FAQs

FIFTH-YEAR COMPUTER SCIENCE MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAM

When should I begin to think about this program?
Applying for this program is a personal decision and a commitment is not required until junior year. Begin considering this option as a freshman or sophomore. Do what is right for you – discuss it with your peers, family, and faculty. Since the department is small, the faculty are easily assessible and are happy to assist students.

What are the application requirements?
Computer Science and Information Technology majors are eligible to apply to the program in their junior year. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and a major GPA of 3.3 are required. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 through completion of the B.S. degree to remain in the program. Students must also continue to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher in the graduate program.

What are the Concentration options in the Master’s Program?
- Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- General
- Web & Database Technologies

What are the total courses required to complete the program?
SJU is a course-based institution. The following number of courses is required for the B.S. and M.S., individually:

- Undergraduate Degree – 40 Courses
- Master’s Degree – 10 Courses

What is the cost savings for a Master’s Degree with the five-year program?
In senior year, two (3) credit graduate courses are charged on the undergraduate fee scale, as opposed to the graduate fee scale.

Are Fifth-Year Master’s Students eligible to apply for a Graduate Assistant position?
Yes! New Graduate Assistants are hired every semester.

What is the typical course of study for this program?
In the Five-Year program, two 500 or 600 level courses are taken during senior year and are applied toward the Master’s Degree. These two courses are double-counted with courses taken in the B.S. program. Research is an integral component of the program; therefore, two mandatory research courses are required during the fifth-year under the supervision of a faculty member.

Senior Year
- Two 500-level or 600-level elective courses

Fall Year 5
- CSC-550: Object Oriented Programming & Data Structures
- CSC-554: Theoretical Foundations
- CSC Elective (600-level)
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Spring Year 5
CSC-551: Design & Analysis of Algorithms
CSC-670: Topics in Computer Science
CSC Elective (600-level)

Summer Year 5
CSC-791: Graduate Research I
CSC-792: Graduate Research II

Are courses available online?
Yes! Several graduate courses are now available online and online course offerings will continue to grow.

I’d like to take some time off between completing my Bachelor’s Degree and starting the Master’s Degree. Is this possible?
Unfortunately, this is not feasible. Admitted students are expected to transition immediately from the undergraduate program to the graduate program and must complete the M.S. degree requirements within one academic year (fall-spring-summer).

What is the advantage of obtaining a Master’s Degree through this program at SJU?
Since the Computer Science class size is small, faculty have the ability and flexibility to work with every student on an individual basis. Also, typical M.S. programs take two years to complete, as opposed to the fifth-year program.

What are the opportunities for a person with a graduate degree vs an undergraduate degree?
The market for Computer Science positions is vibrant and growing. Graduates do well with a B.S. degree and are successful. The main difference is the starting salary—approximately a $10,000 difference. Also, promotions are usually preferred with a graduate degree, as opposed to an undergraduate degree. The decision to obtain a Master’s degree is a personal choice and totally up to you.

Who should I contact to discuss this program in further detail?
Please feel free to contact the Department Chair & Graduate Program Director, Dr. Babak Forouraghi, at bforoura@sju.edu or 610.660.1567.