

Computer Science, B.A.

Learning Outcomes

- Students understand the mathematical, logical, statistical, and theoretical foundations of computing.
- Students can analyze and compare the relative merits of alternative software designs and develop high-quality software systems.
- Students understand the fundamental principles of computer organization, system software, networks, and security.
- Students can apply computer science principles to a variety of problems, such as databases, data mining, graphics, and various fields of artificial intelligence (AI).
- Students understand social, professional, and ethical issues related to computing.

Overview

The major in computer science provides students with the necessary training for employment in careers such as software development and information management. It provides good preparation for graduate study in a variety of disciplines.

The department encourages students majoring in computer science to consider earning a second major, certificate, or minor.

Students may declare a major in computer science when they are admitted to the University or afterward. All students begin as Bachelor of Arts majors but may switch to the Bachelor of Science program at any time.

Undergraduates majoring in computer science develop competence in programming principles and methodologies, problem-solving techniques, mathematics, and computer systems. Computer science training is critical for many careers in science, engineering, business, and health care.

Computer science majors are advised at the Academic Advising Center until they have completed 24 s.h., at which point they are assigned a departmental advisor. Students being advised at the Academic Advising Center also can consult with a computer science faculty advisor.

Transfer students who have taken a course approved as equivalent to a required computer science or informatics course are exempt from that course. Transfer course grades are included in the computer science grade-point average.

Students should consult the Department of Computer Science website or visit the department's office for information about general policies, elective areas, and internships, scholarships, and student groups, such as the University's chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and Women in Computing Sciences (WiCS).

Advanced Placement

The Computer Science Advanced Placement Program test may be used to satisfy requirements. See "Advanced Placement" under Undergraduate Programs on the Department of Computer Science website.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in computer science requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 41 s.h. of work for the major. Students must maintain a g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. A cumulative g.p.a. of at least 2.00 is required for graduation. Students also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

The computer science major for the Bachelor of Arts is designed for students who would like to gain considerable knowledge in computer science and have flexibility in choosing electives. Students preparing for careers in the computing field are encouraged to supplement the base requirements with additional computer science courses. The program's flexibility makes it suitable for combination with other majors.

Course work for the major includes computer science courses as well as courses in mathematics, statistics, and other supporting disciplines. Work for the major may not be taken pass/nonpass.

Bachelor of Arts students considering a switch to the Bachelor of Science program should choose their GE CLAS Core Natural Sciences courses carefully since students may be able to use the same courses to satisfy the computer science major natural science sequences requirement for the B.S. degree. See "Natural Science Sequences" under Requirements in the B.S. in computer science section of the Catalog.

The departmental residency requirement requires that students who earn a B.A. in computer science must complete at least five courses (minimum of 15 s.h.) at the University of Iowa from the following: CS:2630 Computer Organization or ECE:3350 Computer Architecture and Organization, CS:2820 Object-Oriented Software Development, CS:3330 Algorithms, and at least two computer science course numbered CS:3620-CS:5899, but excluding CS:3910 and CS:3980.

The B.A. with a major in computer science requires the following course work.

Code	Title	Hours
Computer Science Core Courses		27
Mathematics Core Courses		11-12
Advanced Computer Science Electives		3
Total Hours		41-42

Computer Science Core

Code	Title	Hours
All of these:		
CS:1210	Computer Science I: Fundamentals	4
CS:2210	Discrete Structures	3
CS:2230	Computer Science II: Data Structures	4
CS:2820	Object-Oriented Software Development	4
CS:3330	Algorithms	3
CS:3820	Programming Language Concepts	3
One of these:		
CS:2630	Computer Organization	3

ECE:3350	Computer Architecture and Organization	3
One of these:		
CS:3620	Operating Systems	3
CS:3640	Introduction to Networks and Their Applications	3
CS:4640	Computer Security	3

Mathematics Core

Code	Title	Hours
Calculus I		
One of these:		
MATH:1550	Engineering Mathematics I: Single Variable Calculus	4
MATH:1850	Calculus I	4
Calculus II		
One of these:		
MATH:1560	Engineering Mathematics II: Multivariable Calculus	4
MATH:1860	Calculus II	4
Linear Algebra/Probability and Statistics		
One of these:		
MATH:2700	Introduction to Linear Algebra	4
STAT:2020	Probability and Statistics for the Engineering and Physical Sciences	3
STAT:3120	Probability and Statistics	4

Students who take MATH:2550 Engineering Mathematics III: Matrix Algebra and MATH:2560 Engineering Mathematics IV: Differential Equations can use these courses together to satisfy the linear algebra requirement.

Advanced Computer Science Electives

Code	Title	Hours
At least 3 s.h. from these:		
A computer science course (prefix CS) numbered 3620-5899, except CS:3910 and CS:3980		
A computer science course (prefix CS) numbered 5900 or above, with department approval		

Students may count a maximum of 3 s.h. earned in CS:3990 Honors in Computer Science or Informatics toward the advanced computer science elective requirement.

Early Admission to the Graduate College

Undergraduate computer science students who have 6 s.h. or less to earn toward graduation may apply for early admission to the Graduate College. Early admission allows students in their final undergraduate semester to take courses for graduate credit in addition to the courses they need to complete their bachelor's degrees.

Combined Programs

B.A./M.C.S.

Qualified computer science undergraduate students who plan to earn the Master of Computer Science degree may apply for the combined Bachelor of Arts/Master of Computer Science program. The combined B.A./M.C.S. program allows students to earn both degrees in five years. The program requires a total of 140 s.h. Students are granted a B.A. when they complete all requirements for the undergraduate degree.

Students in the combined program must complete all requirements for each degree, but may count a maximum of 12 s.h. (four courses) toward both degrees. The four courses must be taken during the fourth year of undergraduate study, after admission to the combined program, and must satisfy degree requirements of both the B.A. and the M.C.S.

If students withdraw from the combined program before completing their bachelor's degree, credit earned in the four courses is counted only toward the undergraduate degree.

A version of the combined program is now available for Grinnell College undergraduate students pursuing a B.A. degree in computer science who want to earn the M.C.S. at the University of Iowa.

Students apply for admission to the combined program during their third year as an undergraduate and enter the program at the beginning of their fourth year. They typically complete the combined program in one year after completing B.A. requirements.

Applicants to the combined program must:

- be enrolled as a B.A. student majoring in computer science at the University of Iowa;
- have completed a minimum of 80 s.h. at the time of admission to the combined program, with at least 30 s.h. earned at the University of Iowa; and
- have a cumulative University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.25 and a g.p.a. of at least 3.25 in the computer science major (computed on math prerequisites and core computer science course work taken at the University of Iowa).

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College.

Students must submit an application for admission to the program, a statement of purpose, three letters of recommendation, and transcripts from all colleges attended; they also must apply to the Graduate College. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are not required. For more detailed information, see Prospective Students on the Department of Computer Science website.

Honors

Honors in the Major

Students majoring in computer science have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. They must maintain a minimum UI cumulative g.p.a. of 3.33 and complete 4-6 s.h. of CS:3990 Honors in Computer Science or Informatics which requires the submission of an acceptable honors thesis. Students are responsible for finding a faculty member willing to supervise their honors project. They can register for

CS:3990 with the project supervisor's name once the faculty member approves the proposed project and a timetable for the work. For more details, see Honors on the Department of Computer Science website.

Honors students may count a maximum of 3 s.h. of CS:3990 Honors in Computer Science or Informatics toward the B.A. degree's advanced computer science elective requirement. Students in the combined B.A./M.C.S. program may register for 4-6 s.h. of CS:5990 Individualized Research or Programming Project instead of CS:3990; this will allow them to receive graduate credit for the course while satisfying the course requirements to graduate with honors.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the University's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the computer science major. However, the semester hours earned in CS:3990 Honors in Computer Science or Informatics or CS:5990 Individualized Research or Programming Project can be used to partially satisfy the UI Honors requirement of 12 s.h. of experiential learning course work.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The Four-Year Graduation Plan is not available to B.A. students majoring in computer science. Students work with their advisors on individual graduation plans.

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

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Course	Title	Hours
First Year		
Fall		
MATH:1005	College Algebra ^a	4
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Diversity and Inclusion ^b		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course ^c		4 - 5
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	2
Hours		16-18
Spring		
CS:1110	Introduction to Computer Science	3
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric	3 - 4
MATH:1010	Trigonometry	3
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives ^b		3

GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course ^c	4 - 5
Hours	16-18

Second Year

Fall		
CS:1210	Computer Science I: Fundamentals	4
MATH:1850	Calculus I	4
GE CLAS Core: Social Sciences ^b		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course ^c	4 - 5	
Elective course ^d		1
Hours		16-17

Spring

CS:2210	Discrete Structures	3
MATH:1860	Calculus II	4
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course ^c	4 - 5	
Elective course ^d		3
Elective course ^d		2
Hours		16-17

Third Year

Fall		
CS:2230	Computer Science II: Data Structures	4
Major: Math Elective ^e		3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab ^b		4
Elective course ^d		3
Elective course ^d		1
Hours		15-16

Spring

CS:2630	Computer Organization ^f	3
CS:2820	Object-Oriented Software Development ^f	4
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts ^b		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences without Lab ^b		3
Elective course ^d		2
Hours		15

Fourth Year

Fall		
CS:3330	Algorithms ^f	3
Major: Computer Science core course ^g		3
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues ^b		3
Elective course ^d		3
Elective course ^d		3
Hours		15
Spring		
Major: Computer Science core course ^g		3
Major: Computer Science advanced elective ^h		3
GE CLAS Core: Values and Culture ^b		3
Elective course ^d		3
Elective course ^d		3
Hours		15
Total Hours		124-131

- a Enrollment in math courses requires completion of a placement exam.
- b GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.
- c Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.
- d Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.
- e Choose from MATH:2700, STAT:2020, or STAT:3120.
- f Students may take CS:2630, CS:2820, and CS:3330 in any order after completing CS:1210, CS:2210, and CS:2230.
- g Possible courses include (1) CS:3620 or CS:3640 or CS:4640 for systems requirement or (2) CS:3820.
- h Students may choose a computer science course (prefix CS) numbered 3620-5890 except CS:3910 and CS:3980, or a CS course numbered 5900 or above with department approval. A course used to complete a core requirement cannot also be used as a major elective.

Career Advancement

Computer science graduates work primarily in two market sectors. One includes the software and computer industry, from small start-ups to giants such as Amazon, Google, Intel, Yahoo, and Microsoft. These offer job opportunities in software design, including UIX, mobile, and web development. Another sector is made up of organizations whose primary business is not computing, such as banks, insurance, and other financial groups; health care organizations; consulting, media, and legal firms; entertainment companies; and the military.

As many as one-third of computer science graduates go into research or elect to pursue graduate studies in computer science, including the University of Iowa's five-year B.A./M.C.S. program, or pursue other areas where computer science provides a strong foundation.

A recent job placement survey indicates that more than 97 percent of computer science graduates were placed or no longer seeking employment within six months of graduation.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.