

**University of Central Florida**  
College of Engineering and Computer Science  
Civil, Environmental & Construction Engineering  
Department

**DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK**

August 2014

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
1. Mission Statement .....	5
2. Organization .....	5
3. Advising/Mentoring .....	5
4. Degree Requirements .....	6
a. General Requirements of degree programs.....	6
b. Articulation course requirements.....	10
c. Graduate course requirements.....	11
d. Examinations .....	15
e. Approximate Timeline for completion of degree program.....	15
f. Graduate Research .....	16
5. Degree Plan of Study .....	17
6. Graduation .....	18
7. General Policies .....	19
8. Professional Development.....	20
9. Financial Support .....	20
10. Miscellaneous.....	21
11. Forms .....	22
Appendices	
Appendix A - Organizational Chart.....	23

## INTRODUCTION

Promoting student success is a primary goal in the Civil, Environmental and Construction Engineering (CECE) Department. This serves in the best interest of the students, the department and the university. This Graduate Handbook was created to serve as a guide for Doctoral students (as well as faculty and staff) within the CECE department. In this handbook, we have consolidated and explained many of the details of the graduate student policies and procedures at UCF, as well as specific rules within the department. The objective of the Graduate Handbook is to provide effective direction and guidance to graduate students that will lead to their success at UCF. Since the Graduate Catalog serves as a source for general policies, it does not explain in great detail the CECE programs, their policies and procedures, and the intricacies that play into them. Note that UCF graduate policies change frequently; for the latest (and very complete) listing of graduate policies please see <http://www.students.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm>. As a supplement to the Graduate Catalog, this Graduate Handbook is more detailed and specific to the students within this department. Of course, in all cases where the two documents appear to disagree, the Graduate Catalog is UCF's official position and is the final authority.

Civil, Environmental and Construction Engineering are all broad fields, each with sub-disciplines and specializations. At UCF, because of their many interactions and common interests, they are housed in one department – the CECE Department. The Department offers Master's and PhD programs in Civil or Environmental Engineering. Research centers that are affiliated with the CECE Department include the Center for Advanced Transportation Systems Simulation (CATSS), the Environmental Systems Engineering Institute (ESEI), the Florida Sinkhole Institute (FSI), and the Stormwater Management Academy (SMA).

Graduate work and research in Civil Engineering reflects the very broad nature of the field, which encompasses the design, construction, and enhancement of the infrastructure of society. The educational programs focus on structural analysis and design, geotechnical engineering and foundations, transportation planning/operations/engineering, and water resources engineering. Our mission is to provide students with a strong graduate engineering education with a focus in one of the main areas of civil engineering. Students completing the program find positions in engineering consulting firms, construction industries, and in city, county, state, and federal governmental agencies.

The Environmental Engineering graduate program focuses on pollution control, pollution prevention, and the correction of pollution impacts on natural and/or human environments. The program includes coursework in drinking water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid and hazardous waste management, atmospheric pollution control and modeling, community noise abatement, water resources modeling, and water resources. The program's overall mission is to

prepare students for careers in consulting; federal, state, and local governments; higher education; and industry. Our key objectives include: producing graduates who have strong technical knowledge in critical areas of environmental engineering, providing a professional engineering education that challenges our graduates to think critically, and developing awareness of the changing environmental needs of society and the global environment.

Civil Engineering faculty research interests include geotechnical studies of subsurface conditions, soil testing, pavement and pavement materials testing, deep foundations testing, “superpave” mix design, intelligent transportation systems, traffic engineering, traffic safety, structural dynamics, structural health monitoring, nonlinear structural analysis and software development, reinforced concrete structures, hydraulic modeling, coastal ocean modeling, stormwater management, watershed management, Systems Analysis, Optimization, and Simulation, Life Cycle Assessment, Intelligent and Autonomous Construction Environments, Construction Simulation and Decision Support Systems. The Environmental Engineering faculty research interests include drinking water treatment, wastewater treatment, stormwater quality control, air pollution control and modeling, solid waste engineering, and community noise control and modeling.

The objective of this Handbook is to help students understand the process of completing a graduate education in the CECE department at UCF, provide information on resources that will help them develop academically and professionally, and to define expectations required to complete the degree program. The handbook will also serve as a reference tool to guide graduate students through their graduate program and help students stay on track for degree completion. It will also help faculty and staff to better guide those students.

The Graduate Catalog is the university’s official record of graduate policies, and this Graduate Handbook must be consistent with university policy. In any case where the two documents appear to disagree, the Graduate Catalog is the final authority. In this graduate handbook we sometimes will reference directly to the Graduate Catalog on policies that are comprehensive and intricate in detail, providing only a short description of the policy then giving the direct website link to the section of that particular policy.

If anyone has any questions about the content of this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the CECE department Graduate Coordinator at 407-823-2841.

## **1. MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of our department's graduate programs is to prepare graduate students to succeed in careers in civil or environmental engineering in such diverse employment opportunities as consulting, industry, governments at all levels, and/or higher education. Broadly speaking, the department's mission includes teaching, research and service. All graduate students receive formal education by being taught in classroom settings. In addition, many actively participate in research projects under faculty supervision, thus receiving informal instruction in the planning and conducting of research. Through this research, they also contribute to their own education and to the success of the department's research programs.

## **2. ORGANIZATION**

The department, college, and university are organized for graduate studies through a number of groups of faculty, administration, and staff. UCF has a central Office of Graduate Studies. The College has a Vice-President and Dean for Graduate Studies, and several dedicated staff personnel. The department has a full-time graduate administrative assistant, and a graduate coordinator who is also a faculty member. Other departmental and college staff members contribute to the graduate effort as well. The most important person to any graduate student is his or her faculty advisor. For a PhD student, the faculty advisor is the dissertation advisor, and has great influence over the student's research direction and level of effort. Together with his or her faculty advisor the graduate student plans his or her courses and research topic. Furthermore, the faculty advisor is typically the one who commits funding to support a student on a research contract. However, many others within the department and the college play an important role in a graduate student's experience while at UCF.

The organization of the department and college for graduate studies (showing key personnel in CECE and CECS) is summarized in an organizational chart (see Appendix A). From this chart, students can see who the people are that they might need to interact with, and the capacity in which they serve. Hopefully, the chart will assist students in determining the route to take to address questions or other matters pertaining to their graduate career. Of course, in all cases, graduate students with assigned faculty advisors should start with their advisor if they have any questions or problems.

## **3. ADVISING/MENTORING**

Advising and mentoring are two very important elements in a graduate student's career. Upon acceptance into the CECE department, graduate students are assigned a faculty advisor, who is identified to the student in the acceptance letter from the department. In most cases, the student will have indicated an area of interest in their application, and the faculty advisor will be specialized in that sub-discipline. The

faculty advisor is a very important person in the life of a PhD student, and it is highly recommended that each student contact their potential faculty advisor in advance of the student's first arrival at UCF to discuss mutual research interests.

The graduate coordinator will provide initial guidance on overall academic requirements, program and university policies and procedures, while the faculty dissertation advisor serves more as a mentor providing direction on research, advice on program of study, and guidance on other areas of academic and personal life.

#### Roles and Responsibilities:

- Faculty Advisor
  - The advisor helps the student select which courses to take.
  - The advisor (in consultation with the student) develops the student's program of study
  - The advisor directs the student's research
  - The advisor reviews and approves the student's dissertation
  - The advisor sometimes provides financial support for the student (based upon a research contract)
- Student
  - The student takes coursework as required, maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA
  - The student maintains a full course load and works diligently to complete all requirements in a timely manner
  - The student (in consultation with the faculty advisor) develops a program of study prior to completing the first 9 hours of coursework
  - The student identifies (in consultation with the faculty advisor) a suitable research topic
  - The student works in the lab or field or other venue as needed to complete his or her research
  - The student is responsible for knowing and meeting all university deadlines, rules, and regulations – see the section titled Student's Responsibility in the Graduate Catalog, located under General Policies.
  - In those rare cases when a student wants to change faculty advisors, the student should discuss the situation with his or her current faculty advisor first, and then request the change through the graduate coordinator. The change must be approved by the losing faculty advisor, the gaining faculty advisor, and the graduate coordinator.

#### **4. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

This section describes the process for degree completion. Students must follow a prescribed, yet flexible path, achieving milestones along the way. Although there is no guarantee that each student will be able to complete all the requirements, if a student is hard working and diligent, and is a full-time graduate student, he or she should be able to complete a PhD program within about 2 to 4 years beyond the

master's degree. For a student who has entered the PhD with only a B.S. degree, the total time may be 3 to 5 years.

**a. General Description of Degree Programs**

The department offers two PhD degrees. These are described as follows.

PhD Degree Programs:

PhD in Civil Engineering  
PhD in Environmental Engineering

The Ph.D. degree is a research-oriented degree that requires some coursework combined with intensive research. The PhD offers an intensive, individually tailored research program suitable for the preparation of students for an academic career, a research institute career, or specialized consulting career. The program is flexible in content, depending on the student and the advisor. However, certain University, College, and Department rules must be met. The main requirements are listed below. A program of study must be developed by the student and advisor, with input from the dissertation committee, and must meet with departmental approval. It is usually developed near the beginning of the Ph.D. program, at which time transfer credit will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis. It can be amended as the research progresses.

- Minimum hours required for Ph.D. - 72 past the bachelor's degree
- Hours waived for an earned Master's - 30 with a maximum of 6 thesis hours
- Hours that must be taken in formal courses at UCF - 15 credit hours minimum
- Dissertation - 18 credit hours
- A minimum "B" (3.0) average must be maintained in the program of study and no more than two C+, C, C- and U grades are allowed. No D+ or lower grades are acceptable.
- Research hours - 9 maximum (more than 9 research hours can be taken, but no more than 9 hours can be counted towards the program of study)
- The student must pass a Qualifying Examination in one of the departmental disciplines. This examination must be taken within the first year of study beyond the master's degree.
- The student must pass a Candidacy Examination prepared by the student's committee. The Candidacy Examination is normally taken near the end of the course work and consists of a written portion (which may be the written research proposal and/or additional written questions), and an oral

presentation of the research proposal. A copy of the written examination will be kept as part of the student's official record. The student cannot register for dissertation hours until the Candidacy Exam has been passed.

- The student must pass a Dissertation Defense Examination, which is the oral defense of the written dissertation.
- International students have to meet Graduate Studies and ISS rules to remain in legal standing as a full-time student throughout their tenure at UCF.

The following illustrates the minimum credit hours requirements for the Ph.D. program of study. Please note that the academic advisor can increase those hours as he/she sees suitable.

### **Program Credit Hours**

#### MS to PhD

#### BS to PhD

Max. of 30 hours waived

Min. 15 hours of coursework

Min. 18 dissertation hours

Max of 9 Doctoral Research hours  
(more than 9 hours may be taken  
but only 9 may be used in POS)

Min. 45 hours of coursework

Min. 18 dissertation hours

Max of 9 Doctoral Research hours  
(more than 9 hours may be taken  
but only 9 may be used in POS)

**Total: Min. of 72 hours**

#### Doctoral Dissertation Committee

- The dissertation committee will consist of a minimum of four members. All committee members should hold a doctoral degree and be in fields related to the research. At least three members must be department faculty (one to serve as chair). Off-campus experts, joint faculty members, adjunct faculty, and other university faculty members may serve as the fourth (and if desired a fifth) person in the committee. There must be at least one member of the committee from outside the department.
- In unusual cases, with approval from the department Chair, two professors may chair the committee jointly. Joint faculty members may serve as committee co-

chairs, but off-campus experts and adjunct faculty may not serve as committee chairs.

All members vote on acceptance or rejection of the dissertation proposal and the final dissertation, and approval requires a majority of the advisory committee.

**b. Articulation Course Requirements**

Articulation Courses are those undergraduate courses that are pre-requisites for graduate courses. Articulation courses are required for some students, especially with backgrounds outside the discipline. These typical senior-level courses give students the appropriate level of knowledge needed to take required and elective graduate courses in the discipline. Articulation requirements may vary for each individual student depending on their background. Please contact a faculty advisor for more information.

**c. Graduate Course Requirements**

PhD degrees are research-oriented. Because most PhD students in CECE enter the program with a Master's degree, there are no set courses required for the PhD. Each program is unique, and depends on the individual's background and interests, and the research needs of the dissertation project.

**d. Examinations**

o **PhD Students:**

(see <http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/Doctoral.cfm> )

Qualifying Exam – within the first two semesters. This exam is a written exam consisting of open and/or closed book questions designed to (1) test the student's knowledge of fundamentals within the broad discipline, and (2) to assess the student's ability to think analytically and creatively. Questions are contributed by various members of the faculty, and the grading is typically on a pass/fail basis. If the student fails this exam, it may be re-taken once.

Candidacy exam – near the end of all coursework (often involves the defense of a proposal for research). This exam is to assess whether the student truly understands the research that he or she is about to undertake. This exam may include written questions, but should be oriented to the specific field of the research topic. It also tests the student's ability to present technical information clearly and understandably in front of an audience. The exam may be re-taken at the discretion of the dissertation committee.

Each student must write a dissertation on his or her research that describes a significant and original contribution to the field of computer science. The dissertation must be in a format specified by the Office of Graduate Studies. An electronic copy of the manuscript must be presented to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval of the format and editorial characteristics at least three weeks before the oral defense of the dissertation. This is referred to as first deposit of the

dissertation and must be made before the first deposit deadline as specified by the Office of Graduate Studies. At this time, a date for the oral defense must be established for public announcement.

Dissertation Defense – after completing and writing the dissertation. This exam determines whether the student has done satisfactory work and fully understands the work that he or she has done. The oral defense of the dissertation is administered by the Research Committee which makes a critical inquiry into the work reported in the dissertation and into the areas of knowledge that are immediately relevant to the research. All members vote on acceptance or rejection of the dissertation. The dissertation must be approved by a majority of the Committee and a pass/fail report will be submitted to the Office of Graduate studies by the Committee. The committee has the final say on whether the student passes or fails. If failed, this exam may not be re-taken.

e. **Approximate Timeline for Completion of Degree Program**

The following listing is intended as a guide and reminder to students and faculty as to the approximate timing of events for graduate students. It is intentionally somewhat vague to account for different starting semesters, different research project needs, and different levels of student capabilities. Note that PhD students should, prior to entering UCF, coordinate with the faculty to talk with a potential dissertation advisor and discuss plans for courses in the first semester.

PhD Students:

Semester 1: Meet with advisor. Enter UCF and begin classes.

Semester 2: Schedule Qualifying Exam to be taken before, during or immediately after the second semester. Continue to take classes. Begin research planning.

Semester 3: After passing Qualifier, work with Advisor to form a committee. Prepare a Program of Study, and file it with the Graduate Coordinator. Prepare a formal plan for research, and a research proposal.

Semester 4: Finish classes and/or take research hours. Take the Candidacy Exam as prepared by Committee. Obtaining doctoral candidacy is one of the major milestones in graduate study. After this important exam is passed, then the student truly becomes a PhD candidate, and can now begin taking dissertation hours.

Semesters 5 - : Conduct Research. Register for Dissertation hours, and work on Dissertation.

Last Semester: File intent to graduate. Defend dissertation. Students must be registered in the semester in which they are completing the requirements for the degree program.

f. **Graduate Research**

Research is a vital part of graduate education, particularly for doctoral students. The development of research skills and the practice of good research ethics begins with

graduate study. Faculty serve a crucial role and are the primary source for teaching research skills and modeling research ethics.

1. In the CECE department, much of our research is carried out as a part of Contracted Sponsored Research. Faculty obtain sponsored research from many different government agencies, and/or industry, and thus commit the university to doing certain research tasks. Students are typically hired to help the faculty conduct the research, and as such are contractually obligated to give their “best efforts” to accomplishing the research tasks. In most cases, students who are supported on contracts may use the results of their work as the basis for their dissertation.
2. Dissertation – This document may be among the biggest academic efforts that you will ever make. As of the writing of this handbook, it is required that all theses and dissertations be officially submitted to the Graduate School in electronic form. It is highly recommended that you (the student) discuss format and content with your advisor, and carefully review other theses or dissertations before you get started. The Graduate Studies web site has some helpful hints with regard to formats for the electronic version of these documents. Please see <http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/index.cfm?FileRescArea=30&FileStep2=Show%2BFiles> .
3. It is important to be honest and ethical in conducting research as well as in taking classes. Report all data factually and completely. Please see [http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/About\\_UCF/universityNotices.cfm#Academic Behavior Standards](http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/About_UCF/universityNotices.cfm#AcademicBehaviorStandards)
4. Patents and inventions may arise from the faculty and graduate student research. UCF has clear guidelines and a Patent and Invention Policy in the Graduate Catalog. Please see [http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm#Patent and Invention Policy](http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm#PatentandInventionPolicy)
5. Students should be aware that in our department, we require that theses and dissertations be written in a journal article format. The Graduate Student Association of UCF conducts workshops on thesis and dissertation formatting, library research, and writing essentials. Students, when beginning to write their dissertation, should always contact the thesis/dissertation editor in the College of Graduate Studies. It is highly recommended that each student coordinate with his or her faculty advisor as to the preferred journal format, prior to beginning to write the dissertation.
6. PhD students must complete several examinations during their time in the program. Please see Section 4.d. (above) for the timing and scope of these exams.
7. There are specific Laboratory Safety Procedures that must be followed by each student working in a lab in the CECE Department. It is department policy that each student is responsible for knowing and following the Safety Procedures. Please see the laboratories manager and/or your faculty advisor to get a copy of the Safety Procedures for the appropriate lab.

## 5. DEGREE PROGRAM (or PLAN) OF STUDY

The Program of Study (POS) serves as an agreement between the student and the program, listing course and other requirements for completing the degree. Each student must have an approved Program of Study (POS). The POS is developed by the student and his/her advisor, and lists the specific courses to be taken as part of the degree requirements. The student must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in his or her POS. For interactive PDF format POS forms, please see the CECE department's web page: <http://cece.ucf.edu> (Note – current course listing are in the graduate catalog.)

The POS for PhD students is flexible and unique to each PhD student. However, it must meet university, college, and department rules for minimum number of hours, etc. (see Program Requirements, above). The doctoral candidate's POS must be completed, submitted, and approved before the student will be allowed to register for dissertation hours.

## 6. GRADUATION

Graduation is the culmination of a challenging and arduous journey in the pursuit of a higher degree. To get to this pinnacle, it takes dedication, sacrifice, and hard work (and meeting all the bureaucratic processes and deadlines of UCF). In order to eliminate or reduce the potential for any unnecessary delays or complications with graduation, each student must be aware of and comply with all degree requirements and deadlines, and must submit all necessary forms on time.

University requirements for courses, numbers of hours, etc. were presented earlier in Section 4 above. The student is responsible for keeping up with his or her course records and knowing where they are in the program. In the last semester (the semester in which the student plans to graduate), several further steps must be taken, as explained below.

1. Submit the Intent to Graduate form by the posted deadline.  
<http://www.registrar.sdes.ucf.edu/calendar/academic/>
2. Finish writing the dissertation early enough to allow time for committee to review well before the defense deadline.
3. Obtain format review and approval by the graduate studies thesis/dissertation editor before giving copies to the committee
4. Contact each member of the dissertation committee to schedule a date for the defense
5. Coordinate with the graduate secretary in the department to ensure that your SASS audit is “clean”
6. Complete clean up of lab space (after you have passed the exam and have been told that no more work is needed), and check out with the lab manager

## 7. GENERAL POLICIES

In this section, we recap some program and university general policies that commonly affect the majority of graduate students. For the final word on policies, please see the Graduate Catalog. For Doctoral Programs, see: <http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/>

- Satisfactory academic performance means that you must maintain a GPA of 3.0 in your graduate POS, with no more than 2 ‘C’ grades (balanced by at least 2 ‘A’ grades).
- Satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion means that you take a full course load each semester (typically 9 hours per Fall and Spring, and 6 hours in Summer) until you complete all courses.
- The department will accept no more than 9 hours of transfer credits for PhD students. These include courses taken at UCF if taken as a non-degree seeking student. No courses with grades less than B- can be accepted. However, for PhD students with a completed Master’s degree, UCF will waive up to 30 hours instead of transferring in courses on a course by course basis, and then will not transfer in additional work.
- Each research lab has a policy on laboratory safety. Please coordinate directly with the labs manager on this if you work in a lab.
- Before passing the candidacy exam, PhD students may not enroll in dissertation hours, but they may enroll in research hours. After passing the candidacy exam, PhD students may be considered to be full-time if they enroll in 3 dissertation hours per semester until they graduate.
- All graduate students are expected to abide by UCF’s Golden Rule.
- Students have available an Academic Grievance Procedure. See <http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/>
- Students may withdraw from a class meeting all conditions stated in the Graduate Catalog. However, this may result in loss of tuition waiver, and, for international students, this may place them in jeopardy of being considered out of status. See <http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/>

## 8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, we identify university resources available to students for professional development. A graduate student’s professional development goes beyond completing course work, passing exams, conducting research for a dissertation, and meeting degree requirements. Professional development also involves developing the academic and non-academic skills needed to become successful in the field of choice. Please see <http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/>

- UCF has an active professional development program for graduate students, including the Professoriate Program, sponsored by Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, the GTA Certificate Program, sponsored by FCTL, the Graduate

Student Association Seminar Series, the Graduate Research forum, sponsored by the College of Graduate Studies, and special award recognitions such as the Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant, the Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching, the Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis, and the Award for the Outstanding Dissertation (see section below for more information)

- Doctoral students intending to pursue a career in academia have the opportunity to develop grant-proposal writing skills by working closely with faculty mentors,
- Students are expected to publish the results of their research. In fact, the CECE department strongly encourages students to write their thesis or dissertation in the journal paper format.
- Graduate students in CECE are encouraged to present a poster or a topic of research at conferences while still a student, and often their faculty mentor will be able to fund one or more such opportunities. Also, see below for travel support.

### **Travel Support**

The College of Graduate Studies offers a Graduate Travel Award that provides funding for master's, specialist, and doctoral students to deliver a research paper or comparable creative activity at a profession meeting. Students must be the primary author and presenter. See [www.graduate.ucf.edu](http://www.graduate.ucf.edu)

Graduate Students Travel Funding is available to pay transportation expenses for graduate students who are delivering a research paper or comparable creative activity at a professional meeting. Contact the Student Government Association at 407/823-5648 for more information.

### **Instructor Training and Development**

The Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. To that end, they offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

- **GTA Training (mandatory for employment as a GTA)**  
This training provides information and resources for students who will be instructors in a two-day workshop. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.
- **GTA Teaching Certificate**  
This certificate program (12-weeks for domestic students, 16-weeks for international students) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided, and a stipend is offered to current UCF students who complete the certificate. International students are provided the same training as well as information regarding language immersion and tricks and cultural awareness as a way of knowing what to expect from American students.

For more information <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/> > Events > GTA Programs or call 407/823-3544.

### **Graduate Excellence Awards**

Each year, students can submit a portfolio for nomination of College and University level awards of excellence. These are intended to showcase student excellence in academic achievement, teaching, research, leadership, and community service.

These awards include the following:

- **Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant**  
For students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (Not intended for students who are instructor of record)
- **Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching**  
For students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.
- **Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis**  
To recognize graduate students for excellence in the master's thesis. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the master's thesis may be demonstrated by evidences such as (but not limited to): publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. The university award will be forwarded to a national-level competition sponsored by the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) when the thesis discipline corresponds to the annual submission request.
- **Award for the Outstanding Dissertation**  
To recognize doctoral students for excellence in the dissertation. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's dissertation. Excellence of the dissertation may be demonstrated by evidences such as, but not limited to: publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field.

For more information about these awards, please see the College of Graduate Studies administrative website: <http://www.admin.graduate.ucf.edu/>

For more information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, please see their website: <http://www.csgs.org/> > Awards.

## **9. FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Financial support is a major concern for graduate students, especially since many rely on financial support from the university to pursue graduate study. In combination,

the college, the university, and the Department provide financial assistance to graduate students in several ways: (1) fellowships and scholarships are available to academically outstanding students, (2) Graduate Teaching Assistantships – GTA’s (for grading or for lab teaching) are available in limited numbers, (3) Graduate Research Assistantships – GRA’s (for helping faculty with research) are more widely available depending on the funding levels of the faculty. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (including a GPA of 3.0 and a full course load), and do acceptable research or grading or teaching work to maintain their financial support.

- All students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA in their Program of Study. They must not make any more than two ‘C’ grades, and those must be balanced with two ‘A’ grades. Students on contract are expected to work 10 to 20 hours per week on their assigned tasks (whether it be grading, lab teaching, or research), while they are maintaining satisfactory progress in completing their academic courses. All GTA’s (especially international students) that have any contact with undergraduate students must take all training required by Graduate Studies. For Fall of 2008, these training modules include
  - Fall 2008 GTA Training  
<http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/pagegen/index.cfm?PageID=154>
  - SPEAK Exam (international students only)  
<http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/pagegen/index.cfm?PageID=160>
  - GTA Legal Module (online beginning in June )
- Students must meet their obligations (making satisfactory progress towards their degree, maintaining a 3.0 in their POS, doing satisfactory work for their research advisor) to continue to receive their financial support. If the students are on time cards, the cards must be filled out properly and filed on time. If they are on contract, they must maintain satisfactory work as defined by their supervisor. Also, being on contract requires that the students register for the proper number of hours of classes in time to process tuition waiver and so forth.
- The duration of financial support may vary from one semester at a time to up to a 4-year renewable fellowship.
- International students are expected to be here as full-time students, and may not work off campus except under very strict conditions. Please see [http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm#International Student Employment](http://www.graduate.ucf.edu/CurrentGradCatalog/content/Policies/GenPolicies.cfm#International%20Student%20Employment)

## 10. MISCELLANEOUS

- Departmental Faculty and Staff (all are located in the CECE office Suite – EN-2, Room 211; the main phone number is 407-823-2841).
  - Dr. Mohamed Abdel-Aty – chair
  - Dr. Andrew Randall – graduate coordinator
  - Carol Ann Pohl – undergrad advisor

- Margarida Trim – graduate programs assistant: admissions, programs of study, thesis/dissertation announcements, graduation certifications
- Felecia Baboolall – purchasing, , contracts administrator, tuition waiver
- Pauline Strauss – faculty searches, faculty travel, other duties as needed
- Tamara Major – student travel, other duties as needed
- Department and college resources.
  - The CECE Department provides office space, desks, etc. (Dept Chair makes assignments)
  - The department provides computers and software to all full-time graduate students (provided as part of office assignment; may be upgraded by research advisor)
  - The department provides campus mailboxes to selected graduate students (see Pauline Strauss).
  - The department has available telephones, and copy and fax machines (for university business) for use by graduate students, as authorized by research advisor.
  - UCF provides internet access and email accounts
- UCF provides University resources for students. Some examples are:
  - Library <http://library.ucf.edu> 407-823-2756
  - Computer facilities [www.acs.ucf.edu](http://www.acs.ucf.edu) 407-823-2713
  - Student Associations and Student Support Groups. Note all student organizations at UCF are listed at:  
<http://www.osi.sdes.ucf.edu/clubsorgs/clubsorgshome.html>
  - Campus social life <http://www.gsa.graduate.ucf.edu/>
  - University Writing Center <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>
  - The Counseling Center <http://counseling.sdes.ucf.edu/welcome.html>
- The Academic Calendar can be found at  
[http://www.ucf.edu/info/acad\\_calendar.php](http://www.ucf.edu/info/acad_calendar.php)
- Most of the faculty in the department are active in research. Their areas and current research projects can be found by starting on the department home page [www.cece.ucf.edu](http://www.cece.ucf.edu) and clicking on the “People” link.

## 11. FORMS

During their career at UCF, graduate students will be required to complete forms to progress through their degree program. The most relevant forms are listed below, and a complete listing can be found at <http://www.graduatelstudies.ucf.edu/formsnfiles/>

Program of Study – must be filed and signed within the first 9 hours of graduate coursework (may be amended later). For the CECE Department, the student may download a preliminary POS form from the Department web site at <http://cece.ucf.edu>

Change of Status – officially advances a PhD student after passing a major milestone (such as passing the candidacy exam)

Contracted Graduate Assistant – Offer of Appointment – contract allowing a grad student to be hired and paid for teaching assistance in the department or for working

as a research assistant for a professor. These must be signed prior to the beginning of the semester, and influence how much tuition waiver you will get.

Graduate Petition Form – required for petitioning old courses into your program, and for numerous other requests for waivers or extensions

Intent to Graduate Form – a most important form for students!

Transfer Request Form – used for transferring courses from other institutions into your program of study

**Appendix A:**  
**College of Engineering and Computer Sciences –**  
**Graduate Programs in Civil and Environmental Engineering (CECE)**

**Organizational Chart: Graduate Programs in CECE**

