

# Computer Engineering

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## Department Information

- **Department Location:**  
Electrical and Computer Engineering
- **Department Phone:**  
701-231-7019
- **Department Web Site:**  
[www.ndsu.edu/ece/](http://www.ndsu.edu/ece/) (<http://www.ndsu.edu/ece/>)
- **Credential Offered:**  
B.S.Cpr.E.
- **Official Program Curriculum:**  
[bulletin.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/computer-engineering/](http://bulletin.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/computer-engineering/) (<http://bulletin.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/computer-engineering/>)

Computer engineering deals with both hardware and software aspects of computer systems. Students take essential electrical engineering classes along with specialized classes in computer engineering and computer science. Demand for computer engineers is strong due to the growing use of computers in all sorts of products and the need for engineers competent with computers in both hardware and software areas.

## The Program

Computer engineering is a degree program in the College of Engineering. The Computer Engineering program provides a background in three broad areas: computer hardware, software, and hardware-software integration. Fundamental topics included in the program are embedded systems, computer architecture, digital systems, software engineering, computer networks, and operating systems. In addition, the program includes core subjects that are common to all engineering disciplines and basic university studies in humanities and social science. The Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org).

## Areas of Specialization

The Computer Engineering program allows students to tailor their studies within broad parameters. Students are encouraged to develop an individual program of study in close consultation with their advisers. Examples are available to illustrate how specialization may be obtained in a number of different technical areas. Students may mix and match from the examples to suit their particular interests.

Technical areas include the following:

**Computer Architecture/Digital VLSI** – VLSI designers and computer architects design computer system hardware, including how the CPU communicates with various types of memory and high-performance multi-processor systems. VLSI design focusses on the lower levels of abstraction: transistor-level and physical-level design; whereas computer architecture focuses on the higher levels of abstraction: architecture and gate-level designs.

**Cyber Physical Systems** – deals with the interaction of computing elements monitoring/controlling physical entities, often in a large network.

**Embedded Systems** – deals with the design of a dedicated computer system to perform a specific task, often requiring real-time constraints. An example is a smartphone.

**Computer Systems** – deals with the close interaction between a system's hardware and software.

## The Facilities

The Electrical and Computer Engineering building is part of an eight building engineering complex. The building contains specialized laboratories and equipment. Numerous grants and donations from the National Science Foundation and private industry have provided valuable equipment. Laboratories along with department and University computer capabilities support education and research. Students also have full access to computer clusters located in the ECE building and throughout the campus. These and other major computer resources are tied to local, regional, national and international computer networks, and remote access is provided for all ECE software.

## Selective Admission

Transfer students from international institutions must have a 3.00 GPA.

Further, the department policy is that transfer courses equivalent to ECE 173 (or CSCI 160), ECE 275, EE 206 and all required Math must have a "C" or better before enrolling in ECE courses listed in the curriculums for Junior & Senior years."

## **High School Preparation**

High school students should attempt to complete one unit of physics, four units of mathematics and one unit of chemistry.

## **Career Opportunities**

Graduates may find work as design engineers (computer hardware, software and systems), computer consultants, sales and customer support engineers or as engineers involved with computer-aided manufacturing and testing.

## **Research and Graduate Study**

Graduate studies leading to a master's degree or doctoral degree are offered in the department. Further details are available in the *Graduate Bulletin*.

## **Cooperative Education Program**

The Cooperative Education Program allows students to alternate classroom study with a series of paid professional work experiences related to electrical and computer engineering. These experiences increase in complexity as the student's background increases. The program provides opportunities for pre-graduation experience in the profession, exploration of several career opportunities, money for education, an enriched degree and enhanced opportunities for employment following graduation.