



DEPARTMENT OF
**Electrical and
Computer Engineering**
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Graduate Application Common Questions

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I. Before You Apply:

Graduate Degrees within the ECE Department

- **What graduate degrees are offered by the ECE department?**
 - M.S. in Electrical Engineering
 - Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering
- **About how long will it take me to earn an M.S. degree from the ECE department?**
 - Approximately two years
- **About how long will it take me to obtain a Ph.D. degree from the ECE department?**
 - Approximately five years
- **Can I apply to the Ph.D. program directly or do I need to earn an M.S. degree first?**
 - Applicants with a bachelor's degree may apply directly to the Ph.D. program if interested. If an applicant applies for the PhD program, they will also be considered for the M.S program.
- **Is there a distance degree program available for the power area?**
 - Yes, please click [here](#) for more information.

ECE Department Faculty

- **How should I go about speaking with a faculty member about my research interests?**
 - Prospective graduate students are individually responsible for investigating the research interests of ECE faculty members and contacting them. Faculty contact information can be found [here](#).

Graduate School Application

- **How do I get an application?**
 - You may apply [online here](#).

Deadlines

- **When does my application need to be complete?**
 - All application materials **MUST** be received no later than the following dates:

Enrollment Term	Application Deadline
Fall	December 15
Spring	September 15

Funding/Financial Aid

• What kind of funding is available through the department?

Please visit the [Office of Fellowship & Funding Resources](#) for additional information. At UW-Madison there are four types of financial support, which include: (a) fellowship, (b) project/program assistant, (c) research assistant, and (d) teaching assistant.

- a. **Fellowship:** A fellowship is an award that enables a graduate student to pursue a degree full-time. Fellowship recipients are chosen through a competitive process in the national, university, school/college, or department/program level.
- b. **Project / Program Assistantship (PA):** These titles designate graduate students employed to assist with research, training or other academic programs or projects. Project/Program Assistants are included in the labor agreement between the state of Wisconsin and the Teaching Assistants Association.
- c. **Research Assistant:** A Research Assistant must be a graduate student working toward a master's or PhD degree. The work performed is primarily to further the education and training of the student.
- d. **Teaching Assistant (TA):** This title is appropriate for graduate students who have been assigned teaching responsibilities in an instructional department under the supervision of a faculty member. Teaching Assistants are included in a labor agreement between the state of Wisconsin and the Teaching Assistants Association. [TA application form](#)
International applicants are required to take the [SPEAK test](#).

• What types of funding are most common?

The most common types of financial support offered to ECE graduate students are research assistantships, teaching assistantships, and fellowships (in that order).

• What are my chances of receiving funding?

Funding is awarded based on the qualifications of the student, the number of applicants, the amount of available funding, and the number of continuing students receiving support. As these vary from term to term, we cannot answer this question directly. Generally, most funding is awarded for fall, then spring, then summer.

• How do I apply for funding?

You can apply for funding (RA, PA, TA positions or fellowships) when you fill out the Graduate School's online admission application and/or by contacting individual faculty members directly. The admissions office does **not** know if a particular professor has funds for assistantships. Those inquiries, and all other inquiries regarding funding opportunities, should be directed to the faculty directly.

Admission Requirements

- **What are the admission requirements?**

Both the Graduate School and the ECE department have admission requirements that you must meet in order to be considered for admission. The Graduate School's admission requirements [are available here](#) while the ECE department's admission requirements [are available here](#).

- **What are my chances of being admitted?**

We cannot answer any questions about your admissibility until we review your **complete** application.

Required Application Materials

- **What application materials do I need to submit online? What application materials do I need to send to the department?**

Please find information on required materials [here](#).

- **What can I do to speed up the review of my application?**

Only **AFTER** successful completion of the online application, send your application materials to us in a **SINGLE** envelope. Sending documents individually does not speed up the process because we do not review files until they are complete. Do **NOT** send anything other than transcripts and/or IELTS scores in the mail. All other documents will be destroyed.

Letters of Recommendation

- **Will you accept hard copies of my letters of recommendation?**

NO. All letters of recommendation must come through the online Graduate School application.

Statement of Purpose

- **What should my statement of purpose (reasons for graduate study) include?**

Technical areas of interest, coursework emphasis, research experience, professional goals, faculty members you are interested in working with and any other items relevant to your qualifications for graduate school. Please keep essay to about 1000 words. For more information please click [here](#).

GRE General Test Scores

- **What were the average GRE scores for the incoming ECE graduate students?**

GRE Verbal: About 525
GRE Quantitative: About 780
GRE Analytical Writing: About 4.0

English Proficiency Requirements

• What were the average English Proficiency scores for the incoming ECE graduate students?

Paper-based TOEFL average: About 612
Internet-based TOEFL average: About 100
Computer-based average: About 250
IELTS average: About 7.5

-The minimum scores required by the Graduate School are:

- TOEFL: 550 for paper test, 213 for computer, and 80 for internet (iBT)
- MELAB: 77
- IELTS: 6

II. Processing Your Application:

Checking Your Application Status

• Have you received all of my application materials? Is my application complete?

Due to the high volume of applications that we receive, it is impossible for us to acknowledge receipt of application materials via e-mail. We recommend that you use express mail and track your package, or if using regular postal services, request a return receipt. It is safe to assume that if our building mail clerk has signed for your package, it will be delivered to our graduate admissions office.

You should visit the “Grad Application Status” window within your [MyUW portal](#) to check you on-line application status. If you are new to the UW-Madison, you will first need to activate your NetID by visiting the [NetID Account Activation site](#). You will need your 10-digit UW-Madison campus ID number and your date of birth to complete the NetID activation process.

During the months of **November through February** it can often take our admissions staff **8 weeks** to update the status of your application once we've received your application materials.

• How do I check the status of my online application?

You should visit the “Grad Application Status” window within your [MyUW portal](#) to check you on-line application status. If you are new to the UW-Madison, you will first need to activate your NetID by visiting the [NetID Account Activation site](#). You will need your 10-digit UW-Madison campus ID number and your date of birth to complete the NetID activation process.

• I've already filled out the online application, paid my fees, and sent in all my application materials. What else should I do?

If the “Grad Application Status” window within your [MyUW portal](#) reports that your application is complete, your file has been sent to the admissions committee. Once a decision has been made, you will be notified by email.

Admission Decision

• When will I be notified of an admission decision?

On average, graduate applicants will receive the department's admission recommendation about two to three months after we receive a completed application.

You will be initially notified by email with the department's admission recommendation. If the department's admission recommendation is favorable, you will receive an official letter of admission from the Graduate School if/when you have been officially admitted. Official letters of admission will only be mailed out if you complete all the tasks required by the Graduate School. Messages will be communicated to you through your [MyUW portal](#).

Funding/Financial Aid/Adequate Financial Resources

• I am an International Student, when do I submit proof of adequate financial resources?

International applicants should **not** send financial documents until requested by the Graduate School. This information will be requested upon a positive admission recommendation from the department.

• As an International Student, do I still need to show adequate financial resources for the duration of my program even if I am applying for financial aid?

Yes. International applicants are required to have sufficient funds to cover their expenses completely while attending UW-Madison. If you are not offered financial support, you will have to show proof of sufficient funds before you can be officially admitted by the Graduate School. More information is [available here](#).

• What funding opportunities are available for international students?

Scholarship, fellowship and grant information is [available here](#).

• How will I be notified, and when will I be notified, of a funding offer?

You will only be notified by email and/or letter of a funding offer if, **and only if**, you have been selected to receive one. Most financial support offers are made to students applying for fall semester enrollment rather than spring semester or summer term enrollment.

Most applicants selected to receive funding will be notified by **March 1st** if they are applying for fall semester enrollment. The department continues to consider applicants for financial support as any additional funding becomes available; therefore, some applicants may be notified later than March 1st.

• Are there additional resources for International Students?

Yes, more information can be found through the International Student Services (ISS) website located [here](#).

III. After You Are Admitted:

Accepting or Declining Your Admission Offer

- **How do I accept or decline my admission offer?**

Please email the ECE Graduate Admissions Team at ece.gradadmissions@uwalumni.com with your enrollment intentions. You must include the following in your enrollment intention email: (a) your full name, (b) your 10-digit UW-Madison campus ID number, and (c) the term you applied for.

Faculty Advisors

- **How do I find a faculty advisor?**

Every Graduate Student **MUST** have a faculty advisor. Please review the list of faculty [here](#). Contact a faculty member in the area of study in which you are interested to inquire if they will serve as your advisor.

- **How do I notify the department that I have found an advisor?**

Contact the CEE/ECE/GLE Student Services Office (2304a Engineering Hall, ece.gradadmissions@uwalumni.com) if you would like to add or change your advisor.

Financial Support

- **How can I find a job on campus?**

Admitted students are able to search for current jobs through the [Student Jobcenter Website](#).

If you are still unable to find the answer to your question, please visit the [Graduate School's Frequently Asked Questions Site](#), the current [ECE Graduate Student Handbook](#), or contact the ECE Graduate Admissions Office at ece.gradadmissions@uwalumni.com.