Toronto Metropolitan University

Computer Science
Graduate Studies

Procedure for Transfer from the MSc to the PhD Program

Introduction:

At Toronto Metropolitan University, the process for a graduate student to transfer from a Masters program to a Doctoral program is governed by Senate Policy 170(b) --"Graduate Status, Enrolment, and Evaluation"[1]. This document provides additional detail and guidance to members of the MSc program in Computer Science who may be involved in this process. This document specifies:

- Timing
- Application process
- Role of the Admissions Committee
- Selection criteria for Transfer
- Procedure for Transfer

Timing

This application for transfer can be made no earlier than the beginning of the 3rd term of registration and no later than the first day of the 4th term. If successful, the student shall be matriculated into the Doctoral program in their 4th term. Normally, only 1 application shall be allowed per student.

Application Process

The Applicant shall submit the following to the Graduate Program Administrator (GPA):

- A letter of explanation where the student outlines why they wish to transfer between programs. In the letter the student should also summarize their research progress during their Master's program to date and a brief dissertation abstract that outlines how they will proceed in the Doctoral program,
- A complete, "PROGRAM TRANSFER APPLICATION MASTER'S TO DOCTORAL LEVEL" form[2],
- A letter of recommendation from the Supervisor after consulting with the student's advisory committee, recommending transfer with reasoning provided[3],
- A letter of assessment of the applicant from a faculty member who is a member of the Doctoral program[4],
- A current CV, and
- One or more pieces of evidence of research potential.

The student should ensure that they meet the criteria for transfer.

[1] See: https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/, Policy 170(b)
[2] See: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/
[3]The Supervisor must ensure that the student is likely to have sufficient resources (including financial) to succeed as a Doctoral student, should the transfer be approved.
[4] The student's supervisor is ineligible to provide an assessment letter.

Role of the Admissions Committee

It is part of the role of the Admissions Committee of the Graduate Program Council (GPC) to provide assessments concerning the suitability of transferring Masters students to the Doctoral Program. In this role, the committee shall assess the evidence provided for transfer and make their recommendation to the Graduate Program Director (GPD).

Selection Criteria for Transfer

Senate policy dictates that a student wishing to transfer to a Doctoral program must meet the following criteria:

1. Be enrolled in a Masters Program
2. Completed all of the course requirements for the Master's degree with a minimum A- (3.67) average,
3. Demonstrated research potential, and
4. Provide a Signed waiver agreeing that they will not be eligible to receive the Master's degree if they do not complete the PhD.

Rubric for Evaluating Research Potential

The primary means of determining if a student has demonstrated research potential is through the peer review publication process. A student will be deemed to have demonstrated research potential if they can show evidence of at least one peer-reviewed academic paper reporting on research the student actively participated in. The venue for publication can be a reputable conference, workshop, journal or other relevant venue broadly associated with Computer Science research. Evidence to be considered will be provided in the form of a copy of the publication accompanied by its correct citation.

Publications must have been accepted or likely to be accepted by the venue. A non-comprehensive list of reputable venues is presented in Table 1:

Table 1 Reputable Venues

Venue
ACM (and associated sub-organizations)
IEEE (and associated societies)
ITAC
AAAI
AWC
CRA

If the paper(s) under consideration is/are published in a venue not listed in the table, the student's Supervisor shall provide a written justification providing evidence that the publication venue is reputable. The Admissions Committee shall consider the argument. If deemed sound, the venue shall be added to Table 1 and the publication treated as valid.

Admissions Committee Recommendation

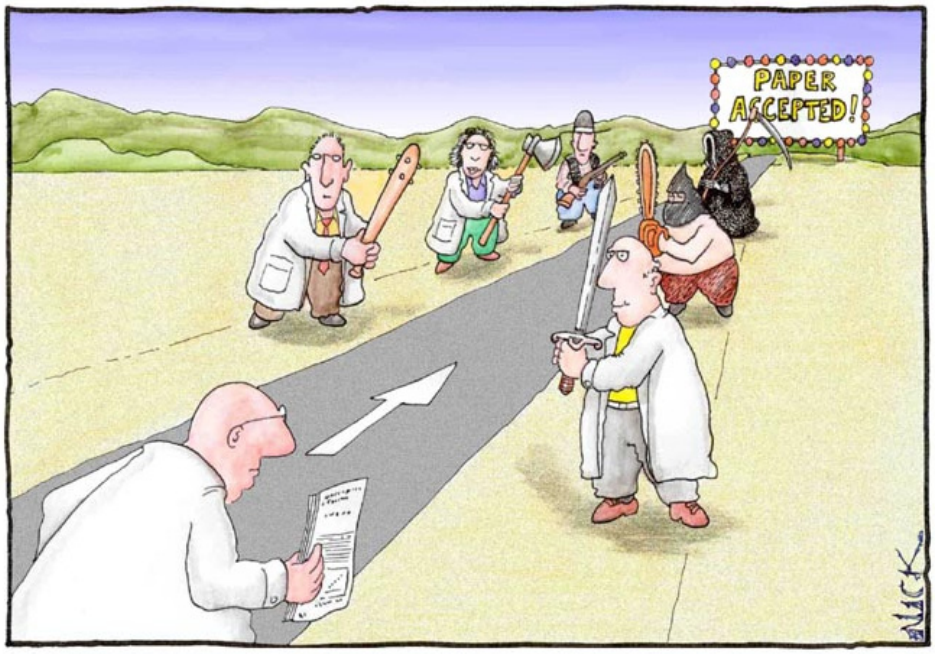
The Admissions Committee shall meet in a timely manner to deliberate the merits of transferring the student to the Doctoral Program. The committee shall take into consideration the student's submissions and request

clarification where necessary. The committee will make their recommendation to the GPD, providing their reasoning, in writing.

Procedure for Transfer

If approval is recommended by the Admissions Committee, the GPD will forward the application package to the Dean and Vice Provost of the Yeates School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (Dean-YSGPS) for consideration. A written decision will be provided by the Dean-YSGPS to the student, copying the GPD, indicating their decision.

If the transfer is approved, the student shall be matriculated into the Doctoral program, can proceed in their studies, and is eligible to take their Qualifying Examinations. If the transfer is not approved, the student shall proceed in the Masters program.



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as "quite an improvement."