MEMORANDUM

Currently, the Zachry Department of Civil Engineering has guidelines for the amount of coursework versus research credit hours that PhD students can have on their degree plan. The wording is as follows:

The PhD degree requires a minimum of 64 credit hours beyond the Master’s Degree and a dissertation in addition to the requirements necessary to meet the program pre-requisites. Of the 64 credit hours, 24 hours must be in coursework if the student has taken at least another 24 hours of acceptable graduate courses for the Master's degree; 32 credit hours otherwise.

There is some ambiguity if certain courses should count towards the minimum 24/32 credit hours of coursework. The courses in question include:

1. CVEN/OCEN 681 – Seminar,
2. CVEN 684 – Internship, and
3. CVEN/OCEN 685 – Directed Studies

The university does not require a set minimum amount of coursework as part of a PhD degree. Therefore, the department can decide which courses to count, and any maximum amount that can count. This minimum amount of coursework was established to provide the student with both a solid foundation for their dissertation research and a broader background. All three of the courses listed above have the potential to achieve both of these objectives. Therefore, it is the department’s recommendation that these courses can count towards the minimum of 24/32 credit hours of coursework. However, the number of credit hours from these 3 courses on the degree plan would be limited to 3. Thus ensuring the other 21/29 credit hours would be from traditional courses – basically 7/10 traditional 3-credit hour courses at a minimum.

Note that students without a master’s degree (direct to doctorates) are required to take a minimum of 96 credit hours, a minimum of 45 of those credit hours are to be coursework.