

Choosing Your Major

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Which degree is best for you?

Most universities offer both a Computer Science degree and an Information Technology degree, and some universities even offer a Management Information Systems degree. Here at Augusta University¹, we have all three options for you: Computer Science² (CS / CSCI), Information Technology³ (IT / AIST), and Cybersecurity⁴ (CYBR), along with two unique diploma, Cybersecurity Engineering⁵ and Cyber Operations⁶.

While all of these degrees are high-quality and should place students on a fast-track towards a successful career, students always ask the same question, “Which degree is best for me?” The answer to this question depends on the student, their career goals, and a variety of other factors.

Students even ask more specific questions:

- Which degree will give me the highest salary?
- Which degree is easiest?
- Which degree is hardest?
- Which degree has the most job opportunities?

These are all great questions! But before answering them, it is more important to have a basic understanding of the degree options.

¹<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/programs.php>

²<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/bs-cs.php>

³<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/bs-it.php>

⁴<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/bs-it-cybersecurity.php>

⁵<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/bs-cybersecurity-engineering.php>

⁶<https://www.augusta.edu/ccs/bs-cyber-ops.php>

The following links detail these three degrees and explain the benefits of each:

- Difference Between a Computer Science & Information Technology Degree⁷
- Computer Science vs Information Systems/Technology⁸
- Degrees that Pay You Back (from Wall Street Journal)⁹

Additionally, Augusta University has a “Planning Your Academic Life”¹⁰ page that you may find useful.

Summary

Computer scientists design and develop computer programs, software, and applications. IT and IS professionals then use, configure, and troubleshoot those programs, software, and applications. So it really depends on what you want to do. Do you want to be on the front end, designing the software and applications? Do you prefer to use and troubleshoot them? One of the websites gave the analogy of a home: computer scientists build the home, set up home, install the lighting, plumbing, etc., and then the IT/IS professionals come and live in the home to use it, test it, and troubleshoot it.

So which degree is “best”? Perhaps you can now see how this question is not fair or at least not clear. If we ask which degree is more difficult, the students will immediately exclaim, “Computer Science is the most challenging!” Therefore, one can perhaps argue that the Computer Science degree is the most rigorous (challenging) and will likely provide the student with more opportunities in their career. And the salary statistics support this argument, as CS students, on average, have a higher salary than their IT and IS colleagues. That said, is Computer Science better? Yes, and no. It depends on **you**! It depends on your goals. It depends on how hard you want to work. For some, “better” means more money and more career opportunities. For others, “better” means easier studies and less math! So again, which degree is “best”? There is no short answer. As mentioned above, all three degrees provide the tools you need to hopefully have a great career. Perhaps the question is best worded as, “Which Degree is Best for **me**?” And of course, only **you** can answer this question!

⁷<http://online.king.edu/information-technology/difference-between-a-computer-science-information-technology-degree/>

⁸<https://www.geteducated.com/careers/521-computer-information-systems-vs-computer-science>

⁹http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-Degrees_that_Pay_you_Back-sort.html

¹⁰<https://www.augusta.edu/advising/planning.php>