: No supervisor(s) or supervisory committee is appointed for the student's M.Eng. program, however, a supervisor from the Department is required for the M.Eng. project course, ECE910A/B or ECE900A/B. The student must make arrangements with a professor in the proposed project area to act as a supervisor for his/her project.
- M.Sc.: A supervisory committee is not required.
- Ph.D.: The supervisory committee consists of a minimum of three members - the student's supervisor, and two other professors normally chosen from the ECE Department. If a student is co-supervised by two professors, the supervisor committee can consist of the two co-supervisors and one other professor normally chosen from the ECE Department. *The supervisory committee is expected to meet at least once a year with the student to assess progress on the thesis project*.

## VI Residency Requirements and Program Duration

- **M.Eng.:** The program of study must be completed within four years from the date of the first registration. Except under special circumstances approved by the department, students are expected to maintain full-time registration for the duration of the program.

Deadlines: When registering in ECE910A/B or ECE900A/B students should be aware that there are specific deadlines for the completion of their projects and submission of their reports.

- Students registering in ECE910 during the Fall term must have their project report completed and grade submitted to GPS by December 31 of the following year.
- Students registering in ECE910 during the Winter term must have their project report completed and grade submitted to GPS by April 30 of the same year.

**In all cases, it is the student's responsibility to submit their project reports well in advance of these dates to ensure that readers have enough time to evaluate the content and that all signatures can be obtained. On the transcript, ECE910A/900A will remain as IP, ECE910B/900B will be updated with the final grade of CR.**

- **M.Sc. and Ph.D.:** Students in both the M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees are expected to maintain full-time registration for the duration of the program. The normal duration of the M. Sc. program is two years and must be completed within four years. The normal duration of the Ph.D. program is four years and must be completed within six years.

## **VII Program Extensions**

In exceptional circumstances, students may be considered for an extension to their time of study. A request for extension requires documentation explaining the reasons or circumstances, which preclude the completion of the project within the normal time limit. For example, extensions may be granted for parental leave, illness or other exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control.

## **VIII Graduate Seminars for Thesis Degrees**

In order to graduate, M.Sc. students must offer a public *Graduate Seminar* based on his/her research project at the beginning of the final MSc examination. PhD students must offer two public *Graduate Seminars* one at the beginning of their candidacy exam and the other at the beginning of their internal departmental final exam. Graduate seminars are open to the general

public and all students and faculty members working in the student's field of study are strongly encouraged to attend.

## IX Oral Examinations

Oral examinations at which the students will defend their theses are held at the end of the M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs. These examinations focus on the area of the thesis research work. In addition, a candidacy examination must be taken by all Ph.D. students. General regulations, which apply to the various oral examinations, are outlined in the sections below.

### IX.1 Examination Committees for Oral Examinations

Arrangements for the examination committee and time of the oral examination are *to be made by the student's supervisor*. The following rules should be followed in the different degree programs.

1. M.Eng.: No oral examination is required for the M.Eng. program.
2. M.Sc.: The examination committee for the M.Sc. final oral examination consists of a minimum of three examiners and one chair: the student's *supervisor* (co-supervisors count as one member of the examination committee), two other Faculty members from the University, and a chair. It is recommended that you have one examiner from outside of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering on the examination committee but this is not a requirement. The other examiner should be from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. At least one of the examiners must be an *arm's length examiner*\*. The examination should be chaired by an ECE faculty member, who is not an examiner.
3. Ph.D.: Three oral examinations must be taken by all students in the Ph.D. program.
  - (i) Candidacy Exam: The examination committee for the Ph.D. candidacy examination shall consist of a minimum of five examiners and a chair, and shall be formed according to the following regulations:
    - A minimum of 5 examiners including the *supervisory committee* and normally the addition of two other faculty members. Co-supervisors count as a maximum of two members of the examination committee;
    - Normally all members are full time faculty;
    - The examination must be chaired by an ECE faculty member, who is not an examiner.
    - Note at least two of the examiners must be *arm's length examiners*\*
  - (ii) Ph.D. Internal Oral Defense: The student's Ph.D. supervisory committee is the examination committee for the Ph.D. internal oral defense.



- (iii) Ph.D. Final Oral Defense: The examination committee for the Ph.D. final oral examination shall consist of at least five examiners and one chair, and shall be formed according to the following regulations:
- A minimum of 5 examiners including the *supervisory committee* and normally the addition of two other faculty members. Co-supervisors count as a maximum of two members of the examination committee. Normally all members are full-time faculty;
  - One of the five examiners must be an *external examiner/reader* from outside of the University of Alberta. The external examiner may be at the examination in person, may attend by teleconference, or may respond with a written report and questions. In the latter case, the external examiner is referred to as a *reader*. The external examiner must be approved by the Department.
  - In addition to the external, another member of the examination committee must be an *arm's length examiner*\* who is not a member of the supervisory committee.
  - The examination must be chaired by an ECE faculty member, who is not an examiner.
  - When the external examiner is present for the examination, there must be a minimum of five voting examiners in attendance at the examination. If the external examiner is a *reader*, there must be a minimum of four voting examiners present at the examination.

\* GPS Graduate Program Manual section 8.2.3: An arm's length examiner must not be (or have been) a member of the supervisory committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in a significant way. The examiner should not have been associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities within the University, nor be related to the student or supervisor(s).

## IX.2 Procedure and Timelines for Oral Examinations

- M.Sc.:
  - Four weeks prior to the examination, the supervisor of the student should contact the Graduate Student Advisor with details of the oral exam. A *Notice and Approval of Oral Examination Committee* must be approved by the Department.
  - Three weeks prior to the final examination, the examination committee members must receive the final copy of the written thesis.
  - At the beginning of MSc exam the student must give a 20-25 minute public seminar. After the seminar and questions, the public will leave and the exam will begin.
  - At the M.Sc. exam, after proper introductions, the chair of the examination committee reviews the procedures to be followed. Then the candidate is asked to briefly leave the room while his/her academic file and background are reviewed. The student is then invited back into the room for the oral exam. There are normally two rounds of questions from the examiners. In each round, questioning is begun by the arm's length examiner(s) and proceeds to the supervisor. After questioning has concluded, the candidate can make a final statement if he or she so desires, and then is asked to leave the room again for the examination committee to reach its final verdict. The verdict shall be one of the following:

Pass. No revisions are required.

Pass with revisions. This means that the student has satisfactorily defended the thesis but the thesis document requires changes that are minor in substance or of an editorial nature.

Adjourned. An oral examination should be adjourned if (a) the revisions are more substantial than editorial or minor reworking, (b) if the committee is dissatisfied with the candidate's oral presentation and defense of the thesis, or (c) in case of extraordinary circumstances such as sudden medical emergency during the exam.

Fail.

- Ph.D. Candidacy Examination:

- The candidacy examination is normally taken after all course work is completed and thesis work has begun. *This examination focuses on the general background preparation of the student in the area of the ongoing and proposed research* and should be taken before the end of the second year of registration in the Ph.D. program (i.e. *normally between 20 to 24 months* after the start of the Ph.D. program).
- Four weeks prior to the examination, the supervisor of the student should contact the Graduate Student Advisor with details of the oral exam. A *Notice and Approval of Oral Examination Committee* must be approved by the Department.
- Two weeks prior to the examination, all examiners must receive a copy of the *candidacy examination thesis status report*. This document will typically consist of 20-30 pages, but *no more than 30 pages*, and contain a literature survey and a description of the research project. It should include work conducted to date, future work and a statement outlining the original contribution and impact expected, and conclude with a time-line for completion of the thesis.
- As part of the PhD Candidacy exam, the student will give a 20–25-minute public seminar on the thesis research to the Department, and after the seminar, the Ph.D. Candidacy Examination Committee will meet with the student to conduct the candidacy exam. During the exam, students must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the examination committee that they possess: *an adequate knowledge of the discipline and of the subject matter relevant to the thesis, and the ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level*. During the examination, only minor attention should be given to the candidacy examination thesis status report and the seminar per se.
- At the candidacy oral exam, after proper introductions, the chair of the examination committee reviews the procedures of the exam. Then the candidate is asked to briefly leave the room while his/her academic file and background are reviewed. Then the student is invited back to the room for the oral exam. There are normally two rounds of questions from the examiners. In each round, questioning is begun by the two arms-length examiners and proceeds to the supervisor. After questioning has concluded the student can make a final statement if he or she so desires and then is asked to leave the room again for the examination committee to reach its final verdict. The verdict shall be one of the following:

❖ Pass.

- ❖ Conditional pass. The candidate is asked to meet some extra conditions to achieve a pass (for example, to write a report on a background area in which they were deemed to be deficient in knowledge). In this case, the committee should provide in writing the mechanism as well as the time frame for the student to meet the conditions.
  - ❖ Fail. Possible recommendation: (i) Repeat the Candidacy, (ii) Change of Category to a Master's Program, (iii) Termination of the Doctoral Program.
- Final Ph.D. Oral Exam:
    - The final Ph.D. oral exam must be conducted in two stages: (a) an initial internal departmental exam that involves only the supervisory committee and (b) a final oral defense that involves the full examination committee as required by GPS. Students and thesis supervisors should allow 8 weeks for these two stages to be completed.

#### **A. Internal Departmental Final Exam**

- The purpose of this process is to ensure the thesis is examined by the supervisor and all supervisory committee members and to verify that it is of sufficient substance and quality to proceed to the defense. This process is critical to protect and uphold the reputation of the department and the University of Alberta for excellence in graduate programs. It is also critical to ensure that External Examiners and other additional members of the examination committee are not asked to invest time reading a thesis that is substandard.
- (1) 2 weeks prior to internal department exam, the student must submit a completed Internal Exam form to the Department and provide all members of the supervisory committee with a copy of the Ph.D. thesis.
- (2) As part of the internal departmental exam, the student must give a 30 - 35 minute public seminar on the thesis research to the Department, and after the seminar, the Ph.D. supervisory committee will meet with the student to examine the student's readiness for the final oral exam.

The possible outcomes:

(i) If the Ph.D. supervisory committee agrees that both the student and the thesis are ready to proceed to the final oral exam, the student can proceed to the final PhD oral exam (see part B on the next page). The supervisory committee will sign the thesis sign-off sheet and return to the Graduate Student Advisor.

(ia) The Ph.D. supervisory committee may decide the student can proceed to the final Ph.D. oral exam after some conditions are met. In this case, the supervisory committee shall discuss with the student the details of the conditions and the time frame for the student to meet the conditions. When

all conditions have been met, the supervisory committee then will sign the thesis sign-off sheet and return to the Graduate Student Advisor.

(iib) The Ph.D. supervisory committee may decide the conditions to be met cannot be done within the duration for completing a Ph.D. program. In this case, the supervisory committee shall discuss with the student and may recommend the student to transfer to a Master program if circumstances allow.

### **B. Ph.D. Final Oral Defense**

- If the student passes the internal departmental final exam, then
- (1) The supervisor can nominate an external examiner to the Department by submitting a completed "*Request to Invite External Reader or Examiner for the Final Doctoral Oral Examination form*" accompanied by a CV of the proposed external examiner.
- (2) After the approval of the external examiner by the Department, the supervisor of the student should contact the Graduate Student Advisor, at least 5 weeks before the exam date, with details of the final Ph.D. oral exam (please note the period between Christmas and New Year's is not included in this five week requirement). A *Notice and Approval of Oral Examination Committee* must be approved by the Department. At this time, the student must provide a copy of the Ph.D. thesis, abstract and a copy of their Summary of Student Record to the Department (to send to the external examiner) and the student must also make sure the rest of the examination committee has a copy of the thesis.
- At the Ph.D. exam, after proper introductions, the chair of the examination committee reviews the procedures to be followed. Then the candidate is asked to briefly leave the room while his/her academic file and background are reviewed. The candidate is then asked to return to the room and give a 20 to 25 minute oral presentation on his/her thesis work. Upon completion of the oral presentation, the candidate is asked questions by the examination committee. There are normally two rounds of questions from the examiners. In each round, questioning is begun by the external examiner if present, followed by the other arms-length examiner and proceeds to the supervisor. After questioning has concluded, the candidate can make a final statement if he or she so desires and then is asked to leave the room again for the examination committee to reach its final verdict. The verdict shall be one of the following:
  - ❖ Pass. No revisions are required.
  - ❖ Pass with revisions. This means that the student has satisfactorily defended the thesis but the thesis document requires changes that are minor in substance or of an editorial nature.
  - ❖ Adjourned. An oral examination should be adjourned if (a) the revisions are more substantial than editorial or minor reworking, (b) if the

committee is dissatisfied with the candidate's oral presentation and defense of the thesis, or (c) in case of extraordinary circumstances such as sudden medical emergency during the exam.

❖ Fail.

## X Financial Assistance

Funds to provide financial assistance are derived from the general departmental budget, the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). These funds are administered by the Department to support students in the thesis-based M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs. In addition, scholarships are available from a variety of sources and the student should check the calendar for listings of such scholarships. *It is emphasized that the student must take the initiative in searching out suitable awards.* Financial assistance is not normally given by the Department to part-time students or to students in the course-based M.Eng. program. For the thesis-based programs, the financial assistance for a student comes in two forms: a research assistantship (RA), generally from the research supervisor, and teaching assistantships (TA). The research assistantship is arranged by the research supervisor and is specified in the **letter of recommendation for admission** from the Department. Priority for TAs is given to Ph.D. students not holding major scholarships.

## Final Remarks

The information provided in this handbook should assist you in planning and carrying out your graduate program. If you require further information or help during the course of your studies, please do not hesitate to approach

the M.Sc. and Ph.D. Graduate Student Advisor,  
Ms. Pinder Bains, [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca), Donadeo ICE 11-229,

the M.Eng Graduate Program Advisor,  
Mrs. Selina Ertman, [ertman@ualberta.ca](mailto:ertman@ualberta.ca), Donadeo ICE 11-227,

the Associate Dean for Graduate Students,  
Dr. Manisha Gupta, [mgupta1@ualberta.ca](mailto:mgupta1@ualberta.ca), Donadeo ICE 11-232,

or the MEng Faculty Advisor,  
Dr. Gregory Kish, [gkish@ualberta.ca](mailto:gkish@ualberta.ca), Donadeo ICE 11-217.

We hope that your graduate studies in Electrical and Computing Engineering will be a very positive and rewarding experience!

## Appendix A: Important Information for New Students

- 1. Social Insurance Number (SIN)** – if you are an international MSc or PhD student and you will be receiving financial support from the University of Alberta in the form of a scholarship, a graduate research assistantship fellowship (GRAF), a research assistantship (RA) or a teaching assistantship (TA), you will need to apply for a SIN. If there is a note on your study permit stating that you can be employed in Canada, then you can go directly to Canada Place, 9700 Jasper Avenue to obtain your SIN. If your study permit does not have the note for employment, then you will need to get your study permit amended. To get your study permit amended, please contact the University of Alberta International located at 142 Telus Centre, 87 Avenue & 111 Street, University of Alberta [info@international.ualberta.ca](mailto:info@international.ualberta.ca) or 780-492-3600 for assistance. It takes several weeks to amend a study permit. When you have the amended one you can apply for your SIN. Information to obtain your SIN is available here <https://www.ualberta.ca/international-student-services/career-and-work/social-insurance-number#applying>. If you have any questions regarding obtaining your SIN, please contact the University of Alberta International Student Services right away. The SIN and study permit are required to ensure that you get paid. Failure to provide them may result in your funding being withheld by Human Resources.
- 2. Electronic Banking/Direct Deposit** – the University of Alberta pays students through Direct Deposit. Funds are transferred electronically into your bank account. You will need to open an account at a recognized Canadian financial institution. Students can enter/update their banking information and SIN in Bear Tracks under the “Employee” tab. The tab may not be available for a few weeks, so you will need to keep checking until it appears.
- 3. Pay Advice/Payroll** – you can view your pay advice through Bear Tracks. Paydays are normally the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of every month and your pay advice information should be available 3-4 days before each pay. Your pay advice provides information regarding your monthly pay (amount you have been paid as an GRAF, RA, TA, scholarship, marker etc.; deductions, the amount transferred into your bank account; etc.). You should check your pay advice each pay period and if you have any questions, contact Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca).
- 4. Mailing Address** – the University of Alberta will send mail to the address in Bear Tracks so it is important that you update your home address as soon as you arrive in Edmonton. You may have letter mail sent to the University of Alberta International for a maximum of three months until you have a permanent address. The address is (Your Name), c/o University of Alberta International Student Services, 142 Telus International Centre, 87 Avenue & 111 Street, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2R1, Canada. An electronic e-mail and

password will have been assigned to you and will enable you to access computing terminals throughout campus.

5. **OneCard** – the OneCard Office is located in 9104 Hub Mall. The OneCard Office will need to see your timetable (so you must be registered in at least one course), or your official admission letter plus one piece of government issued photo ID before they give you your OneCard.
6. **Lab Access/Desk** – please see Kymberly McDonald, Receptionist in ECE Reception regarding access to your supervisor’s lab and desk space.
7. **E-mail** – **you must use a ualberta e-mail address for university related matters.** It is your responsibility to check your e-mail regularly. You will be added to the ECE graduate student e-mail list when you arrive in the department. If you do not want to be on this list you can remove yourself or send an e-mail to Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca) to be removed.
8. **Mailboxes** – all graduate students will have a mailbox set up in ECE Reception, please check your mailbox regularly. Erin can show where it is.
9. **Teaching Assistantships** – questions relating to teaching assistantships should be forwarded to [eceta@ualberta.ca](mailto:eceta@ualberta.ca).
10. **Graduate Research Assistantship Fellowship (GRAF), Research Assistantships (RA), Teaching Assistantship and Marker (TA/Marker) Pay** – questions relating to GRAF/RA/TA or Marker pay should be forwarded to Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca).
11. **Automatic Tuition Deductions** – Students who are receiving a GRAF/RA and/or TA and who do not pay their tuition fees by the payment deadlines for the Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer terms are automatically enrolled. There is no charge for this service and you do not need to enroll. If you do not pay your tuition fees by the payment deadline for each term, the tuition deductions will start automatically.

If you are eligible, tuition fees will be deducted from your pay in equal payments in October, November and December for the Fall term, in February, March and April for the Winter term, May/June for the Spring term and July/August for the Summer term. If you still owe tuition fees by the end of each term you will need to pay the outstanding amount by the payment deadline for that term. Tuition fees still owed for a term that has ended will not be carried over to the next term for automatic deductions. If you do not pay the outstanding amount by the deadline, you will be charged interest.

**Students with scholarships who do not have a GRAF, RA or TA are NOT eligible for automatic tuition deductions and are required to pay their tuition fees by the payment**

**deadlines. If you do not pay your tuition fees by the payment deadline you will be charged late fees.**

Questions relating to automatic tuition deductions can be forwarded to Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca).

12. **Dental/Health** – the GSA takes care of dental and health benefits. You will be automatically enrolled in the dental/health benefit plan. If you have any questions regarding your dental/health you can contact the GSA, Killam Centre for Advanced Studies, 1-37 Triffo Hall to enroll. If you wish to opt out of the plan, you will need to advise the GSA before the deadline in the Fall term. More information can be found at the link: <https://gsa-ualberta.ca/programs-services/health-and-dental-plan/>
13. **U-Pass (bus pass)** – the U-Pass is normally available for Fall, Winter and Spring/Summer terms.
14. **Study Permits** – international students must ensure that the Department has a copy of their valid study permit at all times. If your study permit expires, you will need to give a copy of your new study permit to Pinder Bains right away. Human Resources may withhold your pay until they have a copy of your valid study permit.
15. **Off Campus Work Permits** – please contact the University of Alberta International (UAI) Student Services, 142 Telus International Centre, 87 Avenue & 111 Street.
16. **Residency Status** – if your residency status changes from study permit to permanent resident, you will need to let Pinder Bains know so that your Department records can be updated. You will also need to go to GPS with proof of your permanent residency status so that they can update your status in Bear Tracks. Your tuition fees will be adjusted when GPS has changed your status in Bear Tracks. You need to update the status of your
17. **Vacation** – MSc and PhD students are allowed 3 weeks' vacation per year with approval from the supervisor and at a mutually agreed upon time.
18. **Transcripts** – students applying for scholarships are responsible for providing copies of transcripts. NSERC requires original transcripts. GPS and Alberta Innovates scholarships require photocopies.
19. **Letters** – letters confirming registration/enrollment can be requested from GPS by sending an e-mail to [grad.mail@ualberta.ca](mailto:grad.mail@ualberta.ca)

Letters stating financial information - you can print the GRAF and TA appointment letters from the Intranet <https://www01.engineering.ualberta.ca/engg/index.php>.



Students requiring letters for **permanent residency applications** are required to complete “Request for An Employment Verification Letter – Grad Student”. This form is available in the Staff and Student Payments forms cabinet <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/human-resources-health-safety-environment/employment-information/employment-and-permanent-residency-letters.html>

To support your permanent residency application, you will also need a letter describing your research assistant duties and lab instructor/teaching/marker duties. You will need to ask your supervisor for the letter describing your research assistantship duties. You can ask Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca) for the letter describing your lab instructor/teaching and marker duties.

20. **Course Schedule** – the schedule of graduate courses offered for the year is posted at <https://www.ualberta.ca/engineering/electrical-computer-engineering/graduate-studies/current-student-resources/graduate-level-courses.html>
  
21. **Course Plan Forms** – all M.Sc. and Ph.D. students are required to have their courses approved by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies. All M.Eng. students are required to have their courses approved by the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor. M.Sc. and Ph.D. students should submit their forms to Pinder Bains before the start of classes. M.Eng. students should submit their forms to Selina Ertman before the start of classes. Changes can be made if needed, by submitting a revised form for approval by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies or the M.Eng. Faculty Supervisor. Course plan forms are available at <https://www.ualberta.ca/engineering/electrical-computer-engineering/graduate-studies/current-student-resources/index.html>
  

Students should discuss courses with their supervisor before completing the course plan form. The form must be signed by the supervisor.

  
22. **Graduate Student Handbook** – all students should read through this handbook and familiarize themselves with the requirements of their program. The handbook is available on the ECE web site <https://www.ualberta.ca/engineering/electrical-computer-engineering/graduate-studies/current-student-resources/index.html>
  
23. **Course Registration** – you can register for courses through Bear Tracks. For courses that are closed to web registration (some 700 level and all 400 level courses) please contact Pinder Bains [pinder.bains@ualberta.ca](mailto:pinder.bains@ualberta.ca) for registration. Please ensure you indicate your student ID number in the e-mail. Generally, registration will be done within a week of submission of request. If you are not registered by the registration deadline, please send a reminder e-mail at that point.
  
24. **INT D 710** – this is a 6-hour Ethics and Academic Citizenship course which all graduate students are required to successfully pass. The course is offered asynchronously and online in

the Fall and Winter terms. GPS will not allow students to graduate until this requirement has been met. Please note this course does not count towards the course requirement for your program. Students are encouraged to complete this course in the first term of studies.

## 25. Professional Development Requirement –

All graduate students admitted as of September 2016 or later are required to complete the professional development activities. As of Fall 2023, the Faculty of Engineering requires all graduate students to complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP). In addition, 8 hours of professional development activities are required by the GPS. Thus, Engineering graduate students must undertake a minimum 8 hours of professional development (PD) over the course of their degree. Students in the combined M.Eng./MBA program must also complete the IDP and 8 hours of career development activities required by the GPS.

**The Individual Development Plan Completion Form and the GPS Professional Development Activities Completion Form must be completed for all Engineering graduate students to convocate.** Information regarding the forms and the requirements is available at the following links:

### **IDP Requirement:**

<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/professional-development-requirement/individual-development-plan-idp.html>

### **PD Requirement:**

<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/professional-development-requirement/index.html>

**A. Individual Development Plan (IDP) Requirement Instructions:** Students must complete the IDP requirement in their first year of study for Master's students, or within 18 months for PhD students. Students must meet with their supervisor to review the IDP workbook, have the supervisor sign the form and give it to Pinder Bains (for M.Sc. and Ph.D. students), or give the form to Selina Ertman (for M.Eng students) for approval by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies or the M.Eng Faculty Advisor.

**B. 8 Hours Professional Development (PD) Requirement Instructions:** All students are required to complete the 8 PD hours over the course of their program. Proof of attendance/registration is required. M.Sc. and Ph.D. students should show proof of attendance/registration to their supervisor. The supervisor will verify the attendance and sign the GPS Professional Development Activities Completion Form. The signed form should be given to Pinder Bains (for M.Sc. and Ph.D. students) for approval of the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies. M.Eng students should show their proof of attendance/registration along with the GPS Professional Development Activities Completion Form to Selina Ertman (for M.Eng students) for the approval of the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor.

**It is up to each student to track the progress of their PD hours and record their proof of attendance/registration.**

26. **Graduate Student Declaration on Academic Integrity Form** – this form will be given to you by Pinder Bains (M.Sc. and Ph.D. students) or Selina Ertman (M.Eng. students) when you arrive in the department. All graduate students are required to read and sign this declaration and return to Pinder Bains (M.Sc. and Ph.D. students) or Selina Ertman (M.Eng. students). M.Sc. and Ph.D. students should sign the form with their supervisor witnessing their signature. M.Eng. students should sign the form with Selina Ertman or the M.Eng. Faculty Advisor witnessing their signature. The signed form is kept in the student's file. Failure to provide a signed form will be considered as the student's refusal to adhere to the standards of academic integrity as practiced at the University of Alberta.
27. **PhD Supervisory Committee Form** – this form must be completed and returned to Pinder Bains by the end of the first year of the PhD program.
28. **Code of Student Behavior** – available at <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/governance/resources/policies-standards-and-codes-of-conduct/code-of-student-behaviour.html>
- University of Alberta Research and Scholarship Integrity Policy** – available at <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Policies/Research-and-Scholarship-Integrity-Policy.pdf>