

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE FIELD OF COMPUTER ENGINEERING

PhD students in the computer engineering program choose from among the following areas of focus: MEMS, electronics, and photonics (microelectronics and VLSI systems). The program is designed to prepare the student for a career of creative scholarship by providing focused knowledge in the student's specialty area and guidance for research.

More information is available on the departmental website (<https://www.ece.seas.gwu.edu/doctor-philosophy-computer-engineering/>).

## ADMISSIONS

Admission deadlines: Fall - January 15

Spring - September 1

Summer\* - March 1 (non-F1 visa seeking applicants)

Standardized test scores: The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required of all applicants. (Institution code 5246).

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction. Minimum scores:

- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 6.0 with no individual score below 5.0; applicants requesting funding consideration must have an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.0; or

- TOEFL: 550 on paper-based or 80 on Internet-based; applicants requesting funding consideration must have 600 on paper-based; or 100 on Internet-based; or

- PTE Academic: 53; applicants requesting funding consideration must have 68.

Recommendations (3) recommendations required. If possible, one recommendation should be from your advisor at the institution from which you earned your highest degree.

Prior academic records: Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

If academic records are in a language other than English, a copy in the original language and an English language translation must be uploaded. Transcript evaluations should not be uploaded. Applicants who have earned a degree from an Indian university are required to submit individual semester marksheets.

Statement of purpose: Please write a comprehensive essay of 400 to 600 words, indicating your fields of study, your specialized interests, and the general subject area of your planned dissertation or professional project.

Additional requirements: Applicant must possess a bachelor's or master's degree in an appropriate area from an accredited institution. Applicants must also show evidence of a strong academic or relevant professional background pertinent to the field of study and must demonstrate a capacity for original scholarship. Students whose highest degree is a bachelor's must have a grade point average of at least 3.3 (on a scale of 4.0); students whose highest degree is a master's must have a grade point average of at least 3.4 (on a scale of 4.0).

All applicants must choose an area of focus that most closely matches their interests and note this on the online application. All applicants must submit a resumé or CV.

International applicants only: Please follow this link - <https://graduate.admissions.gwu.edu/international-student-application-requirements> (<https://graduate.admissions.gwu.edu/international-student-application-requirements/>) - to review the International Applicant Information carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

\* A limited number of doctoral applicants are accepted for the summer. Please contact the admissions office for details. International applicants who require a visa from GW are eligible to apply for admission in fall and spring only (not summer).

**For more information on the admission process**, please visit the SEAS Frequently Asked Questions page. (<http://graduate.seas.gwu.edu/apply/faq/>)

**Contact for questions:**

engineering@gwu.edu - 202-994-1802 (phone) - 202-994-1651 (fax)

9:00 – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

## REQUIREMENTS

### Credit Requirements

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

1. The general requirements stated in this Bulletin under School of Engineering and Applied Science Regulations, Doctoral Programs ([http://bulletin.gwu.edu/engineering-applied-science/#Doctoral\\_Programs](http://bulletin.gwu.edu/engineering-applied-science/#Doctoral_Programs)).
2. Students with a master of science degree must take a minimum of 30 credits, of which at least 18 credits must be credits in courses available for graduate credit, and at least 12 credits must be in dissertation research. Students with a bachelor of science degree must take a minimum of 54 credits, of which at least 36 credits must be in courses available for graduate credit, and at least 12 credits must be in dissertation research. The courses to be taken by the student must be approved by the student's faculty advisor. In some cases, particularly when the student undertakes a doctoral program in a field other than that in which the earlier degree was earned, the program of study may exceed the minimum number of credits. No specific courses are required; the student and faculty advisor design the curriculum to meet the student's needs and goals.

### Preliminary Examination

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering requires doctoral students to pass a preliminary examination. Doctoral students who received their master of science degree prior to admission to the doctoral program must attempt their preliminary exam before completing 27 program credits or before completing three semesters after matriculation into the program, whichever is later. Direct entry PhD students, i.e., those with a bachelor of science degree, must attempt their preliminary examination before completing 36 program credits or before completing four semesters after matriculation into the program, whichever is later. The examination, which is offered every spring and fall semester, is guided by, but not limited to, the core material in the electrical and computer engineering master's programs. Specific details regarding the examination are available on the department's website. Normally, a student is allowed two attempts to pass the preliminary examination. The student selects a research advisor, also called dissertation director, by the end of the semester in which the student passes the preliminary examination.

### Doctoral Qualifying Examination

After passing the preliminary examination, in consultation with the research advisor, a student prepares for the doctoral qualifying examination (also known as proposal defense). The doctoral qualifying examination is the principal means of determining whether a student qualifies as a candidate for the

doctoral degree and progress to the next stage of the program. For the doctoral qualifying examination, a written proposal of the doctoral dissertation research is presented to a committee which also conducts an oral examination of the student. Details on the structure of the proposal and the composition of the committee can be found on the departmental website (<https://www.ece.seas.gwu.edu/graduate-resources/>).

### Publication Requirements

Doctoral candidates in the area of computer architecture and high-performance computing (CAHPC) may petition the department to have one or more full-length papers published in highly selective peer-refereed conferences to satisfy the journal paper requirement. Such a petition must be submitted by the student's dissertation advisor on behalf of the student, and requires the approval of the dissertation committee, CAHPC faculty, and the ECE department chair.

### Doctoral Final Examination

Once the dissertation has been completed, the student schedules the doctoral final examination (also known as dissertation defense) in consultation with the research advisor. The doctoral final examination Form must be filed and approved by the department chair at least three weeks prior to the doctoral final examination date. Approval is granted only when all required materials have been submitted to the department. The required materials include a completed form, a copy of the journal article or final acceptance letter, resumes of any outside examination committee members, and electronic and printed copies of the dissertation. Details on the structure of the dissertation and the composition of the examination committee can be found on the departmental website (<https://www.ece.seas.gwu.edu/graduate-resources/>).

The doctoral final examination is oral and open to the public. The candidate must demonstrate mastery of the special field of study and of the materials and techniques used in the research. The committee of examiners may include qualified experts brought to the University specially to participate in the examination. The research advisor usually serves as advocate for the candidate. The committee will assess the quality and originality of the candidate's contribution to knowledge as well as the student's mastery of the scholarship and research techniques of the field. Upon decision to pass the student, the committee recommends the candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy. The decision to pass may be provisional based on committee recommendations for changes to the dissertation in terms of additional work, writing, or clarifications.

### Seminar and Colloquium Requirements

- Seminar requirement—Students must present one departmental seminar, excluding the dissertation defense, prior to graduation.

- Colloquium requirement—Students are required to attend five colloquia during their time in the program. Each attended colloquium is verified by a faculty member in attendance. Upon the attendance of five colloquia, the student must submit to the department the colloquium attendance form signed by the faculty advisor prior to applying for graduation.

### **Graduation and Scholarship Requirements**

Students are responsible for knowing the university's minimum GPA requirement for graduation and scholarships. See School of Engineering and Applied Science Regulations, Graduation and Scholarship Requirements ([http://bulletin.gwu.edu/engineering-applied-science/#Graduation\\_Scholarship\\_Requirements\\_DP](http://bulletin.gwu.edu/engineering-applied-science/#Graduation_Scholarship_Requirements_DP)).

Students should contact the department for additional information and requirements.