

Computer Science: Master of Science Thesis and Non-Thesis Option Guidelines

Thesis Option

The culminating thesis is a research project that builds on existing knowledge and includes some novel elements. The project may include major software implementation or software development as part of a research effort, or it may be primarily theoretical or empirical in nature. The novel element could include a new algorithmic technique, an empirical study of existing techniques, or a unique application of existing techniques. The thesis becomes an SIUE publication and may lead to a conference or journal publication.

To complete an MS Thesis, a student must follow these procedures:

1. With the help of a professor in the Computer Science Department, identify a project that would be an extension of current research. This professor will then serve as your advisory committee chair.
2. With the guidance of the chair you will then develop the proposal. It must include a clear plan and a timeline for completion. You must follow the thesis formatting guidelines of the University.
3. Request approval of your project by your advisory committee. If a committee member does not approve your project or no longer wishes to serve on the committee, your committee chair will help you to identify other faculty members who might consent to be on your committee. Upon approval of the proposal, you will be registered for the CS 599 course. You must also register your thesis title with the Graduate School (refer to the Graduate School website for the appropriate form).
4. Upon completion of your thesis work, you will be required to hold an open defense of your project that will consist of a presentation and a question-and-answer session by your advisory committee. Your thesis write-up must be available to your committee three weeks prior to your scheduled defense date. Passage of the thesis and defense is by unanimous agreement of the committee. The committee chair, in consultation with the committee members, will assign a grade for CS 599.

Non-Thesis Option

In place of the CS 599 Thesis credit hours, non-thesis option students may either take three additional credit hours of approved graduate-level electives and complete an MS project, or six additional credit hours of approved graduate-level electives and pass a Final Exam. The MS Project (CS596) is a 3 credit hour elective course whose oral exam will serve as the MS exit exam. Please refer to the MS project document for additional information. The Final Exam is a non credit exam, given once each semester (fall and spring), for students who have completed at least 21 hours of graduate credit. Refer to the Final Exam Guideline for additional information.