

Guidebook for Graduate Students  
Computer Science Department  
University of Kentucky  
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Welcome to Lexington and to the University of Kentucky Computer Science Department! The purpose of this guidebook is to present a lot of different information under one cover. The guidebook contains the rules and regulations concerning graduate students, the director of graduate studies, and the graduate school. This guidebook is likely to be updated periodically. Please make suggestions about how it can become more useful.

This guidebook addresses matters pertaining to programs of study leading to the Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees in Computer Science (CS). The Department of Computer Science also offers the MS and PhD degrees in Computer Engineering and the MS degree in Data Science. Information on those other programs is not covered by this document.

Admission to the MS and PhD programs in CS is highly competitive and based upon academic record, GRE scores, curriculum vitae (CV), personal statement and letters of recommendation. Applicants should present evidence of competence in computer science as well as of mathematical maturity.

Since very few specific courses are required for the graduate degree programs, all degree candidates in the MS program must demonstrate proficiency in the fundamental areas of computer science by taking four *core* courses, see part II.A below.

Thesis (Plan A) and non-thesis (Plan B) options are available in the program leading to the MS degree. A project is required of non-thesis candidates. The program has no language requirement (other than proficiency in English).

The PhD degree in Computer Science is a research degree granted primarily on the presentation of a substantial research achievement. To be admitted to candidacy for this degree, students in the program must satisfy the requirements of the Graduate School, complete the departmental *breadth* and *depth* requirements, and pass the Qualifying Exam. This examination usually consists of a presentation to the doctoral committee of a written thesis proposal discussing the area of research, specific problems to be studied, related work by others, preliminary work by the student, and the plan of work.

Students admitted to the PhD program in Computer Science who hold a prior Master's degree in Computer Science from another institution are not eligible to receive a University of Kentucky MS degree in Computer Science. In special circumstances and in the case of students who are eligible for the Qualifying Exam, the DGS may petition the Graduate School for a waiver of this policy.

## Guidelines for graduate students in CS

This document contains a wealth of information about the academic life of graduate students. It uses the following abbreviations:

ASST:	Administrative Assistant for Payroll: Dee Fuhs
CSC:	Graduate School code for graduate programs in CS used as a designation of graduate faculty membership
CS:	Computer Science Department
DGS:	Director of Graduate Studies: Zongming Fei
DUS:	Director of Undergraduate Studies: Jurek Jaromczyk
GGPA:	Grade-point average (cumulative over CS grad courses)
GRE:	Graduate record exam
GSD:	Graduate School Dean: Brian Jackson
GS:	Graduate School
INS:	Immigration and Naturalization Service
UKIC:	International Center
PB:	Post baccalaureate status
QE:	University Qualifying Exam (PhD)
RA:	Research assistant (from a faculty grant)
AADGS:	Administrative Assistant for Director of Graduate Studies: Kathy Ice-Wedding
TA:	Teaching assistant
UK:	University of Kentucky

We believe this document to be accurate, but the official documents of CS, GS, and UK take precedence in all matters of disagreement. The Graduate School Bulletin <https://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin> is the most comprehensive document describing graduate studies at UK.

## I. ADMISSION

- A. **Online documents** General information about admission is available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions>. It describes admission categories, the application process, and provides a link to an on-line application site. Additional department-specific information can be found at <http://www.engr.uky.edu/research-faculty/departments/computer-science/students/graduate-students/admissions>
- B. **Graduating seniors.** Graduating UK seniors lacking no more than 6 credit hours and having an undergraduate average of at least 2.75 may register in the GS in conditional status with the consent of the undergraduate college dean, the DGS, and the GSD. The total load of such students may not exceed 12 credit hours. More information and an application form is at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions>.
- C. **University Scholars Program.** Gifted and highly motivated CS undergraduate students can integrate the senior year with MS study to have up to 12 graduate hours counted for both BS and MS degrees. To qualify, GPA of 3.5 in CS and 3.2 overall is required. More information and an application form at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions>.
- D. **Conditional admission.** A student may be admitted conditionally. Typical conditions are: high GGPA, number of credits to be taken, scores on GRE. The DGS will police conditions and review them after the end of the first semester. More information at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions>.
- E. **Students Changing Programs.** Students who plan to change programs must submit a new application (and fee) to the Graduate School and be formally admitted by the Director of Graduate Studies in the new program.
- F. **Admission to the CS PhD program from the CS Masters program.** The student must update the application status with the online GS site and should provide three letters of reference to the DGS. There is no deadline for such a status change, nor must a student finish the Masters before switching

to the PhD. CS Masters students may count all their UK credits taken for a Masters (except for CS 768) towards the 36-credit requirement for PhD residency once they enter the PhD program if no Masters degree has been awarded.

- G. **Re-admission.** After any hiatus (including probationary dismissal) other than just a summer, a graduate student needs to apply to the GS for re-admission. The GGPA and course credits are carried over from the previous time the student was enrolled.
- H. **CS PhD students getting CS Masters degree (en-passant Masters).** A PhD student may be awarded a Masters degree after passing the QE, and the DGS must write a letter of approval to the GSD. However, the PhD student must complete a minimum of 48 credit hours (not counting CS 767) to get both degrees. Also, note the following rule.
- I. **Students with prior CS Master's degree.** Students admitted to the PhD program in Computer Science who hold a prior Master's degree in Computer Science from another institution are not eligible to receive a UK MS in Computer Science. In special circumstances and in the case of students who are eligible for the QE, the DGS may petition the Graduate School for a waiver of this policy.

## II. MASTERS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Core Courses.** MS candidates must pass four *core* courses, two from each of the following two groups: **(a)** CS 505 (Databases), CS 541 (Compilers), CS 570 (Systems), CS 571 (Networks), and **(b)** CS 515 (Algorithms), CS 537 (Numerical), CS 575 (Theory). The final grades in each course must be **B** or higher. In exceptional cases, when courses needed to complete the requirement are not offered, the DGS may approve other courses as equivalent replacements.
- B. **Credits.** To receive an MS, the student must finish either **option A** (thesis option) or **option B** (non-thesis option).

Option A requires at least 24 credit hours of regular coursework in CS and up to six credits of CS 768 Residence Credit for Master's Degree. The total number of credits required is 30.

Option B requires 30 credit hours and a project. The 30 hours may include CS 610.

In either option, students may take up to 6 credits of CS 612.

For either option, at least half of the credit hours must be in higher than 500-level courses (excluding CS 768 and CS 680). Courses from other departments require a prior DGS approval.

All courses other than CS 768 for option A must have regular letter grades, that is, no pass/fail, and the overall GPA in these classes must be 3.0 or higher.
- C. **Course load during the last semester.** It is not necessary to take a full load during the last semester of courses, even for international students and/or TAs. Students with F-1 visas need to submit a form for reduced course load <https://international.uky.edu/ISSS/Students/RCL>. Students who have finished all required courses and have enough credits may take CS 748 for 0 credits; this course counts as full load by itself.
- D. **Masters committee.** The student should consult with the supervising professor in choosing a committee. The committee must have at least three members; at least two must be members of graduate faculty in CSC, at least one must be a full member of the graduate faculty in CSC. All committee members must be regular faculty, not lecturers nor adjuncts. If the chair is not from CS department, he/she serves as co-chair with a faculty from CS department as another co-chair. Upon request, the CS Department may allow such faculty to serve as sole chair of the committee.
- E. **No remaining incomplete grades.**
- F. **Formal masters exam.** All Masters students need to take the Masters exam that is related to the thesis or the project, depending on the student's option.

- (a) MS students under option A must prepare a thesis. The information on thesis preparation and final submission can be found at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-thesis-preparation>. MS students under option B must complete the project. Neither the department nor the Graduate School have any formal specifications for the project. However, the document has to be prepared professionally and has to comply with standard technical writing norms.
- (b) In consultation with the advisor, the student selects a committee for the MS exam (see above).
- (c) To schedule the MS exam the student in either option must follow the steps described at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-thesis-defense>. In particular, the student will submit to GS the Graduate School Application for Degree and the Request for Final Master's Degree Examination (both forms available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms>). Some of the steps are subject to deadlines. The students are encouraged to check the Graduate School calendar <https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates> for details. When the student submits the request to schedule the exam, the request is approved by the DGS, who publicizes its date and time.
- (d) At least 10 calendar days prior to the MS exam, the student presents all the committee members with a clean draft of the thesis or project document. If any of the committee members finds the document unsatisfactory, that committee member may request that the exam be rescheduled.
- (e) Prior to the scheduled examination, the GS emails the DGS an "exam card", which the DGS forwards to the chair of the committee.
- (f) The exam **must be attended by all members** of the committee. On-line attendance by one member of the committee is allowed; the student is responsible for making all technical arrangements. If more than one person needs to attend on-line, the DGS needs to obtain an approval from the GS. This exam is open to public. However, it is not a party; the student should not provide refreshments.
- (g) The committee members indicate their judgement on the exam card, which they sign. The chair of the committee gives the exam card (hard copy) to the DGS.
- (h) The DGS countersigns the exam card and sends it to the GS.
- (i) A student doing a thesis has 60 days following the exam to complete last revisions to the thesis document. Because the DGS must sign it, and the GS must approve the format, the student should be in contact with both the GS and the DGS well before the deadline to make sure the document meets their criteria. The DGS may require, for example, that the student hire a native speaker of English to fix presentation errors.
- (j) The student must submit the thesis electronically. The advisor and the DGS sign the final approval form. See <https://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-thesis-defense>.

G. **Written report.** A written report is required for completion of a Masters Degree (whether thesis or project). The writeup must be of sufficient quality to enable committee members to determine the general nature, scope, and quality of the project, and must be provided (in hard copy, if requested) to each committee member at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled examination date.

In the event that some committee member does not receive the writeup at least 10 calendar days before the scheduled examination, the faculty member shall report this fact to the DGS, who shall inform all members of the committee and the student that the defense is being rescheduled.

H. **Enrollment.** Students need not be enrolled in the semester they take the masters exam and/or receive a Masters degree. This rule applies to Plan A students as well as Plan B students.

I. **Time limits.** International students are subject to conditions on their I-20 form. Extensions can be granted; the student must contact the UKIC to discuss eligibility and steps to take.

All students are subject to general time limits set by the GS. Students enrolled in a master's program have 6 years to complete all requirements for the degree, but still have the opportunity to request extensions up to additional four years for a total of ten years. Extensions up to two years may be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Requests for extensions longer than two years must be considered by Graduate Council. All requests should be initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies. No activity completed more than ten calendar years preceding the proposed graduation date as appropriate will be considered for graduation.

### III. PhD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A. **Advisor.** At first, the DGS is the student's advisor. The student should choose a research area and find a real advisor as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first year of coursework.

B. **PhD advisory committee.** PhD students need to have advisory committee preferably by the end of their fourth semester in the program. In consultation with the advisor, the student proposes the committee using an online form "Formation of an Advisory Committee" available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms> (link blue login required). The DGS is automatically notified.

The committee consists of at least four members: the advisor serves as the chair of the committee, one person is from an outside department, three must be CSC graduate faculty, at least 3 (including chair) must be full graduate faculty, all must be members of graduate faculty. Full graduate faculty members for CSC (but not with CS as their home department) can serve as co-chairs, with a regular CS department member as another co-chair. Upon request, the CS Department may allow such faculty to serve as sole chair of the committee. For the purpose of the committee formation, faculty with joint appointments in CS cannot serve in the role of a member from an outside department.

Faculty members from other universities may serve as additional members of the committee. In such case, the DGS must first nominate them for the graduate membership.

C. **Plan of study.** The advisory committee shall oversee the student's progress towards the degree. To this end, students will regularly and at least once a year appraise all committee members with the state of their coursework and research. The committee also decides on the form of the depth requirement completion process and the QE.

D. **Residence credit for a PhD.** PhD students must spend two years (36 credits of graduate course work, all courses be letter grade courses) in residence before the QE. CS MS students who transfer to the PhD program before earning the MS degree may count all their UK graduate credits earned towards the MS degree (except CS 768 and similar) towards the first and second year of residency.

The DGS may ask the GS to waive the second year of residency for exceptional students.

(a) **First year.** Either (a) Masters at UK, or (b) 18 graduate credits in CS at UK, or (c) transfer of residence credits from an awarded Masters at an accredited domestic or international school. Students request transfer by completing the form "Transfer of Credit: Doctoral" available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms>. Prior approval for transfer from the DGS is necessary. In each case, student must still complete the breadth requirement (see next).

(b) **Second year.** 18 additional graduate credits at UK.

E. **Breadth requirement** Students fulfill the breadth requirement by taking at least one course from each of the following areas and receiving at least a B in all, and an A in at least two of them.

(a) CS 505, CS 541.

(b) CS 570, CS 571.

(c) CS 515, CS 575.

(d) CS 535, CS 537.

A student who has taken equivalent courses elsewhere can ask for them to apply to the breadth requirement; each such case is evaluated on its merits by the DGS.

In exceptional cases, when courses needed to complete the requirement are not offered, the DGS may approve other courses as equivalent replacements.

F. **Depth requirement.** The Depth process is individualized to the research focus of the student. The student's committee decides on the appropriate form of this process. It can be a written exam, an oral exam, a literature review, a published paper, some other requirement, or a combination of these. The student's committee informs the DGS when the student has accomplished this process.

G. **No remaining incomplete grades.**

H. **Before the Qualifying Exam.** If the student completed the pre-qualifying exam residency credit requirement (see D), but is not planning on taking the qualifying exam in the current semester, the student will enroll in CS 611 (Research in CS). This enrollment may be repeated for up to two four semesters or 36 credits.

CS 767 (2 credits) may be taken during the semester of the QE, even if the exam is on the last day of the semester, but if a student registers for CS 767 and does not pass the QE during that semester, the registration must be changed to something else, typically CS 611.

I. **Qualifying exam (QE).** After two years of residency, the completion of the requirements above, and any other requirements (such as courses and research papers) imposed by the student's advisory committee, the student becomes eligible for a QE. The QE is typically a thesis proposal examination, although the committee can decide otherwise.

The student initiates the request for the QE, specifying the date, the time, and the place through an online form "The Qualifying Exam" available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms> (link blue login required). Before submitting this form, the student should present all the committee members with a clean draft of the QE paper and get their agreement to hold the QE.

The QE **must be attended by all members** of the advisory committee. But on-line attendance is possible with prior approval of the GSD.

Students who complete the two years of residency coursework at UK should take the QE in the sixth semester of their study. For other students, the preferred time for the QE is adjusted accordingly. Further, the QE should be taken no later than in the second semester after the student completed the depth requirement.

All students must pass the QE within first five years. Extensions may be approved by the GSD or the Graduate Council upon positive recommendation from DGS and the student's advisor. Failure to pass the QE within 5 years or after the approved extended limit will result in the dismissal from the program.

After the QE, students must enroll in CS 767 *Dissertation Residency Credit*, a 2-credit hour course, every Fall and Spring semester (at least 2) until completing the degree. In addition, students may enroll for any other course approved by their advisory committee. However, this requires a permission from the Graduate School. They will be charged at the in-state tuition rate plus mandatory fees in each term (Spring and Fall).

J. **Time limits.** All degree requirements for the doctorate must be completed within five years following the semester or summer session in which the student completes the QE, but extensions up to additional 5 years may be requested for a total of 10 years.

K. **Assessment of progress.** The DGS, in consultation with the student's advisor, reviews each PhD student's progress every year and informs each PhD student in writing the results of this review. Students determined by the DGS as borderline or not making a satisfactory progress towards the degree are discussed at the faculty meeting.

- L. **PhD Oral examination.** The final hurdle is the PhD oral exam. Several steps are involved.
- (a) In the semester in which the student is planning to defend, the student submits an application for the degree and the notice of intent to defend. The forms are at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms> (link blue login required). The deadlines for these steps are available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/key-dates>.
  - (b) The student presents all the committee members with a clean draft of the thesis and gets their agreement to hold the exam.
  - (c) The student requests that the defense be scheduled by completing and submitting a form (all on-line) available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms> (link blue login required).
  - (d) The GS appoints an outside examiner and informs the student.
  - (e) The student presents the whole committee a clean draft of the thesis and gets their agreement to schedule the defense. The student consults the committee and the outside examiner to establish a date and time for the exam; the student also reserves a room for the defense. The student notifies the GS about the date, time and place of the exam by completing a form that can be found at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms> (link blue login required).
  - (f) The exam is held. It **must be attended by all members** of the committee and the outside examiner. On-line participation (with some restrictions) is possible but requires an prior approval by the GSD. This exam is open to public.  
It is not a party; the student should not provide refreshments.
  - (g) The student has 60 days following the exam to complete last revisions to the thesis document. Information about the thesis preparation and formatting is at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-dissertation-preparation>. Students using Latex may check with recent graduates for style files. The DGS may require that the student hire a native speaker of English to fix presentation errors.
  - (h) The student submits the thesis electronically. The advisor and the DGS sign the final approval form. The form is at [https://gradschool.uky.edu/sites/gradschool.uky.edu/files/Forms/StudentForms/ETDApprovalForm\\_0.pdf](https://gradschool.uky.edu/sites/gradschool.uky.edu/files/Forms/StudentForms/ETDApprovalForm_0.pdf)

#### IV. COURSES

- A. **Advising.** Prior to registration or pre-registration, students are encouraged to discuss their schedule for next semester with the DGS or their advisor.
- B. **Pass/fail.** No graduate-level course (400G or higher) may be taken Pass/Fail. All courses must be taken for grades except for 700-level courses.
- C. **Repeat option.** A student may exercise once during the graduate career the option to repeat a course and have only the second time count for credit and towards the GGPA. The student should fill out the form available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms> preferably after the conclusion of the repeated semester, so the student knows the grade. If the student re-takes a course but does not invoke the repeat option, both grades count towards the GGPA.  
If a student takes a non-repeatable course more than once and gets a passing grade each time, its credits and grade only count the first time.
- D. **Courses outside major.** There is no set rule concerning the number of courses that can be taken outside CS. However, all such courses should be approved in advance by the student's advisor and the DGS.

- E. **CS 612, independent work.** This course may be repeated to a maximum of 9 credits by PhD students and 6 credits by MS students (exceptions to the 6 credits limit for MS students require the prior approval of the DGS). Students taking the course must work according to a syllabus developed by the faculty member and approved by the DGS. The syllabus must specify the topic, reading lists, meetings schedule and deliverables and describe the grading schema that will be used. Enrollments in CS 612 is possible only after the DGS approves the syllabus.
- F. **CS 610 and Masters Project.**
- (a) CS 610 is not a required course.
  - (b) The grade in CS 610 (for students taking the course) will reflect student's performance during the whole semester. Specifically, the grade will depend on: (a) initial write-up, (b) midterm progress report, (c) final project. It will not depend on the final examination.
  - (c) Each MS project (regardless of whether it is performed as CS 610) should require the amount of work that is approximately equal to taking a 600-level course. It should require a programming component, testing/verification as well as a final write-up and presentation. Moreover, at the beginning of the project, a student should prepare a write-up of the project that would provide, in particular, the techniques to be used and specific goals with a time table. This write up should be submitted to the advisor and posted on the Web. The student should also provide the advisor with a written progress report in the middle of the semester.
- G. **Full-time status.** International students and all funded TAs, RAs and GAs must maintain the full time student status. In most cases, this is accomplished by taking 9 credits of the course work or by 2 credits of CS 748 (for MS students in option A) or CS 767 (for students who are planning to take the QE in the current semester or have already passed the QE).
- H. **Graduate courses in other departments.** Graduate students in one department generally need an override to register for graduate courses (600-level) in other departments.
- I. **Incompletes.** The student need not be enrolled at the time the incomplete is made up.
- J. **Time Limit.** Courses taken more than 6 years earlier do not count toward the requirements of an MS. The DGS may request the GSD to increase this window. The GSD needs approval from the Graduate Council to increase the window beyond 8 years. It cannot be increased beyond 10 years. Courses that fall outside the window still count in the GGPA, but do not count for graduate credit and may be repeated without invoking the repeat option.
- K. **Probation, low GGPA.** A GGPA of 3.0 is required for graduation. A GGPA below 3.0 puts the student on probation if the student has completed 12 or more hours of graduate course work. Students on probation may not serve as TAs or hold fellowships from the GS. After one full semester on probation (or 9-credit equivalent), the GS does not allow the student to continue unless the GGPA is at least 3.0. The DGS may ask the GS to allow a longer probation. After dismissal for these reasons, student may apply for re-admission after two semesters (one of which may be the 8-week summer term).
- L. **Curricular practical training (CPT).** International students taking course work are eligible to take CPT. The Stuckert Career Center provides EXP 650 and EXP 651 (variable credits). These courses require an approved Learning Contract, which the student must present to the UKIC, detailing the work to be done, the form and frequency of communication between student and supervising faculty, and the grading standard. The student must be taken for a letter grade and will count towards the students course residency. The UKIC can provide accurate and up-to-date details about the program. **IMPORTANT:** CS is still in the process of clarifying conditions for granting CPT; students considering the CPT must contact the the UKIC and the DGS before making any plans.



- M. **Optional practical training (OPT).** This option provides international students with an opportunity to gain practical experience working off-campus. Unlike CPT, it offers no credits towards the course requirement, and in no other way advances students in the program. It may be used for internships while the student is in the program, but in practice it is difficult to use this option to that end because of the time required for processing OPT requests. Most international students request OPT for the time after they graduate. The UKIC provides accurate and up-to-date details about the program.

## V. FAILING OFFICIAL EXAMINATIONS

- A. **Definition of terms.** By “Official Examination” we mean a Masters Final Examination, a PhD Qualifying Examination, or a PhD Final Examination. By “pass” and “fail” we mean “passing or failing according to the vote of the committee.” A strict majority is needed to pass an exam.
- B. If a student fails an Official Examination, the student may sit exactly once for a further attempt at passing that Examination.
- C. The further attempt may not take place sooner than 4 months (1 month for the Masters Final Examination) nor later than 12 months from the date of the original Examination.
- D. The rules pertaining to lead times for submitting requests and providing written write-ups apply equally to Official Examinations and to the further attempt.
- E. The committee for the further attempt must be the same as for the original Examination insofar as possible. Committee substitutions require the approval of both the DGS and the Graduate School.

## VI. PROPER BEHAVIOR

- A. **Plagiarism.** All academic work, written or otherwise, that a student submits is expected to be the result of that student’s own thought, research, or self-expression. It is a serious offense to allow other students to copy work or to copy the work of other students (even if it is in a public computer file) unless the instructor of the course explicitly permits such activities. A student who borrows ideas, wording, or code from other sources must acknowledge that fact or the student has committed plagiarism. These offenses are punished quite strictly. University of Kentucky adopted and follows detailed policies concerning plagiarism and academic offenses. Detailed information on these and related topics is at <https://www.uky.edu/ombud/>.
- B. **Responsible use of computers.** Students are expected to follow these rules: Respect the privacy of others. Don’t try to gain access to the files of another user without clear authorization (such as public access permission). Don’t try to intercept network communications (including mail). Don’t build programs that secretly collect information about their users. Don’t attempt to obtain unauthorized privileges. Don’t try to alter the integrity of the software (by using unauthorized accounts, impersonating others, cracking passwords, modifying others’ data or programs). Don’t copy programs for redistribution outside the department (even if within UK) without authorization. Don’t use our computers for immediate financial gain. Inform the staff if you detect others violating these principles.
- C. **Computer privacy.** The staff and faculty will generally not attempt to read protected or encrypted files and directories unless the owner explicitly permits it, except if they need to in order to perform their function or if there is reasonable suspicion of someone violating the plagiarism or responsible computer use guidelines. The Department keeps archival backups on a regular basis. Mail and protected (or even encrypted) files and directories are not secure. Therefore, it is unwise to

keep confidential material on the computer. More detailed information concerning the general UK computing infrastructure can be found at <https://www.uky.edu/its/it-security-policy/uk-information-security-policy>.

## VII. CREDITS

A. **Academic load** The normal load during any semester is 9 credit hours. Students that are funded must take no more than 9 credits and must maintain a full-time student status.

The DGS might allow a student to take 12 credits if the student has a demonstrated record of very good grades at UK and is not funded. The DGS will generally not permit more than 12 credits. An approval of the GSD is needed to exceed 15 credits in a regular semester.

### B. Credit transfer

- (a) **How many.** The maximum number of credits allowed (effectively 9 hours) is the greater of 9 hours and 25% of the semester hours required for degree (not counting thesis credit). The GSD can override the 9-credit max in some cases. A course that earned  $n$  credits on a quarter scheme transfers as  $2n/3$  credits in our semester scheme.
- (b) **When.** The credits must not be more than 8 years old. The transfer cannot happen while the student is on academic probation at UK.
- (c) **Where.** The credits must come from an accredited American institution, not a foreign institution. They may come from a previous graduate degree at UK.
- (d) **Exceptions.** Older or foreign credits can be transferred based on passing a course exam, but students must pay for such credits.
- (e) **What.** The DGS will not approve credits for work unrelated to CS. Credits must not be in independent work, research, or thesis. Grades must be A or B. The course may be from another UK program in which the student has already received a degree. It is permissible to transfer high-level (600, 700-level) credits.
- (f) **Effect.** A transferred credit counts towards the degree requirements, but the grade is not transferred. Transferred courses do not affect the GGPA.
- (g) **How.** The student secures the DGS approval for the transfer. The student then submits a formal request for the transfer to the GS using the appropriate to the degree "Transfer of Credit" form available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/degree-forms>.
- (h) **Graduate students transferring into CS from elsewhere on campus** automatically transfer graduate-level (including non-CS 400G) credits. If the student will not receive a degree in the other program, there is no limit on the number of courses. The DGS may choose to disallow certain non-CS courses from applying to the CS degree.
- (i) **PB credits.** Up to 9 graduate level (including non-CS 400G) PB credits may be transferred. It is wise to transfer 600-level credits first.

## VIII. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Here is some information. As the regulations change frequently, it can only be viewed as approximate. The only definitive source of information on these matters is the UKIC <https://international.uky.edu>.

A. **Minimum number of credits.** The United States government requires 9 credit hours for holders of F-1 visas. These must not be audit credits. They may be undergraduate credits if required for a

graduate degree. This minimum can be lowered due to language difficulties, improper placement in a course leading to the student needing to drop the course, work on thesis, preparing for Masters exam, in last semester before graduation. In all these cases, DGS must sign a form available at <https://international.uky.edu/isss/students/rcl>.

- B. **PB status.** Only domestic students may generally be PB (because INS does not allow an I-20 form to be issued to a PB student; the GS will not allow an F-1 visa to be used for a PB). However, someone who already has an F-2 visa can take classes PB and part-time. Applicants for PB status must meet the GS English requirement (TOEFL 79 or IELTS 6.5).
- C. **Financial matters.** International students are not eligible for student loans. Full-time TAs may not have an additional job. Half-time TAs may work another 10 hours on campus, but need permission from INS to take a job off campus. Summer jobs can be full-time, and permission from INS is likely to be easier in the summer for off-campus jobs.
- D. **Visa information.** International students generally come to the US under an F-1 student visa based on an I-20 form. Students whose course of study exceeds the limit on their initial I-20 form need to submit an extension request to UKIC (the form is available at the UKIC site).

## IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- A. **Travel support.** The department has a limited budget to support travel expenses of students presenting talks at conferences or expenses related to thesis/dissertation research. To apply for support, students must contact the DGS by email.
- B. **Payroll.** The payroll for Computer Science TAs and RAs is handled by the ASST and AADGS. The ASST can provide forms to let students decide how much state and federal withholding should be applied. Students may be eligible for a waiver of local taxes; see the ASST for details.
- C. **Fellowships.** The GS offers fellowships for graduate students. The details are at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/fellowships>.
- D. **TA positions** are generally allocated by the DGS in consultation with the Department Chair. Summer TAs are allocated by the DUS. TAs need to e-mail the DGS in early Spring expressing interest. Courses like CS 101, CS 115, CS 215, and CS 221 are often offered and need TAs, but the number of positions is not known until after pre-registration. The DUS assigns responsibilities to TAs. The amount of stipend is calculated once a year at the start of the Fall semester based on budget and level of experience of the student. We do not raise the stipend during the year. The GS officially requires registration of full load for TAs. In exceptional cases, the GS may waive this requirement, if requested by the DGS with a strong compelling justification.
- E. **RA positions** are offered by faculty members, both in CS and in other departments, who have funding from external sources. The amount of stipend is calculated once a year at the start of the Fall semester based on budget and level of experience of the student. In general, a full-time RA requires that the student carries a full time load. Exceptions are possible but require a prior approval from the GS.
- F. **Limits.** CS policy is to support a masters student with a TA position only for two years. PhD students with fewer than 8 semesters as a TA get priority for reappointment over students with 8 or more semesters. PhD students with 8 or more semesters as a TA who have not passed the QE have the lowest priority.
- G. **Tuition scholarship.** Full-time TAs and RAs get a full tuition scholarship; Half-time TAs and half-RAs get a half tuition scholarship.