Welcome to the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering

PhD Program Handbook
INFORMATION FOR PHD GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING

WELCOME to the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) in the Faculty of Engineering. This handbook will provide you with important information as you begin your PhD program.

Please keep this package for future reference.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS
Graduate Secretaries: Process all record changes and paperwork in conjunction with our Records Clerk, and provides advice on calendar regulations, university policy and other information related to your program. The Department of ECE, PhD Graduate Secretary, Mrs. Ashleigh Carlsen is located in the Engineering Office Wing (EOW), Room 448. The PhD Graduate Secretary can be contacted by email at: ecegsec@uvic.ca or by telephone at: 250-721-8675.

Graduate Advisor: Is responsible for the Department’s Graduate Programs. If your Supervisor is unavailable, the Graduate Advisor is the next person to speak with regarding your program. The Graduate Advisor, Dr. Alexandra Branzan Albu may be contacted by email at ecegradv@uvic.ca.

Graduate Admissions and Records Office (GARO): Is responsible for the maintenance of academic records including program and course registration, program and course changes, supervisory committee structures, grades, transcripts, etc. GARO is located in Room A206 on the 2nd Floor of University Centre. You can reach our assigned records advisor, Scott Baker at 250-721-7976 or grad3@uvic.ca

Note: All PhD program update and registration forms go through the PhD Graduate Secretary, who will ensure the form is complete and forward for processing.

REGISTRATION
Web registration is the general method for registering in courses; courses that cannot be registered online are:

- Directed Studies (ProForma)
- Undergraduate courses (Graduate Registration form)
- Courses offered by other departments; Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering etc. (Graduate Registration form)

The exceptions listed above require you to manually register. You will need to complete either a Graduate Registration Form or a ProForma form. Once the form is completed it should be submitted to the PhD Graduate Secretary, who will advise you of any next steps and forward to GARO for processing.

Please speak to your Supervisor to discuss which elective courses you should take. Course information and courses may be found at the links below.

Course Listing: https://web.uvic.ca/calendar/CDs/ECE/CTs.html
Search for courses: https://www.uvic.ca/BAN1P/bwckctlg.p_disp_cat_term_date
PhD students must register for ECE 609 Seminar and ECE 699 Dissertation in every term of their program. In addition, PhD students must register for the ECE 693 Candidacy Examination each term until the Candidacy Examination is passed. The Candidacy Examination must be passed no later than 3 years from first registration in the PhD program.

Note: ECE 693 and ECE 699 are co-requisites and students must register for these courses at the same time or you will receive the co-req error.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: Minimum courses, undergraduate and directed study
When searching for course requirements, please use the academic calendar specific to your program. For example, if you entered the program in January 2019 (201901), you will adhere to the January 2019 calendar.

https://web.uvic.ca/calendar/grad/programs/ece/program-requirements.html

ACADEMIC SUPERVISION
Supervisor: Each Graduate student must have a Supervisor. Your Supervisor is responsible for advising you on the academic aspects of your program.

Supervisory committee: Formed through discussion with your Supervisor within your first two terms of your program. The committee for a PhD student will comprise of the following: Supervisor, Committee Member and Outside Member.

Students may have more than the required number of committee members. For more information; https://web.uvic.ca/calendar/grad/admissions/committees.html

WORK TERMS (Co-op)
Students are expected to complete their degree in an academic term. To receive Co-op work experience on your diploma, PhD students must complete one co-op work term and to receive Co-op designation on their diploma, PhD students must complete three co-op work terms.

https://www.uvic.ca/coopandcareer/co-op/info-by-program/engineering/index.php ("Graduate Student“ tab)

UVIC ONECARD (PHOTO ID CARDS)
The UVic ONECard is the single official identification card for the University of Victoria community. It incorporates many systems and services throughout the university in one card. As long as you're a current student, faculty, staff, retiree or alumni, your ONECard will be an important piece of identification on campus.

Learn more about the ONECard and how to get your ONECard at the following link http://www.uvic.ca/onecard/get-card/index.php.

DESK SPACE
ECE graduate student offices are located in the Engineering Lab Wing or the Engineering Office Wing. Desk space is limited and there may not be space available for you on arrival. In that case, you will be put on the wait list automatically and notified when a space becomes available. Please see Dan Mai, Administrative Officer (EOW 453) or contact him by email at eceao@uvic.ca for all concerns regarding desk space.
While awaiting your office desk from the department, you may explore the open study spaces or apply for a graduate study carrel in the McPherson Library [http://www.uvic.ca/library/use/info/grads/index.php](http://www.uvic.ca/library/use/info/grads/index.php) which are open to all graduate students on campus.

If you go on a Co-op work term or absent from campus for over 2 months, please vacate your office and return the office key so that students on the wait list can make use of the office desk. Upon or before your return to campus, contact Mr. Dan Mai and he will put you at the top of the wait list so that you will be re-assigned an office desk as soon as possible.

**KEYS**

You will need a key to the office where you are assigned desk space, and for research labs related to your program. Please visit the ECE Main Office, EOW 448 for issue and return of keys. A $20 dollar deposit fee per key applies.

If you are re-assigned office space, please ensure that you return keys for office space you no longer occupy.

**PAPER MAIL**

Important messages are generally passed on to graduate students via email, so it is recommended that you read your email at least once a day. When emailing ECE office staff, always include your full name and student number in the email.

**MAIL POLICY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>Mail generated by the University is sorted and delivered to the Engineering Lab Wing generally each day. <strong>Please be sure to check your mailbox on a regular basis.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>All <strong>personal mail</strong> should be addressed to you at your <strong>HOME ADDRESS</strong> in Victoria. If frequent moves from one residence to the next are anticipated, you should obtain a Post Office Box at the nearest postal station. <strong>Personal mail is defined as all mail coming from off campus.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>When you leave the Department, either after you have graduated or, if you get a job while finishing your degree, the department will only forward mail to you after receiving written confirmation (via email) of the forwarding address. After one month, mail will be returned to the sender.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UVIC EMAIL ADDRESS**

- We recommend that you use your UVic email as other email accounts may not receive our emails properly
- You can change your preferred email to your UVic email on your MyPage
- Please let the PhD Graduate Secretary know when you have updated this information

**SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)**

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) is required for students appointed as Teaching Assistants (TA). If appointed, you may request an Employment Contract from the ECE Reception at ecesec@uvic.ca so that you may apply for a SIN card.

**STUDY PERMIT (International students only)**

Your Study Permit must be valid at all times. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) recommends that you apply for a renewal at least 2 months before the expiry date of your current permit. Please see the CIC website for details [https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html)
LETTERS
If Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) requires a confirmation letter please complete and submit the form found at the following link; [https://www.uvic.ca/engineering/ece/assets/docs/current/graduate/LetterRequest.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/engineering/ece/assets/docs/current/graduate/LetterRequest.pdf) to ECE Reception at ecesec@uvic.ca. Please allow 1 to 2 weeks for letters to be prepared. If you require confirmation of your academic status at the University of Victoria, you can request a letter from Graduate Admissions and Records through your MyPage. Please note there is a charge for this service.

TUITION FEES
Tuition Fee Deadlines:
- 1st term (September-December) fees are due September 30th.
- 2nd term (January-April) fees are due January 31st.
- Summer term (May-August) fees are due May 31st.

A 1.5% service charge annualized at 19.56% will be added if the account is not paid on or by the due date.


WHERE AND HOW TO PAY TUITION FEES
The Tuition Office is located on the 1st floor of the University Centre Building, room UVC A115

- Online banking (bill payment)
- Cheque, money order, bank draft, cash, or debit card
- Interac Online
- Wire transfer (for international students only)
- Western Union GlobalPay for Students (for international students only)

Please note: UVic does not accept payment by credit card for tuition fees.

Further details are found at the following link; [http://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/services/tuition/index.php](http://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/services/tuition/index.php).

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS
Upon arrival, PhD students are automatically considered for UVic fellowships, based on qualifying GPA and available of funds. Payments are released on the last day of each month over the period of the award.

Note: The Faculty of Graduate Studies withholds award payments if a student has outstanding fees or is not currently registered.

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT PAYMENTS (GSSP)
Graduate Student Support Payments (GSSP), and renewal, are subject to the availability of each Supervisor's own research funds and to the student's academic performance. Payments are released on the 18th day of each month.

EXTERNAL AND NATIONAL AWARDS
There are a number of national and provincial granting agencies that annually fund graduate students and their research. These are merit-based fellowships, which must be applied for individually. Most of the agencies have specific application guidelines and deadlines. A few...
examples of the awards are Trudeau Foundation Doctoral Scholarship, Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship, NSERC Scholarships, etc. Please refer to the funding agencies guidelines for specific criteria.

A list of external awards and fellowship can be found at the graduate studies external awards and fellowships page; [http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/financialaid/externalawards/index.php](http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/financialaid/externalawards/index.php)

**BURSARIES**

Bursaries are non-repayable awards offered based on financial need and reasonable academic standing. The Office of Student Awards and Financial Aid administer graduate bursaries. A few examples of bursaries available are University of Victoria Graduate Students’ Society Child Care Bursary, Ronald Kitchener Bursary, Donald and Evelyn MacLean Fund, etc.

For information on bursary applications and eligibility criteria please refer to the information available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website; [http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/financialaid/bursaries/index.php](http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/financialaid/bursaries/index.php)

**TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA)**

Teaching Assistantship – paid by the Department to Graduate Students who are appointed as Lab Instructor, Maker, or Tutor over the period of a term. Wages are paid on the 15th and 31st of each month.

**CHEQUES**

Students will be notified by email when cheques are ready for pick-up from the ECE Main Office, EOW 448.

**DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Direct deposit is recommended to receive payment of Awards, Graduate Support Payments, TA employment income, and travel expense claim refunds. Students may submit the complete forms directly to Accounting Services or to ECE Reception for processing.

Teaching Assistants: [https://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/assets/docs/payroll/direct-deposit-form.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/assets/docs/payroll/direct-deposit-form.pdf)

Graduate Scholarship, Awards, Graduate Support Payment and Fellowships: [https://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/assets/docs/acctpayable/direct-deposit-authorization.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/vpfo/accounting/assets/docs/acctpayable/direct-deposit-authorization.pdf)

**HEALTH COVERAGE & INSURANCE**

The Guard.me@UVic Plan:

The guard.me@UVic plan provides emergency medical insurance coverage for international students who are new to UVic. This plan covers required medical services to address new and unexpected illness or injury. Most new international students are automatically enrolled in the guard.me@UVic plan upon registration at UVic.

Further information can be found at the following link: [https://www.uvic.ca/international/inbound-students/living-canada/health-insurance/index.php](https://www.uvic.ca/international/inbound-students/living-canada/health-insurance/index.php)

Please contact International Student Services with any questions by email issinfo@uvic.ca or by phone at 250-721-6361.
Graduate Student’s Society (GSS) - Extended Health Care and Dental Insurance Plan:

The Graduate Students’ Society (GSS) health and dental plan provides extended coverage for graduate students. Most students are automatically enrolled in the appropriate plan upon registration at UVic. All new students are encouraged to contact the GSS to ensure they have opted in or out of the Extended Health and Dental Plans.

For information on the GSS Extended Health and Dental Insurance Plan, please visit the GSS website: https://gss.uvic.ca/health-dental/basic-information/

**Location:** Room 102, Halpern Centre  
**Email:** gsoc@uvic.ca

**The BC Medical Services Plan:**
The British Columbia (BC) Medical Services Plan (MSP) covers required medical services provided by physicians, specialists, diagnostic facilities, laboratory facilities, and hospitals. If you intend to stay in British Columbia (BC) for fewer than six months, you are not eligible for the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP). All other international students must submit an application for enrolment when they arrive in BC.

The application for enrolment is available online. You will receive in the mail a Non-Photo BC Services Card with a personal health number (PHN) which will allow you to access required medical services.

Visit the BC MSP website for information about benefits.
TEACHING ASSISTANT POSITIONS

Important: If you are considering Teaching Assistantship opportunities in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering your study permit must explicitly state permission to hold employment at this institution. Please contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada for more information.

Teaching Assistant appointments are assigned on a term-by-term basis. TA appointments are governed by the Appointment Priority Policy for Specialist Instructional positions (Canadian Union of Public Employees 4163) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Group</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students previously appointed to bargaining unit positions as incoming students, and who will be in their 2nd year of a Master’s program or the 2nd or 3rd year of a Ph.D. program</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Year 1 and Ph.D. Year 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. Year 2, 3, 4 or 5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other graduate students (in other years, or not previously appointed, or from other departments)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/non-students</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A list of TA positions is posted approximately 10 weeks prior to the beginning of each term. The application deadline is approximately 5 weeks prior to the beginning of each term. Once you receive the official offer letter from Graduate Admissions and Records, you can apply for TA positions by going to the ECE Department website at: http://www.ece.uvic.ca/positions/specialist.php

Please note the following:

• All new graduate students or those who have not been appointed as TA before in the Faculty, are required to attend the workshop (within the first year of study): Function and Responsibility of TA.

• All new graduate students or those who have not been appointed as TA before in the faculty, and to whom English is a second language, are required to attend the workshop: Serving as TA with English as a Second Language, within the first year of study.

• Based on TA evaluation and at the discretion of the Awards Committee, a graduate student with a poor evaluation will be notified and may not be selected for TA appointment until he/she has attended one or both mandatory workshops. Workshop schedules will be announced by email in the Fall and Spring term of each year.

• When you receive your recommendation letter, positions may be available for the current term. Be sure to only apply for a position for your entry term.

• Regretfully, if you applied late or your recommendation for admission was late, the Teaching Assistant appointment deadline may have passed.

• Applying for a position does not necessarily mean that you will be appointed.

• Decisions on these appointments will not be made until two weeks before the beginning of a term and usually extend to the first week of a term.
USEFUL WEBSITES – ON CAMPUS

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Website: www.ece.uvic.ca

ELEC 609 Seminar Syllabus:
https://www.uvic.ca/engineering/ece/assets/docs/current/graduate/ece609.pdf

ELEC 693 Candidacy Examination:
https://www.uvic.ca/engineering/ece/assets/docs/current/graduate/ece693.pdf

Important Dates: https://web.uvic.ca/calendar/general/dates.html

Faculty of Graduate Studies Graduate Supervision Policy:
https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/policies/Graduate%20Supervision%20Policy.pdf

ECE Courses offered by term, course descriptions:
https://www.uvic.ca/engineering/ece/current/graduate/courses/index.php

Tuition and Fees: http://web.finance.uvic.ca/tuition

Registration: http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/admissions/registration/index.php

Resources for Students (Library, campus housing, groups, clubs, forms, policies, etc.):
http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/resourcesfor/students/

Academic Calendar: https://web.uvic.ca/calendar

International Student Services:
https://www.uvic.ca/international/home/contact/iss/index.php

Maps, building and directions: https://www.uvic.ca/search/browse/maps.php

FORMS

Graduate Registration Form
https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/forms/coursechangeform.pdf

Pro Forma Proposal Form (Directed Studies)
https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/forms/ProFormaregform.pdf

Program Update Form
https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/forms/Program_update_form.pdf

USEFUL WEBSITES – OFF CAMPUS

Immigration and citizenship Canada:
https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html