



Example Dissertation/Thesis Syllabus

Course Number: **EEL 7980, Ph.D. Dissertation**

Section:

In-Person meetings arranged

Term: SP 2026

Course Meeting Information

This is an in person class.

Students are required to meet every Friday between 11:30am-1pm.

PROFESSOR INFO

John Volakis

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: jvolakis@fiu.edu

Phone: 7-2243

Office Hours: as requested/arranged all week up request

Office Location: EC 3912

Website: <https://volakis.eng.fiu.edu/>

Department or Academic Unit: ECE

Course Prerequisites

PhD graduate status

Course Description

This course is PhD students under the advisory of the major faculty to carry out research as part of their dissertation

The goal is to carry out novel research in Electromagnetics, radio systems and communication links, including security across the entire frequency spectrum up to 6G/Future G, terahertz and optics

Textbook and Course Materials

No textbook required
Required/Recommended: N/A
Authors: N/A
Publisher: N/A
Publication Date: N/A
Copyright Date: N/A
ISBN 10: N/A| ISBN 13: N/A
Chapters/Pages: N/A

Readings, Materials, and Open Educational Resources (OER)

No materials are required for this course. Instructor will discuss readings with student as needed for preparation of the dissertation.

Course Goals

- Identify and defend the contributions and research uniqueness
- Critically evaluate past work and be able to review journal papers.
- Develop/introduce novel concepts that are publishable in top peer reviewed journals
- Write professionally using established standards that are well-established in leading journals.
- Prepare and present presentations
- Translate journal and conference paper to dissertation chapters

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- write technical reports suitable for peer review
- write journal and/or conference papers
- translate research/journal papers to dissertation chapters

Expectations of the Course

- Engage in advanced data analysis, interpretation and presentation of results in both written and oral formats.
- Adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct and responsible conduct of research in terms of data collection, storage and reporting and use of AI.
- Adhere to the University Graduate School “Use of AI in Graduate Research, Theses, and Dissertations” <https://gradschool.fiu.edu/wp->

<content/uploads/2026/01/Guidance-for-the-Effective-and-Responsible-use-of-AI-in-Dissertations.pdf>) as well as any additional program requirements.

- Demonstrate professionalism in all interactions with the faculty and peers.
- Develop a realistic timeline for completing dissertation drafts and oral defense

Assignments & Assessments

- Schedule regular meetings (weekly or at the latest bi-weekly) with the major professor throughout the semester
- Attend weekly group meetings at 11:30-1pm on Fridays
- Present at the weekly meeting when assigned (1 to 2 times)
- Presentation should explain the background and new research/accomplishments
- Write a professional document (research report, chapter, conference or journal paper). The specific writing will be assigned and discussed at the start of the semester and must adhere to professional standards and expected research novelty/innovation required for publication in peer reviewed journals or conference venue
- translate journal/conference papers to dissertation chapters as appropriate
- Schedule meetings with the dissertation committee as needed
- Present papers at conferences and participate in best paper competitions
- At the appropriate time/semester prepare dissertation chapters
- At the appropriate time/semester prepare for oral defense (ensure approval and review of slides and dissertation draft prior to presenting to committee)

Grading

- **Grading for this course can be IP, U, P, or F.**
A grade of **IP (In Progress)** will be recorded until the dissertation is complete and the oral defense was completed successfully. A grade of IP indicates successful progress has been made during the semester towards completion of the dissertation.
- **The U (Unsatisfactory)** grade shall be given when progress towards completion of a dissertation does not meet the expectations of the faculty and/or committee for the semester as written in the Assignments/Assessments. The U grade does not interfere with the student's ability to continue working toward completion of their dissertation and allows the student to register for dissertation credits in the following semester.
- **The P (Passing)** grade cannot be given until the Dissertation or Thesis has been defended successfully. For successfully completed dissertations or thesis, all prior IP grades will convert to the final grade awarded, P (Passing).
- **The F (Failing)** grade is given when the dissertation and oral defense are considered unsuccessful. An F grade will impact the student's GPA and will result in a review by the major advisor and the Graduate Program Director of whether the student should remain in the program.

Schedule of Topics

Goals and topics will be assigned for individual students at the start of the semester

Course Communication

Course communication will be conducted in both person and via email.
Must attend research group meetings at their weekly assigned time
Dissertation defense will be held in person.

Policies & Resources

Before starting this course, please review the Policies & Resources Page in Canvas, which includes comprehensive information on various University and Course Level Policies such as:

- UGS Guideline's for the Use of AI in Graduate Research, Thesis, and Dissertations (<https://gradschool.fiu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Guidance-for-the-Effective-and-Responsible-use-of-AI-in-Dissertations.pdf>)
- University Policies
 - Accessibility and Accommodations
 - Online Etiquette
 - Technical Requirements and Skills
 - Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
 - Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies
 - Academic Integrity
 - Copyright Statement
 - Nondiscrimination Statement
 - Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
 - Fair Use Policy

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility (CRCA) is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the CRCA team through report.fiu.edu.