

Department of Computer Science

Five-year BS/MS Program



What is the BS/MS Program?

The BS/MS Program in Computer Science is an academic program that allows admitted participants to obtain both a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, or Computing (CCS) and a Master of Science in Computer Science in as little as 5 years. Admitted participants are allowed to take graduate courses in Computer Science during the final year of their BS degree, which can be used toward satisfying MS degree requirements.

Why should I apply?

There are several reasons a student may consider applying to the BS/MS program:

- By completing a Master of Science degree, your knowledge of Computer Science will be deeper, better preparing you, and your résumé, for success in industry.
- You will experience the excitement of participating in cutting edge Computer Science research.
- BS/MS students save time and money by completing their Master's degree in one additional year instead of two years.
- Approximately 1,500 applications are submitted each year for our MS degree program during the annual formal graduate school application cycle. The BS/MS program provides high-achieving UCSB CS/CE/CCS Computing students an opportunity to be considered for our graduate program as part of a much smaller applicant pool.

Who is eligible to apply?

If you want to acquire an advanced degree in Computer Science, or think that you may want to do so, you should *immediately* set your academic goals high enough for admission to the program:

- Eligible applicants are typically in the third year of their 4-year BS degree. You must have at least 1 and at most 3 remaining undergraduate quarter(s) after the Spring application quarter.
- Applicants must have completed at least 3 upper division Computer Science courses by the end of the Spring application quarter.
- Admission is offered to our most accomplished and creative undergraduates; acceptance to the BS/MS program is an honor. Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 overall GPA to be considered, and most successful applicants have a GPA of at least 3.5.

*If you are a prospective applicant, you should visit the Computer Science Undergraduate Advisors at the **beginning** of your third year, as you will need to schedule plan differently than undergraduates with terminal B.S. degrees. If you are planning to finish your undergraduate degree in 3 years, you should visit the Advisors at the **beginning** of your second year.*

Planning for BS/MS

Second Year

Formulate your career goals as clearly as you can and determine which academic program will best meet those goals. You may wish to consult with Computer Science faculty to help with this formulation, as well as your course planning.

Third Year

Begin speaking with an advisor about how you should plan your courses this year to prepare for the possibility of taking graduate courses in your fourth year. During the Spring quarter of your third year, you will submit your BS/MS application to the Computer Science Department. Please note that exceptions can be made for students who have accelerated their program and plan to finish their undergraduate requirements by the end of their 3rd year.

Fourth Year

In order to complete the program in 5 years, you must plan to take 2-3 graduate courses during your fourth year. Graduate courses are generally twice as much work as undergraduate classes, so you will need to plan your schedule accordingly. Once you are in your final quarter of your undergraduate degree, you **MUST** request to advance to graduate standing. **Strict deadlines exist for advancement**, thus please schedule a meeting with the CS Undergraduate Advisors **the quarter before** advancing for a degree audit.

Master's/Fifth Year

You will work with the CS Staff Graduate Advisor to make sure you understand and meet all requirements. Please note that MS students are required to be in graduate standing for a minimum of 3 quarters in order to be granted their MS degree. While most BS/MS students finish both degrees in 5 years, it is not a strict rule for the MS degree to be completed in 1 year.

How To Apply

Submit the BS/MS application to the Department of Computer Science during the Spring quarter of your third year (*NOTE: Transfer students please see the CS Department regarding this requirement*). **We only accept applications once per year.** The completed application packet includes:

1. Three letters of recommendation, preferably from Computer Science faculty, submitted directly to the CS Graduate Student Advisor (cs-gradprogram@ucsb.edu)
2. Statement of Purpose: See the "Required Application Materials" page of this application for the essay instructions.
3. Personal History and Diversity Statement: See the "Required Application Materials" page of this application for the essay instructions.
4. An unofficial transcript downloaded through your GOLD portal.
5. A list of all undergraduate courses remaining, at the time of application, to complete your undergraduate degree.
6. A proposed MS study plan (*Note: Any graduate courses taken prior to admission into the program cannot count towards the MS requirements*).

2024-2025 APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 1, 2025

Questions? Please contact the CS Staff Graduate Advisor by email cs-gradprogram@ucsb.edu. For questions regarding your undergraduate program plan, please email cs-undergrad@ucsb.edu.

BS/MS STUDY PLAN

This study plan is **not** required to be submitted with your application. However, it is important that you plan the next three years carefully. If you have any questions or would like advice, contact a CS Undergrad Advisor.

JUNIOR YEAR					
FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:
TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:	

Get to know faculty

Apply by deadline

SENIOR YEAR					
FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:
TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:	

Take at least 2 graduate
(200-level) courses

Confer BS degree

MASTER'S YEAR					
FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:	Course:	Units:
TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:	

Take 2 graduate (200-level)
courses per quarter

Take 1 seminar (595)

Take 8 units of 596 research
and complete project**

**Based on project option. For exam or thesis information, please contact the Staff Graduate Advisor.

Name (Last, First):

Perm Number:

Date:

Required Application Materials

1. All required materials should be uploaded to your personal Box link that will be emailed to you by the CS Graduate Advisor (cs-gradprogram@ucsb.edu):
 - a. **Signed Coversheet**
 - b. **Statement of Purpose:** Give a brief statement outlining your reasons for undertaking a graduate program, your particular area of specialization within the major field, your past academic work, and your plans for future occupation or profession. Also include any additional information that may assist the selection committee in evaluating your preparation and aptitude for graduate study at UC Santa Barbara. Your Statement of Purpose must be written in narrative (essay) form without duplicating content from your Personal History and Diversity Statement. While there is no minimum or maximum, most statements are typically 1-2 pages.
 - c. **Personal History and Diversity Statement:** UC Santa Barbara is interested in a diverse and inclusive graduate student population. Please describe any aspects of your personal background, accomplishments, or achievements that you feel are important in evaluating your application for graduate study. For example, please describe if you have experienced economic challenges in achieving higher education, such as being financially responsible for family members or dependents, having to work significant hours during undergraduate schooling or coming from a family background of limited income. Please describe if you have any unusual or varied life experiences that might contribute to the diversity of the graduate group, such as fluency in other languages, experience living in bi-cultural communities, academic research interests focusing on cultural, societal, or educational problems as they affect under-served segments of society, or evidence of an intention to use the graduate degree toward serving disadvantaged individuals or populations. Your Personal History and Diversity Statement must be written in narrative (essay) form without duplicating content from your Statement of Purpose. A minimum word count of 250 words is required. There is no maximum length requirement. Most statements are typically 1-2 pages.
 - d. **Resume or CV:** List your positions of employment or volunteer work/community service since high school, either full or part-time, including the hours per week worked and the nature and dates of employment or service.
2. **Three letters of recommendation, preferably from CS faculty:**

Letters of recommendation should be emailed directly by faculty to the CS Staff Graduate Advisor by the application deadline (cs-gradprogram@ucsb.edu)
3. **Unofficial UCSB transcript:**
 - a. An unofficial transcript may be printed or downloaded through your GOLD portal.
4. **Completed chart (attached):**
 - a. All undergraduate courses remaining, at the time of application, to complete your undergraduate degree
5. **Proposed MS study plan (attached):**
 - a. The CS website provides a list of courses applicable to each area (*note: when completing this study plan, please remember that you should plan to take 2-3 graduate level courses during your 4th year of undergrad*)

Coversheet for Statement, Achievements, and Resume/CV

Name: _____ Perm #: _____ Date: _____
Last First

UCSB email address: _____ Citizenship: _____ Visa: _____

Current Department: _____ Current College: _____

Research area of interest (optional): _____

Faculty interests (optional): (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

Are you interested in pursuing a PhD in the future? Y N

Instructions:

Each of these three **required** documents should be uploaded as separate files. **All application materials should have file names that include your name as well as which document you are submitting, e.g., "lastname_firstname-SOP."**

Statement of Purpose: See the "Required Application Materials" page of this application for the essay instructions.

Personal History and Diversity: See the "Required Application Materials" page of this application for the essay instructions.

Resume or Curriculum Vitae: See the "Required Application Materials" page of this application for the essay instructions.

If you have discussed your plans for graduate study with any UC Santa Barbara faculty, please list their names here:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please upload completed application to Box:
the CS Department Staff Graduate Advisor will email you a personalized Box link
(cs-gradprogram@ucsb.edu)

Tentative Study Plan for the Master of Science Degree

Name:

UCSB Email:

Perm #:

Choose One:

Exam

Project

Thesis

MAJOR COURSES					
Major Area (choose one)	Course	Year/Quarter	Units	Grade	Verification
<input type="checkbox"/> Applications <input type="checkbox"/> Foundations <input type="checkbox"/> Systems					

BREADTH REQUIREMENTS (List Area)					

SEMINAR COURSES					
595					

ADDITIONAL COURSES					
Graduate (200-level)					
Undergraduate (100-level) except 193					
596/597/598					

REQUIREMENTS

- **Total number of units: 42** (includes Major Area, Breadth, Seminar, and Additional Courses; upper-division or above excluding CS 193)
- **Major Courses:** Take 4 CS graduate courses from one area
- **Breadth:** Take 1 CS graduate course from each of the other 2 areas
- Same course cannot be used to satisfy multiple requirements
- Receive at least a B in all major area courses
- Take 2 to 6 units of CS 595 research seminar, or of research seminars in other CoE departments (except TMP and MAT, which require an exception)

Thesis Additional Requirements

- At most 12 units of 596 and 598 may be used towards unit requirement
- Pass a 1-2 hour oral defense
- Formally file a MS Thesis according to Graduate Division procedures

Comprehensive Exam Additional Requirements

- Take 12 additional units of 100-level (excluding 193) or 200-level courses, 8 units of which must be graduate courses (200-level)
- At most 4 units of CS 596/597/598 may be used towards unit requirement
- Pass the MS Comprehensive Exam, offered in Fall and Spring quarters

Project Additional Requirements

- Take at least 2 additional 200-level graduate courses
- Take at least 6 units and at most 8 units of 596 Directed Research
- Submit a project completed under permanent faculty direction
- Pass a 1 hour oral defense