COMPUTER SCIENCES, PH.D.

The Department of Computer Sciences offers the master of science (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/computer-sciences/masters/) and doctor of philosophy degrees in computer sciences. Research specialty areas include artificial intelligence, computational biology, computer architecture, computer graphics, computer networks, computer security, database systems, human–computer interaction, numerical analysis, optimization, performance analysis, programming languages and compilers, systems research, and theoretical computer sciences. The department’s Graduate Advising Committee (GAC) advises all computer sciences graduate students except students who are in dissertation status. See department website (https://www.cs.wisc.edu/) for faculty interests, research activities, courses, facilities, and degree requirements.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program’s admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s). Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>December 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)</td>
<td>Not required but may be considered if available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency Test</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of Recommendation Required</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with a strong background in computer sciences or a related field are encouraged to apply for admission. At a minimum, the applicant should have had some programming experience, including courses in data structures and machine organization, and should have had a year of college-level mathematics at the calculus level or above. Applicants are evaluated based on their previous academic record, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, and a personal statement. All applications must be submitted online. Admission is very competitive. Aid is offered to about half of the students to whom admission is offered. Aid is usually in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, or research assistantships. For more information on admissions, visit the department website (https://www.cs.wisc.edu/).

Contact admissions@cs.wisc.edu with questions about admissions in the traditional M.S. or the Ph.D. programs.

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Funding is offered to about half of the students to whom admission is offered. Funding is usually in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, or research assistantships. Because computer science skills are in demand, students who are admitted without funding are often able to find graduate assistantships on campus. The department website (https://www.cs.wisc.edu/academics/graduate-programs/guidebook/) provides information on funding options and offers suggestions for those who are admitted without department funding.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face | Evening/Weekend | Online | Hybrid | Accelerated
---|---|---|---|---
Yes | No | No | No | No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.
Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement Detail</th>
<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
<th>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51 credits</td>
<td>32 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimum Graduate Coursework: 26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Details can be found in the Graduate School’s Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) policy [here](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).

Overall GPA Requirement: 3.00 GPA required.

This program follows the Graduate School’s policy: [here](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).

Other Grade Requirements: All grades must be at least AB in all required qualifying breadth courses.

Assessments and Examinations: Doctoral students must complete a qualifying process, a preliminary examination, and a dissertation requirement. The qualifying process includes both completion of "qualifying breadth courses" (see Required Courses, below) as well as satisfactory completion of a depth examination in a selected focus area. The preliminary examination is an oral examination demonstrating depth of knowledge in the area of specialization in which research for the dissertation will be conducted. The dissertation requirement consists of conducting a substantial piece of original research in computer science, reporting it in a dissertation that meets the highest standards of scholarship, and explaining and defending the contents of the dissertation in a final oral examination and defense.

Language Requirements: No language requirements.

Graduate School Breadth Requirement: All doctoral students are required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate.

**REQUIRED COURSES**

**Additional Qualifying Breadth Courses Requirement**

Ph.D. students must take one course from each of the bands 1, 2, 3 and 4 listed below. Two of the four courses used to satisfy this requirement must be numbered 700 or above; the remaining two courses must be numbered 500 above. Grades in all courses used for breadth must be at least AB. COMP SCI 839 can be used to satisfy breadth in the band declared by the course instructor at the time of course offering.

One course taken as a graduate student at another institution may be counted for breadth. A request for this must be made in writing to the faculty member designated to approve equivalence for the respective course on the breadth list. The request should indicate the corresponding UW–Madison course, include a transcript showing a grade equivalent to AB or better, and provide a course syllabus and description.

The request should indicate the corresponding faculty member designated to approve equivalence for the respective course on the breadth list. A request for this must be made in writing to the course instructor at the time of course offering.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---
| COMP SCI/ E C E 506 | Software Engineering | 3 |
| COMP SCI 536 | Introduction to Programming Languages and Compilers | 3 |
| COMP SCI 537 | Introduction to Operating Systems | 4 |
| COMP SCI 538 | Introduction to the Theory and Design of Programming Languages | 3 |
| COMP SCI 542 | Introduction to Software Security | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 552 | Introduction to Computer Architecture | 3 |
| COMP SCI 640 | Introduction to Computer Networks | 3 |
| COMP SCI 642 | Introduction to Information Security | 3 |
| COMP SCI 701 | Construction of Compilers | 3 |
| COMP SCI 703 | Program Verification and Synthesis | 3 |
| COMP SCI 704 | Principles of Programming Languages | 3 |
| COMP SCI 706 | Analysis of Software Artifacts | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 707 | Mobile and Wireless Networking | 3 |
| COMP SCI 736 | Advanced Operating Systems | 3 |
| COMP SCI 739 | Distributed Systems | 3 |
| COMP SCI 740 | Advanced Computer Networks | 3 |
| COMP SCI 744 | Big Data Systems | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 752 | Advanced Computer Architecture I | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 755 | VLSI Systems Design | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 757 | Advanced Computer Architecture II | 3 |
| COMP SCI 758 | Advanced Topics in Computer Architecture | 3 |
| COMP SCI/ E C E 782 | Advanced Computer Security and Privacy | 3 |

**Band 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 534</td>
<td>Computational Photography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 545</td>
<td>Natural Language and Computing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 559</td>
<td>Computer Graphics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 564</td>
<td>Database Management Systems: Design and Implementation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 570</td>
<td>Introduction to Human–Computer Interaction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 571</td>
<td>Building User Interfaces</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI/ B M I 576</td>
<td>Introduction to Bioinformatics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 764</td>
<td>Topics in Database Management Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 765</td>
<td>Data Visualization</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI 766</td>
<td>Computer Vision</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI/ ED PSYCH/ PSYCH 770</td>
<td>Human-Computer Interaction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP SCI/ B M I 776</td>
<td>Advanced Bioinformatics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### COMP SCI 784
Foundations of Data Management 3

### Band 3
- COMP SCI/MATH 513: Numerical Linear Algebra 3
- COMP SCI/MATH 514: Numerical Analysis 3
- COMP SCI 520: Introduction to Theory of Computing 3
- COMP SCI/E C E/ISY E 524: Introduction to Optimization 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E/MATH/STAT 525: Linear Optimization 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E 526: Advanced Linear Programming 3
- COMP SCI 577: Introduction to Algorithms 4
- COMP SCI/ISY E 635: Tools and Environments for Optimization 3
- COMP SCI 710: Computational Complexity 3
- COMP SCI/MATH 714: Methods of Computational Mathematics I 3
- COMP SCI/MATH 715: Methods of Computational Mathematics II 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E 719: Stochastic Programming 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E 723: Dynamic Programming and Associated Topics 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E/MATH/STAT 726: Nonlinear Optimization I 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E 727: Convex Analysis 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E/MATH 728: Integer Optimization 3
- COMP SCI/ISY E/MATH 730: Nonlinear Optimization II 3
- COMP SCI 787: Advanced Algorithms 3
- COMP SCI 880: Topics in Theoretical Computer Science 3

### Band 4
- COMP SCI/E C E/M E 532: Matrix Methods in Machine Learning 3
- COMP SCI/E C E/M E 539: Introduction to Artificial Neural Networks 3
- COMP SCI 540: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence 3
- COMP SCI/E C E 561: Probability and Information Theory in Machine Learning 3
- COMP SCI/E C E 760: Machine Learning 3
- COMP SCI/E C E 761: Mathematical Foundations of Machine Learning 3
- COMP SCI 762: Advanced Deep Learning 3
- COMP SCI 769: Advanced Natural Language Processing 3
- COMP SCI/B M I 771: Learning Based Methods for Computer Vision 3

### Band 4
- COMP SCI/E C E/STAT 861: Theoretical Foundations of Machine Learning 3

### POLICIES

## GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

## MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

### PRIOR COURSEWORK

#### GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS
Subject to faculty approval, one graduate course taken elsewhere may be used for breadth. Other than that, no credits of graduate coursework from other institutions are allowed to satisfy requirements.

#### UW–Madison Undergraduate
No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to satisfy requirements.

#### UW–Madison University Special
With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special student. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

### PROBATION

At the end of any regular (nonsummer) semester, a student is considered to be making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) if the following conditions are all satisfied:

- Before achieving dissertator status: the student has completed at least 6 (if full load) or 3 (if part load) credits of approved courses during the semester.
- After achieving dissertator status: the student has satisfactorily completed at least three credits of courses approved by the student’s major professor.
- The student has removed all Incomplete grades from any previous regular semester or summer session.
- The student has passed any required exams and procedures within designated time limits.

Any graduate student who fails to make SAP during two consecutive regular semesters (fall and spring, or spring and fall) will be dismissed from the department at the end of the subsequent summer session. Any graduate student who fails to make SAP due to missed deadlines will be dismissed from the department at the end of the subsequent summer session.

### ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

A member of the graduate advising committee must formally approve all graduate schedules each semester until a student is in dissertator status.

### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits
TIME LIMITS
Students must pass the qualifying process by the end of the sixth semester.

The preliminary exam must be taken within two regular (nonsummer) semesters after the deadline for the qualifying exam.

A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

Doctoral degree students who have been absent for ten or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS
These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER
n/a