

Electrical & Computer Engineering Devolved Scholarship Fund Policy (Approved by Department, Oct. 23, 2008)

INTRODUCTION:

The objectives of the graduate scholarship program for the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering are:

1. *To encourage enrollment in the graduate program of the department,*
2. *To attract high quality students who have the potential to contribute to the research program of the Department and*
3. *To provide financial assistance to fully qualified, full time graduate students.*

Applicants are required to submit an application form, together with a brief research proposal (not exceeding one page) and a letter of recommendation from a U of S faculty member. Incoming students should provide a letter of recommendation from a faculty member that is familiar with their work. Scholarships are awarded twice per year (normally effective Sept. 1 and Jan. 1) and may be renewed the following September.

POLICY:

Selection Process: Scholarships will be awarded by the department scholarship committee, consisting of the Head of the Department, the research committee chair, and representatives of the research groups. The selection criteria include:

- applicant's academic merit (marks obtained previously)
- research potential (previously published and accepted research papers in reputable conferences and journals, supervisor's recommendation)
- quality of research proposal
- departmental strategies (balance of support for different research areas, number of scholarships with the same supervisor, number of potential applicants in each term, etc.).
- to support new faculty member research, devolved scholarship funds will be used to match a New Faculty Graduate Student Start-up Fund award on a 50/50 basis.

Some preference will be given to Ph.D. students because they are considered to be capable of making more contributions to research. However, the scholarship committee is also aware that M.Sc. students are a majority, and that the M.Sc. degree is an essential training step for the Ph.D.

Minimum Requirements:

1. New graduate students are encouraged to apply after having completed one term with the Department. This is to recognize problems with different and less recognized universities having non-uniform systems of grading.
2. In the case of a very well recognized university, as agreed by the committee, the committee may award a scholarship in advance of registration in order to attract NSERC scholarship holders or other very high quality students. Incoming graduate students must have an equivalent academic average of at least 80%. The committee will meet in April or May to consider any such cases.
3. Current students with the Department must have an average of at least 80%. Preference will be given to students taking a full load of graduate courses. Current Ph.D. students should additionally have demonstrated research ability by a research proposal, published papers, or other similar criteria.
4. Under special circumstances, a case may be made for a new scholarship where a student has a standing below 80% but in no circumstance can an award be given for a standing below 75%.

Renewals: Awards will terminate the following September and will be renewed on the basis of the supervisor's positive recommendation and a satisfactory progress report. Renewal is contingent on 80% average in courses taken for the degree. Lack of research progress may result in suspension of payments or cancellation of the scholarship award.

Time Limit (with no extensions):

M.Sc.: the lesser of two years funding or 28 months in the program.

Ph.D.: the lesser of three years funding or 40 months in the program.

Transfer M.Sc. to Ph.D.: an additional 2 years funding (four year total).

Continued Study: A student completing the M.Sc. program and entering the Ph.D. program should apply for Ph.D. scholarship consideration at the September or January scholarship committee meeting that is just prior to completion of the M.Sc. degree.

Amounts and Payment Schedule: Scholarship will be paid in monthly amounts as set by the College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR). The start date for the award of a scholarship will normally be either January or September. It is anticipated that, in most cases, scholarships will be awarded close to the start of program.

Employment: Scholarship holders are allowed paid employment up to 12 hours per week provided that research productivity is not impaired. Employment includes marking, lab demonstration or other employment. Scholarship holders cannot work more than 12 hrs/wk except with permission of the Department Head. Permission is granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Breaks in the Program: Scholarship holders are entitled to a three-week paid vacation in each year. Any absence beyond three weeks will not be paid. Unpaid breaks may be allowed provided that a prior approval is obtained from the scholarship committee. For example, internship, maternity or paternity leave, and illness are legitimate breaks.

Scholarships and Research Grants: In an effort to support a number of research programs within the department, and to use the scholarship funding as a vehicle for attracting broader funding, it is desirable to fund a graduate student partly from scholarship funds and partly from research grants. This split will be 50/50 and the total funding must be equal to an acceptable level as set by the CGSR.

Other Scholarship/Grant Holders: Half-scholarships may be given to students who hold a major scholarship or financial support from other agencies such as NSERC. Students must apply and compete for Department Scholarship and are asked to declare all support/scholarships that they hold or anticipate to hold.

Grievances: Grievances arising from any decision of the scholarship committee will be dealt with, in the first instance, in a department meeting. If there is no resolution at this point, the matter will be referred to a committee of the CGSR.

Equity: The Department and Scholarship Committee will ensure that the four designated groups (aboriginal people, women, handicapped people and visible minorities) will be treated in an equitable manner. Special effort will be made for recruiting students from groups underrepresented in the College of Engineering.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Our objective is to attract and fund high-quality graduate students and this policy is intended to be equitable and fair, and to meet the stated objectives.