Graduate Application Common Questions

- MS ECE
- PHD ECE
- MS POWER AT A DISTANCE (Online Only)

This document contains the answers to many of the commonly asked questions of the application process. If your questions are still not answered, please refer to our contact information.

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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
  - M.S. Power at a Distance in Electrical Engineering (Online Only)

Please reference the ECE Graduate Student Handbook for in-depth program descriptions.

- About how long will it take me to earn an M.S. degree from the ECE department?
  - Approximately two years
  - Approximately two to four years for a Power at a Distance MS Degree

- 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

Power at a Distance Online MS Degree- Electrical and Computer Engineering (Power Electronics)

- Do you offer a distance learning program? Yes.
  - Power at a Distance applicants are not required to submit a GRE score.
    However international applicants are required to submit a TOEFL score.
  - Please review the Capstone Certificate and admissions requirements here.
  - Off-campus students seeking an MS degree in electrical engineering must meet all general MS degree requirements. Students may work on the thesis or project while off campus, but must keep in contact with their advisor.
  - Please see the ECE handbook (section 4):

ECE Department Faculty

- How should I go about contacting faculty 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 by the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Term</th>
<th>MS/PHD Application Deadline</th>
<th>MS Power Application Deadline**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring*</td>
<td></td>
<td>September 1</td>
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*The ECE Department is not currently accepting on-campus applications for Spring or Summer semesters.

**Please refer to [Engineering Professional Development’s Website](#) for Application Deadlines.

**Funding/Financial Aid**

- **What kind of funding is available through the department?**
  Please visit the [ECE Financial Support page](#) for additional information. At UW-Madison there are four types of financial support: (a) fellowship, (b) project/program assistant, (c) research assistant, and (d) teaching assistant.

- **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. We cannot determine a student’s chances.

- **How do I apply for funding?**
  You can indicate that you are interested in funding (RA, PA, TA positions or fellowships) when you fill out your application and/or by contacting individual faculty members directly. You do not need to submit any additional materials to be considered for these positions. **The admissions office does not know if a particular professor has funds for assistantships.** All inquiries regarding funding opportunities should be directed to individual faculty members.

**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](#). Please do not send any application materials unless specifically requested from the department or ECE Graduate Admissions Office.

- What can I do to speed up the review of my application?
  
  Send your transcripts to us AFTER a department recommendation has been made. Do NOT send anything other than transcripts and/or IELTS scores in the mail. Please upload your application materials to your online Graduate School application. All mailed 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 you’re your 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?
  
  Preferred ranking is about 80% and above in all areas.
  
  GRE Verbal: About 154
  
  GRE Quantitative: About 163
  
  GRE Analytical Writing: About 4

**English Proficiency Requirements**

- What were the average English Proficiency scores for the incoming ECE graduate students?
  
  Internet-based TOEFL average: About 100
  
  IELTS average: About 7.5

- The minimum scores required by the Graduate School are:
  
  - TOEFL: 80 for internet (iBT)
  - MELAB: 77
  - IELTS: 6.5

***Any applicant whose TOEFL (internet based iBT) test score below is 92; IELTS score below 7; or MELAB below 82 must take an English assessment test upon arrival. Depending on your score you may need to register for any recommended English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in the first semester you are enrolled.***
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. 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.

When sending transcripts after receiving a department recommendation, 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.

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 via e-mail about two to three months after the application deadline. If the department’s admission recommendation is favorable, it may take up to an additional two weeks to receive an official admission decision from UW-Madison’s Graduate School. Official letters of admission will only be mailed out if you complete all the tasks that may be required by the Graduate School. Messages of these tasks 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?
  
  If recommended by the department and they meet the minimum Graduate School admissions requirements, international applicants will be asked to submit a financial statement. International students should not send financial documents until requested by the UW-Madison Graduate School. This information will be requested via a message in your MyUW portal upon a positive admission recommendation from the department. Please do not send the ECE Graduate Admissions financial documents. Please contact the Graduate School at gradadmiss@grad.wisc.edu for further questions regarding required financial documents.

- 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 April 15 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 April 15.

- Are there additional resources for international students?
  
  Yes, more information can be found through the International Student Services (ISS) website here.
III. After You Are Admitted:

After Receiving a Recommendation from the Department
• I’ve been recommended by the department for admission to the Graduate School. What are the next steps?
After receiving the department’s recommendation, please submit official transcripts from previous institutions. These transcripts must be sent directly from those institutions to the ECE Graduate Admissions office via mail or a secure e-transcript service. Official transcripts will be required in order for the Graduate School to process your official admission decision.

Please continue to monitor your MyUW portal for messages from the Graduate School regarding specific tasks that must be done in order to receive an official admission decision.

Accepting or Declining Your Admission Offer
• How do I accept or decline my admission offer?
Please email the ECE Graduate Admissions Team at ecegradadmission@engr.wisc.edu after you receive an official admission letter from the Graduate School, 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. If you would like to withdraw you application from consideration please also email ecegradadmission@engr.wisc.edu

Faculty Advisors
• How do I find a faculty advisor?
Initially, you will be assigned a faculty advisor. This advisor can help connect you with other faculty members who may also serve as an 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 ecegradadmission@engr.wisc.edu.