

Logistics for getting a Masters in Computer Science

Department of Computer Science
College of Engineering

Fall, 2012

Getting Started

- You will be assigned an initial advisor. Consult that advisor. Take a variety of graduate courses. Talk to faculty about their research interests. Find out what interests you if you don't already know.
- **Project versus Thesis.** A project is typically smaller in scope, from three to six credits. A thesis is larger in scope, from six to nine credits. Both require a full report to be written. See the graduate catalog for further discussion on what is a project versus what is a thesis.
- You can take up to three credits of independent study. You can also take up to three credits of Practicum (industrial internship). These must be approved by your adviser, committee and the graduate program coordinator. See next section on how to create a committee.

The Process

1. Find a faculty and a topic to work on for your project or thesis. Once a faculty agrees to be your supervisor, they become the chair of your supervisory committee for your thesis or project.
2. Form a committee with at least three members. The norm is three members and the maximum is four members. Typically the members are Computer Science faculty. However, there can be one committee member that is from outside the Computer Science department. They could be from another academic department on campus or another University. They can also be from industry. Fill out the *Supervisory Committee appointment* form (available from the graduate college website: <http://www.boisestate.edu/gradcoll/>) and submit to graduate college.
3. Write a project or thesis proposal working closely with the chair of your supervisory committee. Present this proposal to your committee. This must be done at least one semester before the semester you intend to graduate. Detailed instructions for the proposal can be found on the web at <http://coen.boisestate.edu/cs/students/graduate-students/thesisproject/>
4. After the proposal is approved, you need to apply for *Candidacy* to the graduate college. This form is also on the website for graduate college. You must have completed at least 15 credits

before applying for candidacy. Part of the candidacy form is to plan out the rest of the your program of study. It then becomes a “contract” for you to follow. Any changes need to be done via a graduate Academic Adjustment form (available on the graduate college website).

5. Work on your project or thesis and then write it up. The project report or the thesis must be written using LaTeX typesetting software using specific style files that were approved by the graduate college for Computer Science. Details can be found on the web page <http://coen.boisestate.edu/cs/students/graduate-students/thesisproject/>

Finish line: What to do during the semester you graduate?

1. Check with the chair of your supervisory committee if you are ready to graduate!
2. Check the Academic Calendar to find out the last date for defense in your graduating semester (usually by end of the 9th week).
3. Contact your committee and set a date for your defense. You will need to schedule about one and half hours of time.
4. Apply for graduation via the BroncoWeb.
5. Contact the department’s office manager (KeelaPatterson KeelaPatterson@boisestate.edu) to schedule a room (make sure to ask for one with a projector and a computer).
6. Give a printed copy of your report/thesis to your committee at least two weeks before the defense date. Some professors may want even more lead time. Check with your committee well in advance!
7. Write a brief announcement for your defense and get it approved by the chair of your supervisory committee.
8. Email the department’s office manager with a title, name and the approved brief announcement of your talk and ask the office manager to send email and make/post fliers for your defense.
9. If you are defending a thesis: on the day of the defense, bring three copies of the Defense Committee Approval. Both these forms are available from the Graduate College website (<http://www.boisestate.edu/gradcoll/>). The Defense Committee Approval needs to be on 25% cotton paper. Bring three copies.
10. After the defense, incorporate any changes suggested by the committee. If you are doing a thesis, then have your committee chair approve the final version by signing on Final Reading Approval page (at least 3 copies on 25% cotton paper).
11. If you are doing a thesis, then take a copy to be approved by the Graduate College office. Project reports do not have to be approved by the Graduate College.
12. The department recommends that both project reports and theses should be uploaded into ScholarWorks in the library.