Electrical and Computer Engineering, Ph.D.

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering stimulates excellence in scholarship and research through close contact with the faculty and programs tailored to fit students’ individual needs.

Students select an advisor and, with the advisor, plan an individual program bounded only by the broad guidelines of the Graduate College and the program. The department maintains close interdisciplinary ties with other University of Iowa departments, especially with the Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Computer Science (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), Industrial and Systems Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering (College of Engineering), and the Carver College of Medicine. Principal areas of graduate study include medical image analysis, signal and image processing, control systems and systems theory, wireless communications, waves and materials, computer systems, and computational genomics. View principal areas of study under Research and Study Areas in the Electrical and Computer Engineering section of the Catalog.

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in electrical and computer engineering requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit. At least 45 s.h. must be earned in formal course work (not in thesis work or other independent study), including 30 s.h. from an approved list of electrical and computer engineering courses. For the list of approved courses, see the Electrical and Computer Engineering Graduate Manual. Each Ph.D. student’s study plan must be approved by the student’s advisor and by the graduate committee.

Acceptance to the Ph.D. program requires successful completion of the Ph.D. qualifying process. The qualifying process consists of two parts—an examination and a course breadth requirement. The half-day written exam is given once a year, late in the spring semester. It covers two subjects chosen by a student from a list of nine. Students normally are expected to take the qualifying examination within the first 30 s.h. of their graduate studies. A cumulative g.p.a. of at least 3.25 is required for admittance to the exam. Students who fail the examination may retake the exam. Then, the candidate must complete the comprehensive exam no later than three calendar years after passing the qualifying exam. Students who fail to meet this deadline must retake the qualifying exam. The qualifying exam and the comprehensive exam may not be taken in the same semester.

The final requirement for completion of the Ph.D. program is the preparation and successful defense of the thesis. This must be completed no sooner than six months but no longer than three years after completion of the comprehensive examination.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College.

Applicants must have a g.p.a. of at least 3.25 on all electrical and computer engineering, mathematics, and physics course work.

Each application is reviewed individually. Extenuating circumstances may permit deviations from the usual standards.

Financial Support

A number of fellowships, traineeships, assistantships, scholarships, and industrial grants are available to graduate students who qualify. These are awarded on a competitive basis.

Career Advancement

Engineering is a well-respected profession that is used as a foundation for a variety of careers in industry, medicine, law, government, and consulting. Graduates consistently rank among the most sought after and highest-paid technology professionals.

Engineering Professional Development (EPD) develops and promotes experiential education and professional opportunities for students. Professional staff coordinate the college’s co-op and internship program, engage in employer outreach, and provide opportunities for students to network with employers, including an engineering career fair and other career-development programming each semester. EPD also offers individual advising and class presentations on résumé and cover letter preparation, job and internship search strategies, interviewing skills, and job offer evaluation.