OPERATIONS RESEARCH, MS

Banner Code: VS-MS-OPRS

Academic Advising

2100 Nguyen Engineering Building
Fairfax Campus
Phone: 703-993-1670
Email: seor@gmu.edu
Website: seor.gmu.edu/grad.html

The MS prepares students for research and professional practice associated with the formulation and analysis of mathematical models for decision making and their computer implementation. Major components include optimization, queuing and network modeling, computer simulation and modeling, applied and computational probability, and application of these components to realistic and relevant operational analysis problems. Students are expected to become proficient in these areas, as well as in supporting areas of information technology necessary to implement operations research methods.

The program includes core courses and electives selected by the student with the aid of a faculty advisor. To obtain the MS degree, students complete an approved plan of study that contains a minimum of 30 graduate credits. Students may take courses through the Commonwealth Graduate Engineering Program. Appropriate courses may be transferred, with advisor approval, into this Mason degree program.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions
To be admitted to the program, students must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution in engineering, mathematics, computer science, physical sciences, economics, or a related field. They also must have completed courses in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calculus</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH 113</td>
<td>Analytic Geometry and Calculus I (Mason Core) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 114</td>
<td>Analytic Geometry and Calculus II 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 213</td>
<td>Analytic Geometry and Calculus III 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrix Algebra</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 203</td>
<td>Linear Algebra 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential Equations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 214</td>
<td>Elementary Differential Equations 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Probability and Statistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 346</td>
<td>Probability for Engineers 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Programming Language</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 112</td>
<td>Introduction to Computer Programming (Mason Core) 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific application deadlines and requirements (https://admissions.gmu.edu/grad/application-deadlines-and-requirements/?academicUnit=VS&ga=1.107632321.273102085.1480697294) are available through the Office of Graduate Admissions.

The department offers SYST 500 Quantitative Foundations for Systems Engineering as an intensive review of undergraduate engineering mathematics, including matrix algebra, transforms, differential equations, probability, and statistics. On acceptance, students will be required to take a foundation qualification test a week or two before school starts, unless waived by the department chair or graduate coordinator. Students who fail the test will be required to take SYST 500 Quantitative Foundations for Systems Engineering. A sample test is available from the department.

Students with minor deficiencies in preparation may be accepted conditionally pending removal of the deficiencies. Courses taken to remove admission deficiencies (including SYST 500 Quantitative Foundations for Systems Engineering) extend minimum requirements for the degree. Students whose undergraduate training was in the quantitative social sciences or quantitatively oriented business administration may be allowed to complete a portion of the mathematics prerequisite by taking SYST 500 Quantitative Foundations for Systems Engineering.

Requirements

Degree Requirements
Total credits: 30

Students must complete four core courses and the project (15 credits). The remaining 15 credits are electives subject to the requirements below, and can be taken in one of five concentration areas or in an individual plan approved by the student's advisor.

Required Core Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR 541</td>
<td>Operations Research: Deterministic Models</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 542</td>
<td>Operations Research: Stochastic Models</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 568</td>
<td>Applied Predictive Analytics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 635</td>
<td>Discrete System Simulation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 12

Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR 699</td>
<td>Masters Project</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 3

Methods Courses

Select at least one deterministic methods and one stochastic methods course:

**Deterministic Methods Courses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR 641</td>
<td>Linear Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 642</td>
<td>Integer Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 643</td>
<td>Network Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 644</td>
<td>Nonlinear Programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stochastic Methods Courses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR 645</td>
<td>Stochastic Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 647</td>
<td>Queuing Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 674</td>
<td>Dynamic Programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Electives
Select up to three additional electives with written concurrence of the advisor. Total Credits 9

Concentrations
Students may construct concentration areas by choosing electives from among special groupings. The six concentrations available are data analytics, decision analysis, financial engineering, military operations research, optimization, and stochastic modeling. In addition to the required core courses (12 credits) and project course (3 credits), the remaining 15 credit hours consist of methods and elective courses associated with the concentration areas as outlined below. Students can also devise their own grouping of electives subject to prior approval of their advisor.

Concentration in Data Analytics (DNIC)
Students concentrating in data analytics must complete the following:

- CS 504 Principles of Data Management and Mining 3
- One deterministic methods course 3
- One stochastics methods course 3
and two courses from the following list:
- OR 604 Practical Optimization 3
- OR 670 Metaheuristics for Optimization 3
- STAT 663 Statistical Graphics and Data Exploration I 3
- SYST 584 Heterogeneous Data Fusion 3
- SYST 664 Bayesian Inference and Decision Theory 3

Total Credits 15

Concentration in Decision Analysis (DA)
- OR 671 Judgment and Choice Processing and Decision Making 3
- OR 681 Decision and Risk Analysis 3
- SYST 664 Bayesian Inference and Decision Theory 3
Select one deterministic methods course 3
Select one stochastics methods course 3

Total Credits 15

Concentration in Financial Engineering (FNNE)
- OR 588 Financial Systems Engineering I: Introduction to Options, Futures, and Derivatives 3

Total Credits 6

Concentration in Military Operations Research (MOR)
- OR 651 Military Operations Research I: Cost Analysis 3
- OR 652 Military Operations Research Modeling II: Effectiveness Analysis 3
- SYST 683 Modeling, Simulation, and Gaming 3
Select one deterministic methods course 3
Select one stochastics methods course 3

Total Credits 15

Concentration in Optimization (OPT)
Select three courses from the following:
- OR 604 Practical Optimization 3
- OR 641 Linear Programming 3
- OR 642 Integer Programming 3
- OR 643 Network Modeling 3
- OR 644 Nonlinear Programming 3
- OR 645 Stochastic Processes 3
- OR 646 Stochastic Optimization 3
- OR 667 Metaheuristics for Optimization 3
- OR 682 Computational Methods in Engineering and Statistics 3
Students must also complete:
- One stochastic methods course 3
- One elective course with written concurrence of the student’s advisor 3

Total Credits 15

Concentration in Stochastic Models (STM)
Select three courses from the following:
- OR 645 Stochastic Processes 3
- OR 647 Queueing Theory 3
- OR 674 Dynamic Programming 3
- OR 719 Graphical Models for Inference and Decision Making 3
- SYST 664 Bayesian Inference and Decision Theory 3

Total Credits 15
Dual Degree Options

Operations Research and Statistical Science Dual-Degree MS

This program allows students to earn an MS in Operations Research and an MS in Statistical Science by completing 48 credits of coursework in both areas instead of the 60 that would be required if the degrees were sought independently.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must satisfy admission requirements for the MS in Operations Research Program and the MS in Statistical Science Program. A joint faculty committee from the Statistics and Systems Engineering and Operations Research Departments make final admission decisions into the dual-degree program.

MS-OPRS/STAT Dual Degree Requirements

Total credits: 48

Required Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR 541</td>
<td>Operations Research: Deterministic Models</td>
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<td>Masters Project</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 544</td>
<td>Applied Probability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 554</td>
<td>Applied Statistics I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 652</td>
<td>Statistical Inference</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 654</td>
<td>Applied Statistics II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 24

Elective Credits in OR Courses

Select 12 elective credits in OR courses at the 600 level, including at least one deterministic methods course and at least one stochastic methods course:

**Deterministic Methods Courses:**
- OR 641 Linear Programming
- OR 642 Integer Programming
- OR 643 Network Modeling
- OR 644 Nonlinear Programming

**Stochastic Methods Courses:**
- OR 645 Stochastic Processes
- OR 647 Queuing Theory
- OR 674 Dynamic Programming
- OR 675 Reliability Analysis

Total Credits: 12

Elective Credits in STAT Courses

Select 12 elective credits from any STAT courses numbered 540-775

Total Credits: 12

Notes

- Students currently enrolled in one of the MS programs must declare pursuit of the dual MS within one year of matriculation into the first MS program.
- A maximum of 6 credits across the two disciplines may be in independent research (thesis). The requirements for independent research are the same as detailed for the associated MS program.
- Students in either the BS (selected)/Operations Research, Accelerated MS program or the BS (selected)/Statistical Science, Accelerated MS program cannot get a reduction of 6 credits toward this dual degree. Students who want to proceed to a PhD degree will only be able to waive the number of credits specified in the associated PhD degree requirements, even though they will have 48 credits at the MS level.
- If a student decides not to complete the required 48 credits, a single MS degree will not be granted unless the student fulfills the requirements for the MS in Operations Research or the MS in Statistical Science.
- Once a student receives one of the MS degrees from either department, the student will no longer be eligible for the reduction in credit (i.e., will need to complete 30 credits) if the student later decides to earn the other MS degree.

Accelerated Master's

BS (selected)/Operations Research, Accelerated MS

Overview

Highly-qualified students in selected BS programs (see below) have the option of obtaining an accelerated Operations Research, MS.

For more detailed information, see AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

Admission Requirements

Mason undergraduate students majoring in the following disciplines may apply to this option if they have earned 90 undergraduate credits with an overall GPA of at least 3.30 and completed all MATH and PHYS requirements. Criteria for admission are identical to criteria for admission to the Operations Research, MS program.

- Civil and Infrastructure Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical Engineering
- Systems Engineering
Accelerated Option Requirements

Up to two courses (6 credits) of approved master’s level courses taken as part of the undergraduate degree may be applied to the graduate degree. These two courses may be chosen from the graduate courses in the following table.

For BS candidates, these graduate courses replace the corresponding undergraduate courses. The undergraduate version of these courses may not be applied to the MS degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Credit may not be received for both courses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYST 420</td>
<td>SYST 521</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 473</td>
<td>SYST 573</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 441</td>
<td>OR 541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR 442</td>
<td>OR 542</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any other 500-level course may be applied to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees with approval of the advisor and SEOR department chair.

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.