SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

PH.D. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

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SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL PROCESS .................................................................3
  Advisor Selection ..........................................................................................3
  Dissertation Topic ..........................................................................................3
  Coursework Completion ..................................................................................3
  Timing of the Proposal ....................................................................................4
  Writing the Proposal .......................................................................................4
  Proposal Review Committee ..........................................................................5
  Submission of the Proposal Materials ............................................................5
  ECE Faculty Input ..........................................................................................6
  Submission of the Proposal to the Review Committee ....................................6
  Evaluation Process ..........................................................................................7
  Evaluation of the Document ............................................................................7
  Evaluation of the Oral Examination ...............................................................7
  Proposal outcomes .........................................................................................8
  Reporting Results ...........................................................................................9

PREPARING THE PROPOSAL ..............................................................................11
  Purpose .........................................................................................................11
  Writing the Proposal ......................................................................................11
  Proposal Format .............................................................................................12
  Other considerations ......................................................................................14
  Preparing the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy Form .....................14
  Problems ....................................................................................................15

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ................................................................16

APPENDIX - FORMS ..........................................................................................18
SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL PROCESS

This guide supplements the PhD proposal information in the ECE Graduate Handbook. Students and faculty should refer to the information contained here during the process of completing the proposal portion of the PhD degree requirements. For additional information, clarification or questions please contact the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

The Georgia Tech policies regarding the graduate student research and the appointment of thesis advisory committees can be found at http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/policy- advisement-and-appointment-thesis-advisory-committees. All students need to familiarize with the document before proceeding with the PhD proposal.

The steps involved in the proposal process are outlined below. Faculty and PhD students should be familiar with these steps. Details of the procedures involved are described in the remaining pages of the guidebook.

**Advisor Selection**

- This is a mutually agreed upon relationship in which the student selects the advisor and the advisor agrees to invest the needed time for research and thesis supervision.
- The student or the advisor may terminate the arrangement with the assistance of the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.
- A student who selects an advisor outside of ECE must also select a co-advisor who is an ECE faculty member. Adjunct faculty can only serve as advisor/co-advisor upon approval from the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.
- The selection of the advisor is reported to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office by submitting the completed (and signed) Advisor Selection form (available in the “Graduate Forms & Files” area of the ECE website). It is advised that the student submits the Advisor Selection form no later than the semester after passing the Preliminary exam.

**Dissertation Topic**

- The PhD dissertation topic is developed by the research advisor and the student.
- In addition to guiding the student in research efforts, the advisor may recommend or require coursework in addition to ECE’s requirements, publication of articles in professional journals, or additional tasks/activities to be completed prior to beginning the proposal process.

**Coursework Completion**

- Although the instructions on the Georgia Tech “Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy” form indicate that the student must complete all course requirements except the minor to qualify for PhD candidacy, ECE does not require that the coursework is completed before the Proposal Examination.
- The electronic coursework plan (https://secure2.ece.gatech.edu/PHP/gradforms/login.php) must be submitted and
approved by the Graduate Affairs Office at the time of the proposal, showing completed coursework and a clear plan for the remaining course completion.

- If the coursework was not completed before the proposal, the final completed coursework plan must be submitted **no later than the Online Application for Graduation (OAG) deadline**. At the time of the final submission, the form has to show completion of **43 hours of classes** to be used toward the PhD coursework requirements, which means that the coursework has to be **completed and approved** no later than one term before graduation. The term and year in which each class was completed as well as the hours completed and the grade earned for each class must also be indicated on the form. The student is responsible to ensure in a timely manner that he/she will meet the coursework requirements.

- When the coursework plan is updated, click **Certify Coursework Completion** at the top of the coursework plan before saving and submitting the plan for review. This action adds the completed coursework plan to a separate queue that is only for those plans that are ready for coursework completion to be certified.

- Students planning to use Special Problem (ECE 8901, 8902 or 8903) hours toward their PhD coursework requirement must have their special problem work certified by the faculty sponsor **before** the hours can be used. A form for use in certifying special problem hours is available on the ECE website in the Courses and Coursework Planning area ([http://www.ece.gatech.edu/academics/internal/graduate/coursework.html](http://www.ece.gatech.edu/academics/internal/graduate/coursework.html)). The faculty signing the form certifies that the work was of PhD quality and that it has not been used towards the PhD dissertation.

### Timing of the Proposal

- Students are expected to schedule the proposal examination within two years of passing the prelim exam, and within three years of entering the PhD program.
- The proposal exam should occur approximately one year prior to the dissertation examination.
- There must be a **minimum of six months** between a successful proposal oral exam and scheduling of the dissertation defense.
- Under no circumstances can the proposal and dissertation examinations take place in the same term.

### Writing the Proposal

- Once the research advisor determines that a significant amount of research on the agreed upon topic is completed, the student writes a proposal of no more than 35 pages including references and appendices. The proposal should be as concise as possible.
- The proposal must be written in the thesis format. The LaTeX and Word templates can be found online at [http://www.grad.gatech.edu/theses-dissertations-templates](http://www.grad.gatech.edu/theses-dissertations-templates). More specific ECE templates will be made available on the ECE website.
- The proposal must contain a chapter or sub-chapter entitled “Literature Survey”, appearing anywhere in the document that the student finds appropriate. The “Literature Survey” section is a minimum of five pages and must be written by the student with no outside help. **A disclaimer statement, signed by both the student and the advisor, is**
included in the first section of the proposal to document compliance with this requirement. A copy of the disclaimer statement is included at the end of this document.

- The rest of the proposal document contains at minimum a concise statement of the PhD dissertation topic, summary of the research completed, outline of the research to be completed and clearly summarizes the contributions of the research. The student can get help in preparing the rest of the proposal document.

Proposal Review Committee

- When the proposal is ready for submission, the student (under the guidance of the research advisor) prepares the proposal Review Request form and the Georgia Tech Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy form. It is important that the abstract of the candidacy form be well written. The abstract must begin with “The objective of the proposed research is…”. Assistance drafting the abstract is acceptable and encouraged.
- The research advisor and the student select two faculty members who will serve on the proposal reading committee and, subject to Institute approval, on the PhD Dissertation Reading Committee.
- At least one of the two reading committee members must be ECE faculty.
- ECE adjunct faculty or faculty from another GT academic unit may serve as the second reading committee member.
- Additional members can be added to the proposal committee by requesting it to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office at the time of the proposal submission.

Editor Review

- Each student’s proposal is reviewed by a professional editor at the same time as it is sent to the committee. Students are expected to proofread their proposals before submitting them to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.
- The editor will review the entire proposal document.
- The editorial review has two possible recommendations: 1. Consider making all the needed changes into the final dissertation, in agreement with your PhD Advisor or 2. Your proposal needs serious attention. Please contact the Academic Office. The changes suggested by the editor are intended to be implemented into the final dissertation and an additional review cycle will not lengthen the proposal process. Although not mandatory, it is recommended that the student, guided by the advisor, seriously considers the editor’s recommendations and makes use of this resource to improve his/her writing and achieve a professionally written dissertation. The editor is committed to help until all the student’s questions have been clarified.

Submission of the Proposal Materials

- Prior to submission all students need to visit the Academic Office for coursework verification and proper advising on the preparation of the submission materials.
- The submission consists of two portions
  - Originals handed to the Graduate Office
Proposal Committee form dated and signed by the student, advisor and reading committee members

Original signed disclaimer form

- **Electronic Submission – email daniela@ece.gatech.edu**
  - Electronic copy of the proposal document with the scanned signed disclaimer form inserted before the Table of Contents page
  - Admission to Candidacy form filled out with no signatures
  - Completed PhD Proposal Review form for the external editor
  - The body of the email has to contain a copy of the Brief Description in the Admission to Candidacy form.

- Links to the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy, PhD Proposal Committee and PhD Proposal Review forms are in the “PhD Degree Guidelines and Forms” page of the ECE website: (http://www.ece.gatech.edu/academics/internal/graduate/phd-degree.html).

- If any of the committee members are traveling when the committee is established or are based off the Atlanta campus, the off campus members should send email messages to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office indicating their commitment to serve on the proposal and dissertation committees and authorizing the Graduate Affairs Office to sign on their behalf.

- Because the Institute Graduate Studies Office requires original signatures, the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy form is signed (by student, advisor, and reading committee members) after the proposal committee determines that the student has successfully completed the proposal process (both written and oral portions).

**ECE Faculty Input**

- The ECE faculty is informed of the proposal submission via an email message from the Graduate Affairs Office.

- A copy of the proposal abstract will be posted on the ECE Web site. ECE faculty members have five business days to review and comment on the proposal.

- ECE faculty members may request a copy of the proposal to read. The copy is provided by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

**Submission of the Proposal to the Review Committee**

- The research advisor cannot serve as chair of the review committee. The chair is designated by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

- Right after the submission, copies of the proposal (and proposal related documentation) are electronically distributed to committee members and to the student by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

- After the documents reach the committee members, the proposal review committee chair assumes responsibility for the remaining proposal-related activities. There is a minimum of two weeks required for the reading committee between submission and scheduling the oral presentation.
Evaluation Process

• It is the proposal review committee's responsibility to evaluate the written proposal and hold an open (public) oral presentation of the proposal followed by a closed question and answer session.

• The proposal committee chair finds a date, time and place when the committee can meet for the oral presentation. The committee chair then submits a request to schedule the proposal oral exam, including in the message the student’s name, the day, date and time of the exam, and the room and building in which the exam will be held. The submission must be done on the contact page of the ECE Website: https://secure2.ece.gatech.edu/academics/graduate/internal/contact.html. Students should not submit proposal oral exam scheduling information, this should be handled by the proposal committee chair or the chair’s administrative assistant.

• The ECE Graduate Affairs Office posts proposal examination notices after being notified of the exam by the proposal committee chair. At least five business days (Monday through Friday) advance notice of the examination must be given to the ECE community.

• Following the proposal exam, the committee provides completed individual and full committee evaluations of the proposal to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office, which then forwards the evaluations to the student and the ECE assessment staff.

Evaluation of the Document

Each member of the proposal review committee will read and evaluate the written proposal based on the criteria described below:

Research Context
• Background and context of proposed research based on extensive review of published literature and other relevant sources are presented in an integrated and synthesized manner.

Statement and Presentation of Proposed Research Objectives
• Statement of the proposed research is effectively formulated, clearly stated and focused.
• Research objectives reflect knowledge of breadth and depth of the research topic and demonstrate ability to synthesize knowledge into distinct, well-structured objectives.

Description of proposed work
• Clear articulation of proposed research work is presented with detailed treatment of relevant methods, equipment, and resources.
• Description of proposed work demonstrates understanding of potential risks and payoffs.

Grammar, Mechanics, Organization
• Document adheres to rules of Standard English.
• Written material demonstrates proper use of punctuation, abbreviations, acronyms, capitalization, spelling, sentence structure, and subject-verb agreement and tense shifts.
• Correct references and citation format used throughout document.
• Graphs and charts used appropriately to present data.

Evaluation of the Oral Examination

Each member of the proposal review committee will read the written proposal and evaluate the
document and the oral presentation based on the criteria described below:

**Organization and Structure of Presentation**
- Material follows logical and systematic sequence, including clear articulation of research objectives; relevant methods, equipment, and resources; and risks and payoffs.
- Presentation culminates in convincing arguments for the proposed research. Appropriate and accurate use of technical concepts and details is used to support arguments.

**Selection of Content**
- Selected content demonstrates command of research field of proposed work.
- Systematic and convincing argument for the contribution of proposed research work and thorough understanding of potential obstacles and problem solving strategies is orally communicated.
- Overall ability to explain complex material and select necessary details is achieved.

**Use of Visual Aids**
- Sequence of visual aids (slides) is logical and supports and follows oral presentation.
- Slides are well organized, visually clear, consistent and understandable.
- Photographs, charts, and graphs are used to effectively illustrate main points and/or provide necessary details.

**Delivery, Speaking Skills, and Length**
- Contact with audience is maintained throughout presentation.
- Delivery is well paced, with attention to diction and enunciation, and not read from notes or slides.
- Projection is appropriate to size of audience and room and visual aids are within clear view.
- Adequate time for questions is provided.
- Answers are thorough and command of material is conveyed.

**Proposal outcomes**

- **Pass:** The committee may pass the student but give recommendations for the student’s research direction. Students should generally follow this advice, in consultation with their advisors, since those committee members will also be on the Final Defense Committee.
- **Conditional Pass:** If the committee has reservations about the student’s performance or the proposed material, they may vote for a conditional pass. A “Conditional Pass” is a pass but certain conditions set forth by the committee must be met. A sample of common conditions include
  - completion of additional courses that the committee feels are important for proper preparation
  - specific steps to take to improve oral presentation skills and/or written communication skills
o adding an addendum to the proposal
o redoing the oral presentation (unless the arrangements for a conditional pass specifically require that the oral presentation be repeated, it generally does not need to be done again)
o additional concerns determined by the committee may also apply and should be communicated to the student and advisor in writing.

• **Fail:** The committee may also consider the student’s proposal and/or presentation to be of insufficient quality to warrant a pass or conditional pass. If this occurs, the committee specifies to the student (advisor and ECE Graduate Affairs) why the “Fail” decision was reached and may make recommendations on what the student should do, for example, continuing the preliminary research until a better definition of a proposed topic is forthcoming.
  o In accordance with Institute requirements, a student may only attempt the proposal exam twice.
  o A student who fails the proposal examination on the first attempt will be expected to consult with the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs for guidance as to how to proceed at that point. If a student chooses to attempt the proposal exam again, then he/she would resubmit a proposal document. The committee may or may not be the same.

• **Hung committee:** If the committee is not in agreement at the time of the examination, the Graduate Affairs Associate Chair will follow up with the committee and negotiate a solution. If the agreement is not reached after mediation, the student will restart the proposal process from the very beginning. The student has two more attempts and has the option to form a new proposal committee.

**Reporting Results**

Each member of the proposal committee will complete individual evaluations based on the criteria outlined above. These evaluations will be summarized in the full committee report, which will be prepared by the committee chair following the committee’s deliberations.

• The results of the proposal examination are reported to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office. Originals of the individual committee member evaluation forms and the full committee report are submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office. The Graduate Affairs Office provides copies of the evaluations to the student.

• The signed Admission to Candidacy form is submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office for processing and submission to the Institute Graduate Studies Office so that the Dissertation Reading Committee can be approved.
  o Following a successful proposal examination, the Admission to PhD Candidacy form is signed by the student, advisor and the two reading committee members.
  o Following a Conditional Pass, the Admission to Candidacy form will not be submitted to the Graduate Affairs Office until the student met all the requirements and the “All Conditions Have Been Met” rubric is checked on the Full Committee Report. Only after meeting all the requirements the form is processed and the Admission to Candidacy accepted.
Following a Fail, the full committee report and the individual evaluation forms are submitted to the ECE Academic Affairs Office and the proposal process ends. If the student chooses to attempt the proposal again, the process will start at a later time with the submission of a new proposal document.

- If the coursework has not been completed prior to the Proposal, the signed Admission to Candidacy form is not submitted until the student completes all the course requirements. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the Academic Office when the coursework has been completed and all grades have been recorded so the Admission to Candidacy form can be released to the office of Graduate Studies.

- **There must be a minimum of six months between the successful completion of the proposal examination and the oral defense of the PhD dissertation.**

- The proposal process is not completed until all the forms have been submitted to the Academic Office. However, the six months count starts at the time when the student met all the requirements and was declared passed by the committee.
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Purpose
The purpose of the research proposal is to provide background information and to describe clearly and precisely the research that is to be presented as the basis of the dissertation. The proposal describes the nature and scope of the research program and serves as a request for the work to be approved in partial fulfillment of the PhD degree requirements.

The proposal examination allows the appointed committee to judge the student's ability to execute a research task and to communicate the results. The committee evaluates the proposed topic to ensure that it constitutes an original contribution to knowledge. The committee also evaluates the completed and planned research.

While the student may pass this examination outright, the examination committee may determine that the student needs to complete additional coursework in order to more effectively explore the research topic. The committee may require additional research to refine the proposed topic. Improvements to the written and/or oral presentations may also be required before the proposal examination is determined to be successful. It is the committee's responsibility to communicate what additional efforts must be undertaken for a successful proposal examination. Students are allotted two attempts to pass the proposal exam. Students who fail their first proposal examination should meet with the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs for guidance before moving onto the second attempt.

Writing the Proposal
In order to provide the proposal examination committee with sufficient material to evaluate the breadth and depth of the student's research efforts, the proposal is prepared with a specific section in mind. The student has to include a section called “Literature Survey” in the proposal, anywhere he/she finds it appropriate. That section is prepared by the student independent of any professional input. The student is to receive no assistance from the research advisor, other graduate students and any other individual when preparing the Literature Survey section of the proposal. A disclaimer statement, signed by both the student and the advisor, is included in the first section of the proposal to document compliance with this requirement.

The advisor and other individuals may assist in the preparation of the rest of the proposal. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the advisor and/or other writing professionals when preparing the abstract portion of the “Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy” form. Candidacy forms with poorly written abstracts will be returned to the student for revision. This may delay the proposal process.

The student may practice the oral presentation portion of their Ph.D. proposal examination before anyone they choose, including faculty and/or the advisor.

The proposal should be submitted within the time frame indicated under “Timing of the Proposal” in “The Proposal Process” section of this guidebook. As soon as the student and the
research advisor agree that sufficient results have been obtained to provide the proposal examination committee with the information needed to effectively evaluate the student's efforts, the written portions of the proposal should be prepared. The following steps should be taken before preparing the proposal.

**STEP 1**: Complete a preliminary investigation, consisting of literature research and discussions with various faculty members concerning the choice of a subject.

**STEP 2**: Undertake an exploration of the problem with a view to discovering where the major difficulties are likely to arise. For example, if the work is primarily experimental, the major difficulty may lie in the construction of a critical item of equipment, or in devising a method of making an important measurement. If the work is primarily theoretical, the major difficulty may be mathematical in nature. It is not expected that such problems will be solved before the proposal is prepared, but they should be identified. It is then possible to make reasonable estimates of the time, effort, etc., that will be required to complete the work.

Another reason for identifying critical obstacles is that both the student and the advisor are thereby ensured of an adequate understanding of the project. Otherwise, much time can be wasted in fruitless efforts. A substantial amount of work must be done to reach this point.

**STEP 3**: Devise a plan of attack with justifiable potential to lead to a solution of the problem and the attainment of the objectives of the research.

Only after these steps are accomplished is it possible to make a reasonable estimate of the time, equipment, and facilities that are needed to complete the project. At this stage it is frequently necessary to revise the objectives of the thesis in order to limit its scope to the effort that is expected by the School. The proposal should be prepared at a time when the objectives are still somewhat fluid. **The research should not be essentially complete before the proposal is written.** However, the proposal should make clear what has been accomplished at the time it is written and no attempt should be made to infer that work already done is part of plans for the future.

**Proposal Format**

The proposal must be written in the Institute Thesis format. Templates can be found at [http://www.grad.gatech.edu/theses-dissertations-templates](http://www.grad.gatech.edu/theses-dissertations-templates). More specific ECE templates will be made available on the ECE website.

The proposal should contain a section entitled “Literature Survey”, that the student writes with no outside help. This section has to be at least 5 pages long. This is the only required section in the proposal, however, the following sections are recommended:
Introduction
This brief paragraph states the objective and/or goals of the PhD research. The information provided in this area gives the reader a quick overview of what is included in the proposal. The Introduction may even be drawn from the abstract of the “Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy” form.

The preliminary research
A written summary of some or all of the research performed is presented in a coherent manner. This section would include the approach taken and some preliminary results.

The proposed research
Based on the background information and results presented in the Preliminary Research section, the Proposed Research section should begin with a clear, concise statement of the problem and the proposed method of attack. This statement will usually begin, "The object of the proposed research is...." This one simple English sentence should state exactly that – the objective of the research. This statement is followed by a few sentences of explanation or amplification, and a description of the method of attack. This information should be in a form suitable for use in the “Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy” form which is submitted to the Graduate Studies – VPR office after the proposal has been approved by the School.

Work remaining to be done
This is an estimate and an outline of the work needed to complete the project, and the time required for completion.

Facilities needed
This section should list the major items of equipment and facilities needed, including those already in use. It should be brief, but specific. It is not sufficient to say "The facilities, etc., are available". If supplies, equipment or facilities are needed and not already available in the School, the means for obtaining them should be indicated. Unusual or special items require advanced planning and these are the most important. Computing time requirements should also be given if applicable.

The entire proposal, including figures, tables, references and appendices, should not exceed 35 pages.

Figures, Tables and References
It is important that figures, tables, and references in the proposal are presented in a manner consistent with professional publication standards.

When placing a figure or table and its identifying description in the proposal, it is important to consider ease of access for the document reader. In most cases the text which introduces a figure or table will precede the placement of the figure or table in the proposal. However, the describing text should be in close proximity to the figure or table so that the reader is not forced to refer back and forth between pages in order to understand the information provided. It may be
necessary to place a figure or table before the describing text so that both appear on the same page.

References should be presented in a consistent manner throughout the proposal. It is recommended that references be presented in either consecutive number order or alphabetical by first author of the publication. When using the alphabetical listing, the references in the body of the proposal should give the author's last name and the year of the publication. When there are two authors, both should be listed with the publication year. When there are more than two authors, just the first author's name, the notation “et al” referring to the other (unlisted) authors, and the year would be listed. When using consecutive numbers, the list of references is prepared in numerical order following the first appearance of each reference in the text.

Other considerations

The proposal should not be longer than 35 pages.

If the thesis research is part of a larger project, its relationship to the larger project should be pointed out. This can be done under “Literature Survey”. The particular aspect of the problem that represents an original contribution by the student should be made clear. This will usually be done under the heading "The Proposed Research".

The proposal will not be approved if it is not written in acceptable English. A student who has unusual difficulty in presenting ideas in writing may use the proposal as an exercise in preparation for the dissertation write-up.

Sample Proposals
The faculty advisor should keep copies of accepted proposals that can be used as examples to which future students may refer.

Preparing the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy Form

Careful attention should be given to the preparation of the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy form, which is submitted with the proposal. This form is included in the permanent Georgia Institute of Technology record for each PhD student. The candidacy form should be prepared with standard grammatical conventions in mind – including proper capitalization of the title. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the research advisor and/or other professionals when preparing the candidacy form.

When preparing the Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy form, it is important to avoid the use of abbreviations and/or acronyms in the dissertation title. Abbreviations and/or acronyms considered as professional (or industry-wide) standards are exceptions and may be used.
The dissertation title should clearly communicate that the research will significantly contribute to the current knowledge level of the topic area. Abbreviations should not be used in the abstract title. The abstract portion of the candidacy form should be a succinct statement describing the object of the research, the planned strategies for research, and the expected results.

***To effectively organize the abstract, the first statement is to begin with “The objective of the proposed research is…” While a concisely worded abstract is important, it is also necessary to provide a statement that gives the reader a good understanding of the proposed research topic and expected outcomes of the research.

A revised Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy form must be filed if changes in the dissertation title, reading committee or abstract are needed. The revised form should include the items to be changed and must be approved by the advisor and the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

**Problems**

Should the student encounter problems along the way, such as interpreting what is contained in this document, the student is advised to discuss the problems with the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will you walk me through the proposal process from start to finish?

1. **Student update coursework plan** at (https://secure2.ece.gatech.edu/PHP/gradforms/login.php) showing all grades earned for the classes already completed and the planned remaining classes. Form needs to be approved by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

2. **Submit** the following to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office:
   a. **Hard copies – Academic Office:**
      i. ECE PhD Proposal Committee form – signed by student, advisor (and co-advisor if applicable) and two reading committee members
      ii. The original disclaimer statement
   b. **Electronic – email Daniela@ece.gatech.edu:**
      i. Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy form with no signatures
      ii. Electronic copy of the proposal including the scanned disclaimer form inserted before the table of contents
      iii. Completed PhD Proposal Review form
      iv. A copy of the Brief Description section of the Admission to Candidacy form in the email body

3. The following actions are **simultaneously** taken by the Academic Office:
   a. Proposal is sent to the editor for review.
   b. Abstract is posted to the web. ECE faculty is given one week to comment on the proposal and/or request a copy of the document.
   c. Proposal materials are distributed to committee members

4. The Committee Chair coordinates proposal committee activities and seeks input on the proposal.

5. When the committee determines proposal is ready for examination, the chair schedules the exam through the ECE Graduate Affairs Office. The date, time and location of the proposal exam must be announced a minimum of five working days in advance.

6. The process could take as short as 3 weeks but it can take up to 8 weeks or longer especially at busy times of the term or at times when faculty are traveling away from campus.

**On the proposal review committee form, may I use an email in lieu of a signature for out of town committee members?**

We do not encourage this, but an email stating intent to participate on the committee may be accepted if a signature cannot be obtained immediately.

**How long should the oral presentation be?**

Typical lengths are 30-45 minutes.

**Who do I contact to reserve a room?**
This should be handled by the Committee Chair who may delegate the task to their administrative aide.

**May I have my advisor/group members review the oral presentation?**

You may practice your oral presentation portion with anyone you choose, including faculty members and your advisor.

**To whom do I submit the proposal?**

The entire proposal package is submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office. Students must visit the Office prior to the submission to make sure they meet all the requirements.

**How do I know when the proposal has been released to the committee?**

You will receive an email from the ECE Graduate Affairs Office with a copy of your proposal memo.
APPENDIX - FORMS
DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

The “Literature Survey” section of this proposal was prepared without input from my research advisor or any other person. While technical writing guides may have been referred to, I did not solicit or receive assistance from any other person while preparing this portion of this document.

Signed ______________________________ (student) ______________________________ (print name)

Approved: ______________________(research advisor) ______________________________ (print name)
ECE PhD Proposal Committee Form

This form is to be submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office along with the signed disclaimer form. The following documents are to be submitted electronically: Admission to Candidacy form, PhD Proposal review form and a pdf copy of the proposal document with the scanned disclaimer form inserted after the Table of Contents. Please note: The “Request for Admission to PhD Candidacy” form has to be submitted with no GTID number on it.

Date submitted____________________  GT ID# ________________________

Student Name______________________________________________________________
Advisor's Name______________________________________________________________

Email Address

Proposed Dissertation Title __________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________
The dissertation research encompasses specialization in the area(s) indicated below (circle all that apply):

BioEng  DSP  Energy  Microsystems  Systems/Controls
CSS  EDA  Emag  Optics/Photonics  Telecom  VLSI

Term/Yr Prelim Exam passed _______  Term/Yr coursework completion ____________

Coursework has to be approved by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office, even if not completed. It is the student’s responsibility to update the web-based “ECE Coursework Completion Form” by listing all courses to be used toward the PhD Coursework Requirement. Official course numbers and names, technical area designation, semester hour credits, and grades must be included. Be sure to save and submit the form and inform the Academic Office when the coursework is ready for approval.

Committee Nomination: Pending approval of the ECE Graduate Committee, the faculty members indicated below agree to serve on the Proposal Review Committee and as the Reading Committee/Thesis Advisory Committee for the PhD dissertation. It is understood that one of the two committee members below may hold adjunct status in ECE or be employed in a GT academic unit other than ECE. Other proposal review committee members who are not ECE faculty may only be involved in the process on an informal basis, increasing the size of the Proposal Review Committee.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Committee members must sign to indicate their agreement to serve on the Proposal Review and Reading Committees.

Committee Member  Committee Member  Co-Advisor (where applicable)

(Print Name)  (Print Name)  (Print Name)

(Signature)  (Signature)  (Signature)

Student Signature  Advisor Signature
ECE Ph.D. Proposal Review Form
By Blount Ferrell
ECE Graduate Professional Communications Program

Student: ________________________________ Date Submitted: ________________

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Proposal Title: _________________________________________

Editor’s Comments: __________________________________________________________________________

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Recommendations:

1. Consider making all the needed changes into the final dissertation, in agreement with your PhD Advisor.

2. Your proposal needs serious attention. Please contact the Academic Office.

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