Direct admission to FST PhD degree program for applicants with BS degree

Drafted by Z. Wen (Admission Chair), modified by T. Wang (FST DOGE), approved by FST Graduate Advisory Committee
Nov 5, 2015
Edited according to faculty meeting comments
Vote conducted on December 15, 2015.
Vote results announced on December 22, 2015.
Faculty voted to approve (13) the proposal. Abstain 2

Background and justification:

- Current policy - no direct admission of applicants from BS to PhD degree program;
- The FST Admissions Committee believes that this rule hinders our program by excluding a number of potentially great candidates. For example, in the past years, our department has been awarded multiple PhD scholarships for recruiting outstanding PhD students. However, the PhD candidate pool has been small and choices are limited;
- We have had highly qualified and fitting candidates who attended recruitment events, learned about policy, and decided to go to other schools for BS to PhD;
- The FST Admissions Committee believes that the policy for PhD student recruitment needs to be relaxed;
- The direct admission (from BS to PhD) should be an option for a major professor who has the most rigorous and fair evaluation of an applicant;
- The FST Admissions Committee’s role will be to facilitate such an admission process and compare among all applicants for award decision if applicable;

Proposed criteria and procedure:

1. The applicant should demonstrate a multiple years of independent research experience (can provide scientific report, poster or oral presentation at the scientific meeting);
2. The applicants have peer-reviewed publications (at least submitted);
3. An overall exceptional application package, demonstrating motivation and all desirable characteristics for success.

If two of these three criteria are met, along with approval by more than 50% of the FST Admissions Committee, the candidate will be allowed for admission to FST PhD program, providing the major professor agrees to provide financial support.

Special note: Applications with their own personal or government financial support alone is not a condition for this special consideration.