Master of Science in Computer Science

The Master of Science (MS) in Computer Science is directed toward students with a computer science background who are looking for a program and courses that are more software-focused. It can be either a pure course option program, or it can incorporate either a project or a thesis. If a student chooses a degree option that incorporates a research experience, this MS degree may provide a solid stepping stone to future doctoral studies. All students in the MS in Computer Science program must have previously completed (as documented by their undergraduate transcript), successfully test to place out of, or complete at the start of their program, the following courses: CSE 501N Introduction to Computer Science and CSE 502N Data Structures and Algorithms, or equivalent courses offered at other institutions.

Course Option

This option requires 30 units of graduate credit. Students must also follow the general degree requirements listed below and complete the breadth requirements.

Thesis/Project Option

The thesis or project options require 24 units of graduate credit in addition to 6 units of either thesis or project courses (CSE 599 or CSE 598 respectively). Students pursuing the project option may opt to take 27 units of graduate courses and only 3 units of CSE 598 with adviser approval. Students must also follow the general degree requirements listed below. Thesis students are exempt from the breadth requirements.

General Degree Requirements

- None of the 30 units may be taken as independent study (i.e., CSE 400 or CSE 500).
- Courses with an “N” designation do not count toward the master’s degree.
- All courses must be taken for a grade of C- or better.
- As per Engineering School guidelines, students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.70.

- Breadth requirements (required of the course and project options) which include one 500-level Theoretical Computer Science (T) course, one 500-level Software Systems (S) course, and one 500-level Machine and Architecture (M) course.
- 18 of the 30 units must be departmental courses at the 500-level or above.
- With departmental approval, up to 12 units may be taken from outside of the department. Such approval shall be contingent on the credits being suitably technical graduate-level content. To count more than 6 units from outside the CSE department, an appropriate justification for the additional increment shall be provided by the adviser and student. Departmental approval shall be evaluated with increasing stringency for each additional increment.
- Up to 9 units of 400-level courses can count for graduate credit.