

Validity of On-line Courses for Ph.D. Credits

Ph.D. in Computer and Control Engineering

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1 Introduction

This document describes the possibility, and explains the rules, of getting learning credits by following on-line courses by accredited e-learning providers, such as MOOC platforms, open content providers, or free offerings by accredited universities.

The policy of the PhD Council is to allow the enrolled students to get some learning credits (up to a maximum limit of 20 credits), by following on-line course and passing the corresponding exam or final evaluation.

2 Course Minimum Requirements

The courses that may be recognized as giving learning credits in the context of the PhD course **must** satisfy **all** the following requirements:

1. The course **topic** must be relevant, with respect to the PhD program general themes.
2. The teacher(s) or instructor(s) of the course must belong to an **official University**, or at least must have a significant research **track record**.
3. The course must be organized in different learning modules and must imply a moderate or large **duration**: single seminars (or seminar-like courses) are not allowed.
4. The course must provide a **final exam**, and the student should be able to get a *verified certificate of achievement* (or equivalent documents)¹. Attendance certificates are not sufficient.
5. The number of **credits** that will be assigned to the course is decided by the PhD Council, on the basis of the number of class-**hours** (or equivalent measure) declared on the course website. In any case, the **maximum** number of assigned credits is 5.

¹in many cases, such certificates are not free; the student may pay for the certificate on his own, or it may be paid by the tutor

3 Course Providers

For the purposes of this document, the on-line e-learning providers are classified in two groups:

Accredited providers (AP) are a subset of course providers that are well known for the quality of their provided courses. The procedure for getting credits from an AP is simplified. The list of currently APs is given in Appendix A. Students may request the accreditation of new providers, by a written request to the PhD Council.

Non-Accredited providers (NAP) are other course providers, that provide contents at the university level, and are not listed as AP.

4 Procedure for AP providers

The student, for getting the learning credits from a course delivered **by an AP**, must follow the process outlined in this section. The responsibility of providing timely, complete and relevant information lies in the student.

1. The student sends a request to the PhD council, before enrolling to the course. The request should be structured according to the form reported in Appendix B, and should show that the course satisfies all the minimum requirements defined in Section 2. The request must be signed by the student and by his/her PhD tutor.
2. The request, if duly filled, is automatically approved. The student may immediately enroll in the course. In case any information is missing, the student will be contacted.
3. At the end of the course, the student will send a copy of the verified certificate of achievement to the PhD council.
4. The PhD council verifies the certificate, and approves the credits.

5 Procedure for NAP providers

The student, for getting the learning credits from a course delivered **by a NAP**, must follow the process outlined in this section. The responsibility of providing timely, complete and relevant information lies in the student.

1. The student sends a request to the PhD council, before enrolling to the course. The request should be structured according to the form reported in Appendix C, and should show that the course satisfies all the minimum requirements defined in Section 2. The request must be signed by the student and by his/her PhD tutor.
2. The PhD Council will evaluate the request, and will reply within 15 days, with an acceptance or rejection notification.
3. In case of acceptance, the student may start enrolling in the course. In case of rejection, the student is free to present another, better motivated, request.
4. At the end of the course, the student will send a copy of the verified certificate of achievement to the PhD council.
5. The PhD council verifies the certificate, and approves the credits.

6 Interim Rules

If any students, currently enrolled in the PhD program, have followed, in the past years and prior to this document, one or more on-line courses, that satisfy the requirements outlined in Section 2, they may ask them to be recognized as credits.

In this case, the students should present the request to the PhD Council, according to the forms in Appendix B or C, within 30 days since the publication of this document, and also attach a copy of the certificate of achievement.

Appendices

A Accredited Providers

Provider	URL	Participating universities
Coursera	https://www.coursera.org/	136 partners (https://www.coursera.org/about/partners), across 27 countries, offering 1.471 courses
edX	https://www.edx.org/	650+ courses in subjects such as humanities, math, computer science; founded by MIT and Harvard and joined by additional partners (https://www.edx.org/schools-partners)

B Format of AP request

The following form is available on-line and *must* be filled at the following address: <http://goo.gl/forms/9TPKgBva8Z>

Request for On-line Credits from Accredited Provider		
Student:	.....
Student's e-mail:	.....
Advisor:	.....
Advisor's e-mail:	.....
Provider:	<input type="radio"/> Coursera	<input type="radio"/> EdX
Course title:	.....
Course URL:	.....
Teacher Name:	.....
Teacher Affiliation:	.....
Course duration (hours):	.....
Why the course is relevant to your Ph.D. course	.....
Teacher's research track record (optional, if not from University)	.....

C Format of NAP Request

The following form is available on-line and *must* be filled at the following address: <http://goo.gl/forms/9TPKgBva8Z>

Request for On-line Credits from Non-Accredited Provider	
Student:	.....
Student's e-mail:	.....
Advisor:	.....
Advisor's e-mail:	.....
<hr/>	
Provider:	.....
Provider URL:	.....
Participating institutions	.....
Scientific qualifications of provider	.....
<hr/>	
Course title:	.....
Course URL:	.....
Teacher Name:	.....
Teacher Affiliation:	.....
Course duration (hours):	.....
<hr/>	
Why the course is relevant to your Ph.D. course	.....
<hr/>	
Teacher's research track record (optional, if not from University)	.....