

ECE Undergraduate Core Courses Committee Meeting

Friday, May 3rd, 2024

Attending: Arabshahi, Chen, Hameed, Makhsous, Overly, Shepard, Swanson, Van Fossen, Wilson (Chair)

Agenda:

1. Discussion of EE 241 as corequisite/prerequisite for EE 242 (Makhsous)
2. Proposal to add EE 215 as corequisite for EE 280 (Wilson)

Minutes of April 29th, 2024: Approved

Discussion of EE 241 as corequisite/prerequisite for EE 242 (Makhsous)

In previous meetings, both in the ECE Undergraduate Core Courses Committee (UCCC) and quarterly hand-off meetings for EE 241 and EE 242, the issue of EE 241 being a corequisite for EE 242 rather than a prerequisite has been raised as a point of possible concern and in need of review.

- Some students have expressed concern with getting the material needed from EE 241 in time for use in EE 242.
- Students anecdotally appear to struggle a bit more when taking the courses concurrently.
- Syncing the two courses properly is difficult and leaves little room for flexibility.
- Two proposed solutions:
 - Revise EE 242 to require EE 241 as a prerequisite instead of its current status as a corequisite.
 - Allow for teaching both courses in the same quarter by the same instructor and to count as 2 teaching loads.
 - Currently, teaching 3 quarters of EE 241 counts as one teaching load.
 - The common way faculty teach EE 241 does not involve attending all lab sections for the full time.
 - Attending every lab section for the full time would require about 15 hours per week.
 - Generally, lab sections are led by a TA, with the instructor coordinating the content and overseeing the TAs.
 - Instructor will attend parts of lab sections from time to time.
- Discussion arose regarding the amount of content to be covered in 242, with some faculty stating that some topics can only be very briefly covered, if at all.
 - Some preferred reverting back to the previous structure of EE 235/341 which separated continuous and discrete topics.
 - Arabshahi said the issue had been discussed when the revision to EE 241/242 was approved as the desire was to have all students have at least an introduction to the discrete material, thus requiring both be covered in the core class.
- Shepard noted that, of all the courses in the core, only EE 242 was dependent on another core course.
- The committee members agreed getting data on grades for taking the courses concurrently versus taking EE 241 prior to EE 242 would be good to know before making a decision.

Action Item: Overly will provide Makhsous with data to assess the grade impact of taking EE 241 and EE 242 concurrently versus taking EE 241 prior to EE 242.

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Proposal to add EE 215 as corequisite for EE 280

Now in the middle of teaching EE 280 for the first time, Wilson proposed adding EE 215 as a corequisite for EE 280 to provide students with important material to help make the topics covered in EE 280 more accessible for students.

- Wilson has noticed in her class that some students who have not yet taken EE 215 appear to struggle with the course.
- Van Fossen mentioned she has heard many students find having taken EE 215 helpful when taking EE 280.
- Makhsous wondered if adding as a corequisite would lead to similar issues as with 241 and 242.
- Hameed expressed concern that the material would not be covered soon enough in EE 215 to be beneficial in EE 280 since it can take a while for the material to “ramp up” at the beginning of a quarter in EE 215.
 - He believes it is a helpful class for EE 280, but he thought EE 215 may be better as a prerequisite instead of a corequisite.
- Wilson raised the issue that this would lengthen the prerequisite chain, and believed there were basically two options available:
 - Add some needed material into EE 280
 - A problem is that EE 280 is already extremely material heavy, and adding more would be difficult to do well.
 - Add EE 215 as a corequisite for EE 280.
 - Wilson stated she did not believe the timing of material would be an issue.

Motion to add EE 215 as a corequisite for EE 280: APPROVED