THOMAS J. WATSON SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCE
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY
DOCTORAL (PhD) PROGRAMS

The Learning Contract: Recommended Format

In consultation with the Guidance Committee, the student prepares a learning contract, in which a program of study is specified, including the major area of research, additional course requirements, teaching requirement, evaluation procedures, and the form of the comprehensive examination. Although the Learning Contract may be modified as the research interests of the student develop, to assure competence and depth in the major area and breadth in relevant disciplines, each modification must be approved by the Guidance Committee, and must be properly documented. A current copy of the learning contract is placed on file in the Dean's Office.

The new doctoral student should start to work immediately with the advisor to develop a learning contract. A major purpose of the learning contract is to define the program of study, including the knowledge and skills required to pass the comprehensive examination. The learning contract should identify core courses and concepts which must be mastered in order to provide breadth of background, as well as specialized courses and concepts which are germane to the proposed area of research. The learning contract can be modified at a later date if additional knowledge is required or if the field of research is changed.

The following format is recommended for the Learning Contract:

Title Page
The Learning Contract should have a Title page, including the following information (also see sample on next page):

Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering and Applied Science
(Department Name)
LEARNING CONTRACT

PhD Candidate: (Candidate's name. Leave space for candidate's signature, and date of signature.)

Date of Contract: (Date that Learning Contract is approved by Committee Chairperson)

Degree and Specialization Sought: (Degree and specialization)

Guidance Committee Members: (List the Committee Chairperson, and list the names of all Committee members, including their home department and school. Leave space next to each member's name, for signature, and date of signature. By their signatures, the members of the Guidance Committee approve the learning contract. All Committee members, and the PhD candidate, should sign and date the Learning Contract.)

Major Area of Research
(Description of research area. Typically 2-3 paragraphs.)

Relevant Prior Graduate Coursework
(Prior coursework to be used toward PhD degree. List course names and number of credits for each.)

Course Requirements to be Completed
(Current and future coursework to be used toward PhD degree. List course names and number of credits for each.)

Comprehensive Examination
(Brief description of areas in which the student is to be examined, and the form the examination will take.)

Reading List
(List of books and/or other publications to be used to prepare for the Comprehensive Exam, with titles and authors. The nature and specifics of this list are dependent on the department and guidance committee.)

Teaching Requirement
(Description of how teaching proficiency requirement will be met.)

Progress Evaluation Procedures
(Describe periodic evaluation for meeting the goals of the learning contract.)

Colloquium and Prospectus
(Brief description of how and when the colloquium and prospectus requirements will be met.)

Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering and Applied Science

Department of *Electrical and Computer Engineering*

LEARNING CONTRACT

PhD Candidate: *Sally Smith*   *12/10/2008*
Name   Signature   Date

Date of Contract: *12/10/2008*

Degree and Specialization Sought: *PhD in Electrical Engineering*

Guidance Committee Members:

Chair: *Jessica Fridrich*   *EECE*   *12/10/2008*
Name   Department   Signature   Date

Member #1: *Scott Craver*   *EECE*   *12/10/2008*
Name   Department   Signature   Date

Member #2: *James Constable*   *EECE*   *12/10/2008*
Name   Department   Signature   Date

Member #3: *Weiyi Meng*   *CS*   *12/10/2008*
(if available)   Name   Department   Signature   Date

(By their signatures, the members of the Guidance Committee approve this learning contract.)