



## DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE ACADEMIC POLICIES

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This manual describes the academic policies for the Master of Science Degree in Computer Science, Master of Science Degree in Computer Information Systems (face-to-face, blended and online), Master of Science Degree in Telecommunications and Graduate Certificate programs at Boston University Metropolitan College Department of Computer Science.

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## 1.0 Application Policies and Procedures

### 1.1 Degree Candidacy

The Master of Science (MS) Degree in Computer Science (CS), Computer Information Systems (CIS), and Telecommunications (TC) is available to qualified individuals who have earned a Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

While no particular undergraduate course of study is required for admission, applicants must demonstrate the ability to succeed in the program for which they are applying. If such ability is not evident after a formal evaluation of their academic records by the Department's Admissions Committee, applicants may be required to complete prerequisite courses in certain academic areas as part of their admission.

In some cases, program prerequisite requirements can be satisfied by passing a waiver examination. Waiver exams are pass/fail, and three hours in length. There is a \$50 processing fee for each exam. Waiver exam syllabi are available from the department upon request.

The Admissions Committee is responsible for evaluating all applications and makes decisions regarding admission for all degree and certificate programs. Emphasis is placed on the applicants' demonstrated scholastic ability, academic potential for satisfactory completion of degree requirements, as well as maturity and previous professional experience.

Boston University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national origin, marital status, or disability in the recruitment and admission of students, or the operation of any of its programs or activities as specified by federal and state laws and regulations. Inquiries concerning the application of, or compliance with, the laws and regulations prohibiting such discrimination should be addressed to the Boston University Director of Affirmative Action or the Director of the United States Office for Civil Rights.

### 1.2 Application Requirements

Applicants can visit <http://www.bu.edu/csmet/admissions/> for more details on the application process and/or to apply to the graduate programs. A completed application for admission includes the following:

1. A completed Application for Graduate Admission form
2. All official transcripts of undergraduate course work completed as well as that of any graduate level course work (if applicable).
3. Three letters of recommendation. It is required that one be an academic reference if you graduated or engaged in post-graduate education in the past three years. (Two Letters of Recommendation are required for Grad Certificate programs)
4. A current résumé
5. A self-evaluation (short essay of at least 200 words describing your motivation for study)
6. A nonrefundable \$85 application fee (\$25.00 Application fee for Grad Certificate programs)

All application documents submitted become the property of the Boston University Metropolitan College Department of Computer Science and may not be returned to an applicant or forwarded to another institution.

### 1.3 English Proficiency

Fluency in English is a requirement. Students whose native language is not English and who have studied at institutions where English is not the language of instruction must provide proof of English proficiency by submitting scores for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The minimum scores for the Internet Based TOEFL (IBT) are 22 in Writing, 23 in Speaking, 18 in Listening, and 21 in Reading OR approval of the admissions committee. The minimum IELTS score is 6.5 or approval of the admissions committee.

### 1.4 International Student Requirements (On Campus & Blended Applicants Only)

In addition to the requirements described in sections 1.2 and 1.3, students who are not U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents must also submit the following documentation:

1. Completed International Student Data Form (ISDF). Fill out the following information completely and accurately:
  - Enter your name exactly as it appears in your passport, even though you may have more than one way of spelling your name (especially in English).
  - Enter your date of birth in the American format: month, day, and year (MM/DD/YYYY). For example, May 12, 1978, should be written 05/12/1978.
  - Answer every question.
  - Sign and date the form.
2. A copy of the biographical page of your passport
3. Copies of all of your immigration documents if you are currently in the U.S.
4. Required financial documentation demonstrating your ability to pay for your expenses at Boston University (required only if applying for a student visa)

Additional information regarding required documents and procedures can be found on the International Student and Scholars Office (ISSO), [www.bu.edu/isso](http://www.bu.edu/isso).

### 1.5 Admissions Timetable

The Admissions Committee meets regularly throughout the year. Applicants can expect to receive an admissions decision within two to four weeks after a complete application is received by the Department. Admission decisions are sent to applicants through email and U.S. mail.

### 1.6 Deferring Enrollment

A student may defer initial registration for a period not exceeding one calendar year.

## 1.7 Change in Master's or Graduate Certificate Programs

If a student decides to change to a different Master's program or Graduate Certificate within the department then they will have to formally apply to the new Program.

## 1.8 Change in Program Format – MSCIS Only

When applying to the MS in Computer Information Systems, it is recommend that applicants apply for the format in which they plan to take a majority of their courses. It is important that a student updates the Department if they decide to complete their remaining courses in a format different then that specified on their program application. That way, the student will receive any important announcements that pertain to that specific format of the program. Further, international online students (non U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents) wishing to switch to the on campus format may be subject to policies as set forth by the International Students and Scholars Office and should contact the Department prior to registering for any on campus courses.

## 1.9 Change in Course Format

Students do have the option to register for classes in different formats as long as all program requirements are being fulfilled. On campus and online international students (non U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents) should contact their designated program coordinator prior to registering for classes in a different format as this may affect their immigration status.

## 2.0 Advanced Standing

### 2.1 Transfer of Credit

MS candidates who, within the previous four years, have completed graduate level courses at other accredited institutions may petition for transfer of credit. These courses must have been completed with a grade of "B" or better. Only graduate level courses are appropriate for transfer and only if they were not used to fulfill the requirements of a previously awarded degree. Graduate courses taken at Metropolitan College before acceptance into the degree program are not considered to be transfer courses.

A petition for approval of credits for transfer form must be submitted to the Department within the first six months after acceptance to the MS degree program. Petitions must be accompanied by an official transcript, a syllabus, and a course description from the catalog proving the course is a graduate level course.

In special cases, MS degree candidates may be allowed to take a graduate course outside Metropolitan College. In such cases, approval must be obtained before registering for the course.

A candidate for the MS degree may transfer a maximum of eight credit hours of advanced standing into the program. This is equivalent to two courses taken at Metropolitan College. A candidate for the Graduate Certificate may transfer a maximum of 4 credits hours. This is equivalent to one course taken at Metropolitan College.

A petition for approval of credits for transfer form can be downloaded from the forms section of the department web site: <http://www.bu.edu/csnet>.

## 2.2 Course Waivers

Students who have mastered the subject matter of a core or concentration requirement through previous coursework (graduate or undergraduate, regardless if it has counted towards a previously awarded degree) and/or professional experience may petition to have the requirement waived. Unlike transfer credit, waivers do not reduce the total number of courses required for the degree and must be replaced.

1. If a 600 level or higher course is waived, it should be replaced by a 600 level or higher course.
2. If more than one course toward a certificate or concentration is waived, the replacement courses must be approved by the department to earn that concentration or certificate.

Students interested in petitioning for a waiver should contact the Department for more information.

## 2.3 Courses taken before Matriculation

In special situations students may be asked to take courses at an outside university/college before they are matriculated into a degree program. Such courses do not count as transfer courses. Students may take specified courses before matriculation and those special outside courses will need departmental approval.

A maximum of two graduate-level courses (8 credits) taken at Metropolitan College before acceptance into the Master's degree program may be applied toward the Master's degree program requirements.

A maximum of two graduate-level courses (8 credits) taken at Metropolitan College before acceptance into a graduate certificate program may be applied toward the graduate certificate program requirements.

## 2.4 PMP Certification

Graduate students pursuing a MS in Computer Information Systems degree with a concentration in IT Project Management that have a valid PMP Certification are eligible to receive a one course reduction for MET CS 632 IT Project Management only. To receive this course reduction, please submit your valid PMP certificate to your assigned program coordinator within the first six months after acceptance to the MS degree program.

## 2.5 CISSP Certification

Graduate students pursuing a MS in Computer Information Systems degree with a concentration in Security that have a valid CISSP Certification are eligible to receive a one course reduction for a Security concentration elective (cannot count towards MET CS 684 IT Security Policies or Procedures, MET CS 695 Enterprise Information Security OR MET CS 546 Quantitative Methods for Information Systems). To receive this course reduction, please submit your valid CISSP certificate to your assigned program coordinator within the first six months after acceptance to the MS degree program.

## 3.0 Curriculum

### 3.1 Current curriculum

Current curriculum for all degree programs can be found by going to:  
<http://www.bu.edu/csnet/academic-programs/programs/>

### 3.2 Additional Requirements

Under special circumstances courses in addition to those constituting the degree requirements may be added as part of the admission conditions. These courses and any additional stipulations become an integral part of the degree requirements.

### 3.3 Online Course Load

Taking one course per seven week term is considered an intensive course load for students enrolled in the MS in Computer Information Systems online program. Taking more than one online class during a 7 week term is considered overloading and requires departmental approval.

### 3.4 Declaration of more than one concentration

Students may choose to concentrate in more than one area for their MS program. Each concentration must be finished before the student officially graduates from their program. No additional concentrations may be added after graduation. In the case of some courses overlapping between one or more concentrations, only one course may count towards both concentrations. If more than one course overlaps, the student must take an elective in its place so that each concentration is completed. If MET CS 546 Quantitative Methods for Information Systems is an overlapping course, another elective will not need to be taken for that particular course. Please consult the Department for further details.

### 3.5 Multiple Certificates

Students who want to pursue two certificates should be aware that in the case of some courses overlapping, only one course will be counted toward both certificates. If two courses overlap, then the second course counts toward only one certificate and will be replaced by some other course (that has to be authorized by the Department) for the second certificate.

### 3.6 Directed Study

A directed study provides the opportunity for a student to conduct research in an area of interest under the guidance of a member of the faculty. It may not be substituted for a required core course. A candidate may engage in only one directed study during his or her program. Additional directed studies may be approved only under special circumstances. A directed study may not be of the same material as a course currently being offered by the Department of Computer Science. A directed study requires the approval of the faculty member concerned, the Chairman of the department, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for Metropolitan College. Directed study applications are available in the forms section of the department web site: <http://www.bu.edu/csnet>

### 3.7 Master’s Thesis

A Master’s Thesis provides the opportunity for a student to conduct research in an area of interest under the guidance of a member of the faculty for two academic semesters. A thesis satisfies an elective requirement in the program. A candidate may engage in only one thesis during his or her program. A Master Thesis requires the approval of the faculty member concerned, the Chairman of the department, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for Metropolitan College.

The thesis must be completed within twelve months. This option is available to candidates who have completed at least seven courses toward their degree and have a GPA of 3.7 or higher. Students are responsible for finding a thesis advisor and a principal reader within the department. The advisor must be a full-time faculty member; the principal reader may be a part-time faculty member with a doctorate. Permission must be obtained from the department. Master’s Thesis application forms are available in the forms section of the department web site: <http://www.bu.edu/csmet>. In addition to the form, a short proposal is required.

## 4.0 Grading System

### 4.1 Grade Symbols

Grade	Grade Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D	1.0
F	0

No grade lower than a “C” will be applied toward degree requirements. Any grade below “C” for courses represents failing performance.

The student’s cumulative grade point average (GPA) is computed by assigning the Grade Points numeric values above to the letter grades earned in completed courses. Incomplete grades (I) are not counted in the GPA.

The minimum passing grade for a course in the graduate program is a “C” (2.0), but an academic average grade of B (3.0) must be maintained to be considered in good academic standing, to satisfy degree requirements and to graduate.

A candidate who receives a failing grade in a core class must repeat the course and earn a passing grade. A candidate who receives a failing grade in an elective may repeat the course and earn a passing grade or substitute another elective course in which a passing grade has been earned. Please

see section 5.4 under Academic Probation.

Courses that are to be applied toward the meeting of degree requirements may not be taken on a Pass/Fail basis.

### 4.2 Withdrawals

There are several important deadlines that students should consider before withdrawing from a course. Students are expected to be aware and understand the financial and academic ramifications of these deadlines prior to registering. Students receiving a student loan or other types of financial aid should

contact the Metropolitan College Office of Financial Aid before withdrawing. Withdrawal deadlines are as follows:

1. Withdrawal and Tuition Refund Schedule for face-to-face and blended courses:  
<http://www.bu.edu/reg/calendars/refund/>
2. Refund and Withdrawal Deadlines for online courses:  
[http://www.bu.edu/online/online\\_course\\_schedule/important\\_dates/](http://www.bu.edu/online/online_course_schedule/important_dates/)

### 4.3 Incompletes

The grade of “I” is given to a student who, for reasons explained at the earliest feasible time and deemed acceptable to the instructor, does not complete all of the course work by the end of the semester. An incomplete is only awarded to students who were unable to complete course work as assigned because of extenuating circumstances, and only if most of the course requirements have been completed.

The faculty member will submit with each grade of “I” an incomplete contract describing the remaining work required, the timetable for the student to complete that work, and the grade the student will receive should the contract not be honored. The contract must be signed by both the instructor and the student. The incomplete contract is available in the forms section of the department web site:  
<http://www.bu.edu/csnet>

Incompletes must be resolved at the student’s initiative within a maximum of one semester, which typically represents two terms for online students. If the necessary work is not completed by one academic semester the grade will be automatically turned into an “F”. When a student has two outstanding incompletes, the student will not be allowed to register for additional courses until the incompletes are completed.

### 4.4 Change of Course Grades

Any change of the grade for a course must be approved by the instructor, the Department Chairman, and the Dean of Metropolitan College. For grades other than “I”, approval will only be granted if the original grade was erroneously given. No grade changes are permitted based on extra work done by a student after the course has been completed.

### 4.5 Recording of Grades

Grades earned in approved transfer courses taken outside Boston University will not be recorded on the student’s academic record, but will be treated as transfer credit. Transfer credits are located in a separate section of the transcript called “External Credits and Test Scores”.

Grades earned in courses in other graduate programs at Boston University will be recorded on the student’s permanent academic record.

## 5.0 Academic Performance Standards

### 5.1 Academic Conduct Code

All students entering Boston University are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. It is the responsibility of every student to be aware of the Academic Conduct Code's contents and to abide by its provisions. The Academic Conduct Committee of each BU school or college is composed of students, faculty and staff, and has jurisdiction over all charges of academic misconduct brought against students. Students may review the Academic Conduct Code at:

<http://www.bu.edu/met/for-students/met-policies-procedures-resources/academic-conduct-code/>

### 5.2 Communication

Candidates are expected to display satisfactory ability to communicate in research papers, reports, written analyses, examinations and classroom and/or online discussions. All work shall be judged not only for content and style, but also for clarity, analytical competence and effectiveness.

### 5.3 Professional Behavior

In accordance with MET student academic conduct standards, candidates are required to maintain high standards of professional behavior in their courses, and may be subject to dismissal if their behavior interferes with their classmates study or does not, in the opinion of the faculty, represent acceptable behavior.

### 5.4 Good Academic Standing

A degree candidate must earn a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) to be in good academic standing. When a student has taken more courses than required to meet the graduation requirements, then a subset of those courses may be selected for the purposes of graduation, provided that the subset meets all degree requirements and the GPA computed over that subset is at least 3.0.

### 5.5 Academic Probation

Graduate student academic status is reviewed by the department at the end of each semester. Graduate students not in good standing at the end of a semester will be placed on academic probation. Good academic standing is defined by:

1. A semester grade point average of at least 3.0
2. A cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in order to graduate

Prerequisite course grades are not taken into consideration when determining whether a student will be placed on Academic Probation. However, these grades are factored into the University GPA.

When a graduate student is placed on probation, the student must receive a minimum 3.0 GPA in the next semester they enroll for classes. If a student's GPA is still under 3.0 after one semester, the student must maintain a minimum 3.3 GPA each subsequent semester until their overall GPA is a 3.0 or higher.

Students who have not removed themselves from academic probation in the allotted time will be dismissed from their program. Students who, in the determination of the department and based on past academic performance, are not in a position to raise their GPA to the necessary level to graduate within the remaining courses of their program, will be dismissed from the program.

## 5.6 Academic Dismissal

After a student has been on Academic Probation for one semester or more, and the student has not made satisfactory progress toward obtaining a GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for graduation, the Academic Advisor may recommend to the Department Chairman that a student be academically dismissed from the degree program. If the Department Chairman concurs then the student will be dismissed from the degree program.

## 5.7 Notification and Petition

A letter shall be sent to the candidate's last address of record notifying the candidate of probationary status or dismissal in accordance with the above.

A student may petition the decision of the Department by submitting within thirty days of the date of the notification letter a written statement of specific, serious circumstances presumed to be unknown to the Department that might warrant reconsideration of a probation or withdrawal action.

## 6.0 Graduation Requirements

### 6.1 Graduation Application

In order to graduate, students must complete and submit to the Department an Application for Graduation. Failure to submit this application will result in a graduation delay. Applications should be submitted after the student registers for the final class in their program. An Application for Graduation can be found in the forms section of the department web site: <http://www.bu.edu/csnet>.

### 6.2 Degree Requirements

To graduate, a student may either choose to comply with the degree requirements in effect at the time of admission, or choose to graduate under the requirements in effect at the time of graduation.

Out of the ten required courses, a candidate for a MS degree must complete with satisfactory grades a minimum of eight courses (equivalent to 32 credits) at Boston University Metropolitan College. No more than two courses may be transferred from an outside university or college. For more information on transfer credit, please refer back to section 2.1.

### 6.3 Recommendations for the Degree

The faculty of Boston University Metropolitan College governs the process of awarding degrees to candidates. The faculty reserves the right to decide whether the academic proficiency and the

professional ability of the candidate warrant the recommendation for the Master of Science degree to the President and Trustees of Boston University.

#### 6.4 Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

A degree candidate must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for the MS and Graduate Certificate programs. Grades earned in courses taken at institutions other than Boston University and transferred into the degree program are not counted in the computation of the GPA. If students have taken more than the minimum required courses then the GPA for purposes of graduation may be computed using a subset of the courses taken, provided that the subset meets all degree requirements, and the GPA computed over that subset is at least 3.0.

#### 6.5 Expiration of coursework

The faculty will evaluate coursework completed more than six calendar years before graduation, and may require a student to take one or more specific additional courses to update their understanding before graduating from the program.

#### 7.0 Leave of Absence

Matriculated students must complete at least one course each academic year to remain active degree candidates. Students must file a Leave of Absence form or notify the Department by letter or email of an anticipated leave of absence whenever the student intends to miss one or more academic semesters.

#### 8.0 Disabilities

If you need academic accommodations because of a disability to meet the academic requirements of our program, please contact Boston University's Office of Disability Services by telephone at 617-353-3658, or by e-mail at [access@bu.edu](mailto:access@bu.edu), at least four weeks prior to the start of class. Disability Services will evaluate your situation and determine what accommodations are appropriate.