January 6, 2022

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom

<u>**Attendance**</u>

Voting Faculty: Debasis Dawn, Thillainathan Logenthiran, Max Laddomada, Jie Sheng, Mike McCourt, Matt Tolentino, Vahid Dargahi, Orlando Baiocchi, Nafiul Siddique

Non-Voting Faculty and Staff: Raj Katti, Rachel Long, Victoria Olive

<u>**Items**</u>

1) Approval of 12.16.21 Minutes

       Moved: Max Laddomada

       Seconded: Jie Sheng

       9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstained

2) MSECE Application Review

Both the Graduate Advisor and the committee have noticed that students are applying for our program thinking that they are applying for UW Seattle's program. The Graduate Advisor met with our SET marketing team to check if there is anything on the website or application that might be confusing. The advisor also discussed some marketing/web analytics issues – she noticed that when she searched "UW Tacoma MSECE" on Google, the UW Bothell program appears first in the search and our program appears second. When she searched "UW MSECE", both Bothell and Seattle programs appear before Tacoma's.

The committee mentioned that they are interested in adding a "how did you hear about us" question to the application, so the committee can have a better idea of how students are finding the program and application. The committee chair will work with the graduate advisor on adding this to the application.

The committee then discussed applicants who might not have an electrical or computer engineering degree – the Dean mentioned a conversation he had with the Dean of a Seattle graduate program, who has addressed this issue by accepting students without relevant background and requiring them to take certain undergraduate courses in the relevant field before they are permitted to enroll in graduate courses. It is important to remember that UW doesn't allow conditional admission, but we can streamline required courses for students who might need additional background knowledge. The committee agreed that it is a good idea to broaden the applicant pool by potentially accepting students who don't have an electrical or computer engineering background, but are cautious of this causing issues for students credit-wise. The committee will continue this discussion in the next meeting.

The Graduate Advisor reminded the committee that she is adding comments to international applications, including their converted GPAs and where to find their translated transcripts – some transcripts include a translation at the bottom.

3) Discussion of "Master Thesis Option" process

The Chair shared the UWT CSS Graduate Handbook and other universities' handbooks with the committee and pointed out the section where they discuss "thesis-only option" processes. The first example from UWT's CSS program explains that students who select the thesis-only option must first work with a faculty supervisor to produce a thesis proposal, which they then submit to the committee for approval – all of this is done before a student is permitted to register for thesis courses (i.e. TCSS 700).

Another example presented was UW Seattle's ECE program, which requires students to submit their thesis once it is completed. This is then followed by a final oral examination. The Chair mentioned that many other universities require thesis students to work with advisors, do research, and then at the end when the research is almost done and ready to publish, students have a limited time to defend their thesis before a committee, as well as submitting other required paperwork. The Chair also presented another graduate program, which requires students to have their proposal approved AND their final thesis published or presented at a relevant conference – this serves as a "quality check" for the student's work.

Given these examples, the Chair's goal is to discuss what this committee would like the process for MSECE students who choose the thesis-only option. The committee agreed that their goal is to help students produce a quality thesis, and that consistency across the board is important for this process.

The committee discussed this further, and agreed that students should write their proposal after working with an advisor for at least one quarter, and that after this period of time students should form their supervisory committee. The student should write their thesis and prepare a defense, all while being enrolled in at least one thesis credit course. The Chair will work more on this wording and will present this topic again at the next meeting.