SOFTWARE ENGINEERING, MS

Banner Code: VS-MS-SWE

Academic Advising
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Email: csgrad@gmu.edu
Website: cs.gmu.edu/prospective-students/ms-programs/ms-in-software-engineering/

The MS in Software Engineering (MS-SWE) prepares students to become leaders in engineering high quality, large scale, computing solutions to real life problems. Software engineering spans all aspects of developing software, including requirements analysis, design, construction, testing, usability, security, maintenance, and economics. Software engineering spans all types of software, including mobile and web applications, software services, enterprise software, and large complex systems. We revise courses regularly to keep up with changes in software engineering.

The MS-SWE program emphasizes pragmatic problem solving that addresses reliability, usability, future growth, security, cost, and efficiency. Graduates go on to technical leadership positions such as engineering lead, software architect, director of engineering, and CTO, as well as managerial and executive positions. MS-SWE students come from a diversity of undergraduate backgrounds, including computer science, engineering, mathematics, sciences, and business. The DC area has one of the largest collections of software companies in the world and the workforce is constantly growing, making our graduates in very high demand. Many MS-SWE students work full-time at companies that are constantly hiring, making every class meeting a mini-job fair. All classes are scheduled in the late afternoon to accommodate part-time students.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions
To succeed in graduate courses, students entering the MS program must have coursework or equivalent knowledge in the following five foundation areas: (1) introductory programming in any programming language; (2) knowledge of an object-oriented programming language such as Java, C++, or C#; (3) data structures and algorithms; (4) machine organization such as those given in computer system architecture or assembly language courses; (5) and topics in discrete mathematics, including sets, propositional and predicate logic, relations, functions, trees, graphs, and inductive proofs.

The level of knowledge required in these areas is equivalent to that taught in undergraduate courses and may be demonstrated in one of several ways:

1. Applicable undergraduate coursework: Such courses must appear on transcripts from the student’s undergraduate university, or another accredited university. Applicable courses from George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) are given here:
   a. Foundation: OO programming
      • GMU CS: CS 211 Object-Oriented Programming
      • GMU IT: IT 106 Introduction to IT Problem Solving Using Computer Programming IT 106 Introduction to IT Problem Solving Using Computer Programming
   b. Foundation: Data structures
      • GMU CS: CS 310 Data Structures
      • GMU IT: IT 306 Data Structures and Algorithms in Java
      • NVCC: None
   c. Foundation: Machine organization
      • GMU IT: IT 342 Operating Systems Fundamentals IT 342 Operating Systems Fundamentals
      • NVCC: None
   d. Foundation: Discrete math
      • GMU Math: MATH 125 Discrete Mathematics I (Mason Core) (http://catalog.gmu.edu/mason-core/)
      • NVCC: MATH 288

2. Preparatory coursework taken at GMU: The CS department offers the following bridge foundation courses: (1-2) SWE 510 Object-Oriented Programming in Java, (3) INF 519 Programming and Data Structures, (4) INF 515 Computer Organization Course and Operating Systems, and (5) INF 501 Discrete and Logical Structures for Information Systems. These courses may be taken by students in non-degree or provisional status.

3. Passing appropriate testout exams: Students can self-prepare and attempt testout exams for SWE 510 Object-Oriented Programming in Java, INF 519 Programming and Data Structures, INF 515 Computer Organization Course and Operating Systems, and INF 501 Discrete and Logical Structures for Information Systems. Eligible domestic students who lack one or more foundation may be admitted provisionally and required to take the appropriate preparatory course or pass the testout exam. Other students may be advised to learn the foundation material and re-apply.

Application Requirements
In addition to general admission requirements of the university, each applicant to the MS program must hold a four-year (120-credit minimum) baccalaureate degree in an appropriate discipline from an accredited institution and have earned a GPA of 3.00 or better in the last 60 credits of undergraduate study. Other requirements are as follows:

• Provide a resume and a one- to two-page statement of educational and work experience in the computing field that includes a statement of career goals in software engineering.
• International students must submit their English Proficiency scores.
Policies

Program Requirements

In addition to the general requirements of the university, the MS in Software Engineering requires a minimum of 30 graduate credits. The coursework is divided into three categories: a breadth requirement of 12 credits of core courses, a depth requirement of 9 credits of emphasis courses, and 9 credits of elective courses.

Advising

The department holds orientation meetings each January and August to advise incoming and continuing students. Members of the faculty are present to answer questions and offer advice concerning programs of study. Detailed information is available on the department web site (https://cs.gmu.edu/).

The department also provides an advising function to students, as outlined in the student advising form available from the department. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor with whom to confer on matters related to degree requirements. A plan of study form for the MS degree should be completed and submitted by the student soon after admission; this plan serves as a guide for the student.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 30

Core Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWE 619</td>
<td>Object-Oriented Software Specification and Construction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE 621</td>
<td>Software Design and Architecture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE 632</td>
<td>User Interface Design and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE 637</td>
<td>Software Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Software Engineering Related Courses

Students must take three courses from the following list:

- Any SWE courses at the 600-level or above. (http://catalog.gmu.edu/courses/swe/)
- Any of the following Computer Science courses:
  - CS 540 Language Processors
  - CS 550 Database Systems
  - CS 555 Computer Communications and Networking
  - CS 571 Operating Systems
  - CS 675 Distributed Systems
- Any of the following Information Security and Assurance courses:
  - ISA 562 Information Security Theory and Practice
  - ISA 650 Security Policy
  - ISA 673 Operating Systems Security
- Any of the following Information Systems courses:
  - INFS 740 Database Programming for the World Wide Web

Operations Research

- OR 542 Operations Research: Stochastic Models

Total Credits 9

1 Credit will not be given for both INFS 614 and CS 550.
2 Credit will not be given for both SWE 622 and CS 675.

Research Option

With the consent of a faculty sponsor and faculty advisor, students may complete a 6-credit thesis as part of the electives.

Electives

Students may select the remaining courses from the following list. Students may select courses not on this list with prior approval from the faculty advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of allowed electives</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Software Engineering courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Computer Science courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Information Security and Assurance courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Information Systems courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Electrical and Computer Engineering courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any of the following Operations Research courses:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any of the following Statistics courses:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Systems Engineering courses:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the following Psychology courses:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 9
Accelerated Master’s

Applied Computer Science, BS/Software Engineering, Accelerated MS

Overview
Highly-qualified students in the Applied Computer Science, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/computer-science/applied-computer-science-bs/) have the option of obtaining an accelerated Software Engineering, MS. See AP.6.7 Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Degrees (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7).

Students in an accelerated degree program must fulfill all university requirements for the master’s degree. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies)/.

Admission Requirements
Students in the Applied Computer Science, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/computer-science/applied-computer-science-bs/) program may apply to this option if they have earned 90 undergraduate credits with an overall GPA of at least 3.30. Students must have successfully completed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS 310</td>
<td>Data Structures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 330</td>
<td>Formal Methods and Models</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 367</td>
<td>Computer Systems and Programming</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accelerated Option Requirements
Students have the opportunity to earn 3-6 credits in graduate coursework, which serves as reserve graduate credit to be counted towards the MS degree only.

Degree Conferral
Students must apply the semester before they expect to complete the BS requirements to have the BS degree conferred. In addition, at the beginning of the student’s final undergraduate semester, students must complete a Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Transition form that is submitted to the Office of the University Registrar and the VSE Graduate Admissions Office. At the completion of MS requirements, a master’s degree is conferred.

Computer Science, BS/Software Engineering, Accelerated MS

Overview
Highly-qualified students in the Computer Science, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/computer-science/computer-science-bs/) have the option of obtaining an accelerated Software Engineering, MS.

For more detailed information, see AP.6.7 Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Degrees (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7). For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies)/.

Admission Requirements
Students in the Computer Science, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/computer-science/computer-science-bs/) program may apply to this option if they have earned 90 undergraduate credits with an overall GPA of at least 3.30. Students must have successfully completed CS 310 Data Structures, CS 330 Formal Methods and Models, and CS 367 Computer Systems and Programming.

Accelerated Option Requirements
Students have the opportunity to earn 3-6 credits in graduate coursework that count towards both the BS and MS degrees. Students may register for 3-6 credits of the following CS 500-level courses in place of the corresponding CS 400-level courses required for the BS degree. Specifically, students must take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS 583</td>
<td>Analysis of Algorithms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select one of the following:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 540</td>
<td>Language Processors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 550</td>
<td>Database Systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 551</td>
<td>Computer Graphics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 555</td>
<td>Computer Communications and Networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 571</td>
<td>Operating Systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 580</td>
<td>Introduction to Artificial Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 584</td>
<td>Theory and Applications of Data Mining</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
Students complete all Software Engineering, MS core courses and apply the two courses from the above list toward elective requirements. Students also have the option to take up to 6 additional credits of graduate coursework, which serve as reserve graduate credit to be counted towards the MS degree only.
Degree Conferral
Students must apply the semester before they expect to complete the BS requirements to have the BS degree conferred. In addition, at the beginning of the student’s final undergraduate semester, students must complete a Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Transition form that is submitted to the Office of the University Registrar and the VSE Graduate Admissions Office. At the completion of MS requirements, a master’s degree is conferred.

Information Technology, BS/Software Engineering, Accelerated MS
Overview
Highly-qualified students in the Information Technology, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/information-sciences-technology/information-technology-bs/) have the option of obtaining an accelerated Software Engineering, MS.

For more detailed information, see AP.6.7 Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Degrees (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7). For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/).

Admission Requirements
Students in the Information Technology, BS (http://catalog.gmu.edu/colleges-schools/engineering/information-sciences-technology/information-technology-bs/) program may apply to this option if they have earned 90 undergraduate credits with an overall GPA of at least 3.30. Criteria for admission are identical to criteria for admission to the Software Engineering, MS Program.

Accelerated Option Requirements
Students must complete all credits that satisfy requirements for the BS and MS programs, with up to 6 overlapping credits chosen from the following two courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS 550</td>
<td>Database Systems (satisfies IT 414 requirement in the BS program)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWE 619</td>
<td>Object-Oriented Software Specification and Construction (satisfies as one DTP concentration course in the BS program)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
Students must complete MATH 125 Discrete Mathematics I (Mason Core) (http://catalog.gmu.edu/mason-core/) as their discrete math requirement and IT 306 Data Structures and Algorithms in Java as part of their concentration requirements in the BS program

Degree Conferral
Students must apply the semester before they expect to complete the BS requirements to have the BS degree conferred. In addition, at the beginning of the student’s final undergraduate semester, students must complete a Bachelor’s/Accelerated Master’s Transition form that is submitted to the Office of the University Registrar and the VSE Graduate Admissions Office. At the completion of MS requirements, a master’s degree is conferred.