

# Frequently Asked Questions

## General Info

How much does the MS program cost?

How much does the PhD program cost?

What are the funding opportunities within the department and university?

For more information about the funding available in the CS department, visit:

<https://www.pdx.edu/computer-science/graduate-assistantships>.

- Teaching Assistantships (TA)
  - Can be awarded to both MS and PhD admitted students and are applied for separately from the application for admission. The CS department offers between 15-25 positions each quarter. TAs might teach a lecture under the supervision of a faculty member or support a course in other ways for approximately 15-20 hours per week. They receive a monthly stipend and a tuition remission.
  - PhD applicants who apply by the priority application deadline for a Fall term start will automatically be considered for an admission offer with guaranteed funding (in the form of a guaranteed 3-term Teaching Assistantship assignment). These offers are limited and are therefore competitive.
- Research Assistantships (RA) are less centralized and administered by individual faculty members; these are usually awarded to PhD students.

The following financial support resources are also available through PSU and the PSU Graduate School:

- <https://www.pdx.edu/gradschool/funding>
- <https://www.pdx.edu/student-finance/scholarships>
- <https://www.pdx.edu/gradschool/scholarships-and-awards>
- <https://www.pdx.edu/international-students/scholarships> (international students only)

Can I transfer credits from another institution to the PhD degree program?

Can I transfer credits from another institution to the Master's degree program?

MS students can transfer a maximum of 15 credits with approval from the CS department and the PSU Graduate School. The transfer credit request process can only be started once a student is 1) admitted, and 2) has matriculated in the program. To initiate the process, the [MS Plan of Study](#) and [GO-21M Transfer Credit Request form](#) are submitted to the department. The GO-21M lists the requirements that all requested transfer credits must meet. Course syllabi or related materials may also be required.

Am I eligible for Grad Prep as an international student?

Yes, international students are eligible for the postbaccalaureate Grad Prep program and can receive an I-20 for the program. The challenge for international students is that they must enroll full-time (12 undergraduate credits = 3 classes) as part of their F-1 visa requirements. However, the Grad Prep program is, for the most part, a part-time program (1 to 2 classes) given the prerequisite structure. So, international students will need to find 3rd class to take, when the required Grad Prep courses are not equivalent to full-time for a given quarter.

## Admission Requirements

What are the admission requirements?

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. To be considered for admission, you must have:

- A four-year baccalaureate degree in Computer Science from an accredited institution
- 3.0 or equivalent GPA
- International students must meet [English Language Proficiency Requirements](#)
- The GRE requirement has been waived through Fall 2024 applications

To find a link to the online application, list of admission materials, and application deadlines please see our [website](#).

What if my previous degree is not in Computer Science?

Depending on the breadth of your previous academic CS background, you might consider the following:

1. Apply for the MS degree directly. The CS admissions committee will assess your academic/CS background, along with the other application components, to determine overall fit and readiness for the graduate program and issue an admission decision accordingly (which could include a recommendation to pursue the options mentioned below).
2. Develop the CS academic background needed for graduate study before applying to the MS program. There are 2 options for this at PSU, both of which require [postbaccalaureate admission](#):
  - a. Complete the [Grad Prep program](#) with a grade of B or higher in each course. The Grad Prep courses are the essential prerequisites for CS graduate courses. An applicant's previous, relevant coursework can be reviewed to determine if any of the Grad Prep coursework can be waived. Course syllabi and transcripts are required to conduct this review.
  - b. Complete a [2nd Bachelor's degree in CS](#). Postbacs are not required to re-take general education requirements, and can have some other requirements waived based on prior coursework.

## What if my undergraduate GPA is below the minimum requirement of 3.0?

It is possible for an applicant to be recommended for admission whose undergraduate GPA is slightly below 3.0 if their overall application is very strong and the admissions committee determines that the applicant is a good fit for the program. It is recommended that an applicant's low GPA be addressed in their Statement of Purpose within their application.

## Which GPA is evaluated if I took graduate-level courses before, or already have a graduate degree?

For applicants who have earned 9 or more letter-graded graduate credits, the graduate GPA supersedes the undergraduate GPA for admission review purposes. The minimum graduate GPA is 3.0.

Add university conditional GPA info?

## Can I be admitted if I do not meet the English language proficiency requirement?

Yes, conditional admission is possible. If an applicant is offered conditional admission, they will be required to complete coursework in PSU's [Intensive English Language Program \(IELP\)](#). Any IELP coursework that is required depends on the test scores that were received within the application and will be detailed within the admission letter. To waive this requirement, updated

scores that meet the [minimum requirement for graduate study](#) must be received prior to a student's first term.

## Can I be admitted if my previous bachelor's degree was a three-year program?

In most cases a four-year bachelor's degree is required for admission. However there can be exceptions to this, for example: three-year Bachelor's + one- or two-year Master's program, or postgraduate diplomas, etc. Degree equivalency is assessed by the PSU Graduate School's degree equivalency team once an application has been submitted, during the admissions review process.

## Can I defer my admission?

Yes, admitted students can defer their admission for up to one year from their original term of admission. To request a deferral, consult the [PSU Academic Calendar](#) and contact the CS Graduate Advisor ([gccs@pdx.edu](mailto:gccs@pdx.edu)) to request a future start term. If a student does not enroll in their term of admission, and does not defer their admission, their admission will be canceled.

International students can expect to receive an updated I-20 document from the PSU Graduate School within 7-10 business days of their deferral request, if the [required financial documentation](#) has already been received by their office.

## I am applying for the PhD program, should I connect with potential faculty advisors before I apply?

Doctoral admission depends on a strong academic background, research experience, a clear research direction, and the availability of a faculty advisor within the proposed research area. It can greatly strengthen a doctoral application if a faculty advisor has already been confirmed. That said, an applicant can apply without one in place.

## I submitted my application, when can I expect to receive a decision?

Admission decisions are typically issued about 6-8 weeks after the [application deadline](#) for complete applications. For applications that are incomplete after the deadline, admission decisions will be issued 6-8 weeks after all required documents have been received. Once the admission decision has been released, applicants will receive a notification from the Graduate School that their decision letter is available to view within the application portal.

I missed the application deadline, can I still apply?

## Application Requirements

What are the application requirements?

Which transcripts am I required to submit?

Portland State requires a complete educational history in order to evaluate your application. This includes a list of all community colleges, colleges and universities that you have previously attended. The Graduate School requires copies of transcripts only from schools where a bachelor's degree was awarded and/or graduate-level coursework was completed.

If you are offered admission, as the final verification step after enrolling in your program, you will be required to submit official transcripts from any institution where a bachelor's degree was awarded, as well as any institution where graduate-level credits were completed.

Degree certificates for international students?

Where do I send my official documents?

For application purposes, unofficial copies are sufficient. Official copies of application documents (like transcripts, English proficiency test score reports, etc.) are only required upon admission to the program and instructions for how to submit these will be provided at that time.

Can I change my application term after I submit it?

Two-year old test references and English proficiency test scores (at time of matriculation)

## Notes/Questions

- Point of view: second or third person?