

## Memorandum

**From:** Ahmad Afsahi  
**Date:** Sept 10, 2020 - Updated Jan 5, 2021  
**Re:** Policy to determine the minimum coursework requirement for new PhD students with a Master's degree from the ECE Department and in the same study area

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### Background

The Regulation 2.1.4 of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science Graduate Council (FEASGC) was revised in January 2020 as follows:

#### 2.1.4 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

- Beyond the Master's degree course requirement, a PhD student will be required to take a minimum of four term length graduate courses (or equivalent). Only 1 course of the required 4 may be a combined undergraduate/graduate course (also known as a double numbered 400/800 course).

For students who received a Master's from the same Department at Queen's and in the same research area, the minimum course requirements shall be decided in consultation with the PhD Advisory Committee and approved by the Department Head or Graduate Coordinator.

In the September 2020 meeting of the FEASGC, the second paragraph of this regulation was further revised to clarify and broaden its scope to both MASc and MEng degree holders:

- For students who received a Master's from the same Department at Queen's and in the same area of study, the minimum course requirements shall be decided in consultation with the PhD Advisory Committee and approved by the Department Head or Graduate Coordinator.

### Department Policy

For new PhD students who may be subject to the newly-revised Regulation 2.1.4 of the FEASGC, a Committee will be struck and will hold a meeting, at the start of the student's PhD program (September or January), to determine the minimum required number of courses for their PhD program. As this is an academic decision, a formal process is required to implement the new regulation in a fair and transparent way, to keep the Committee's deliberation on the student file, and to forward a copy to the School of Graduate Studies.

#### Committee Membership:

- Coordinator of Graduate Studies (Committee Chair)
- Members of the Student's PhD Advisory Committee

The Committee Chair and the members of the PhD Advisory Committee are voting members of the Committee for a total of four voting members (even if the PhD student is supervised by more than one supervisor). The primary Supervisor, Internal Examiner, Department Representative and Coordinator of Graduate Studies must all be present in the meeting to determine the minimum coursework requirement for the student's PhD program. A unanimous agreement between the voting members is needed to approve a plan.

Committee Terms of Reference:

- To determine if the PhD student has received their MAsc/MEng degree from the ECE Department in the same study area as their PhD thesis research area.
- To review the plan of study for the student's PhD research program, and to determine the minimum coursework requirement for the student's PhD program.
- After the deliberation, the Chair is responsible to ask the Committee to enter their decision on the *Minimum PhD Coursework Requirement Form*, sign and date it. The final remarks on the form can be compiled by the Chair and agreed upon by the Committee.

Additional Notes:

- In Sept/Jan when the PhD program commences, the Department in consultation with the student's Supervisor(s) establish the PhD Advisory Committee consisting of the Supervisor(s), an Internal Examiner, and a Department Representative.
- The Supervisor is responsible to schedule a meeting, at the start of the student's PhD program (September or January), in consultation with the PhD Advisory Committee and the Chair of Graduate Studies and inform the Department. The Graduate Program Assistant will then send an invite for the meeting (Zoom meeting, during COVID-19 pandemic) to the Committee.
- To comply with privacy regulations, the PhD student's authorization is required for the Committee to review the student's transcripts.
- The completed PhD Minimum Coursework Requirement Form will be kept on the student file and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies.

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Ahmad Afsahi  
Professor and Chair of Graduate Studies

### Minimum PhD Coursework Requirement Form

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

| Committee             | Name | Minimum Number of Required Courses | Signature | Date |
|-----------------------|------|------------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Supervisor(s):        |      |                                    |           |      |
|                       |      |                                    |           |      |
| Internal Examiner:    |      |                                    |           |      |
| Dept. Representative: |      |                                    |           |      |
| Graduate Coordinator: |      |                                    |           |      |

**Remarks:**

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**Committee Chair**