The Master of Science in Informatics is an interdisciplinary degree program that focuses on the theoretical, application-oriented, and educational issues facing a digital, global economy. The program is designed to build an understanding of how information and technology fundamentally impact (and are impacted by) people, organizations, and the world community. Topical areas within the program span a broad range including: human computer interaction, computational techniques, applications (e.g., bio-informatics and geographical information systems), societal issues (such as digital divide issues), user issues (e.g., computer-aided cognition), and information systems design and development providing exposure and grounding in many of the aspects of the information sciences. The program is especially attractive to students interested in gaining state-of-the-art understanding of informatics and its use as a solution in multiple venues.

The Integrated Undergraduate Graduate (IUG) program is available for strong undergraduate students who wish to pursue a bachelor's and master's degree in a shorter period of time than would be necessary if the degrees were pursued separately. There are two approved IUG programs: an Integrated B.S. in Information Sciences and Technology and M.S. in Informatics, and an Integrated B.S. in Security and Risk Analysis and M.S. in Informatics.

Admission Requirements

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (http://gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies).

Applicants to the program are required to submit scores from the general portions of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), three letters of reference, a current resume (including present position and any publications), a 1 to 3 page statement of research background and goals related to pursuing an advanced degree and career in informatics, which also briefly discusses personal motivation for obtaining an M.S. or Ph.D., and a sample of the applicant’s writing (e.g., technical paper, etc.).

Because the program is multidisciplinary in nature, students from many different disciplines may be accepted for entry into the program. A bachelor’s degree in a related area (e.g., engineering and science), while not necessary for admission, is helpful in the successful completion of the degree. It is expected that students will have a basic level of competency in statistics, as well as computer and information technology. Related work experience can be used to demonstrate such competency. A student may be accepted into the program with provisional status (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/provisional-admission) for no more than one year while work is completed to meet these expectations.

It is expected that the successful applicant will have an overall grade point average of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) or higher for his or her undergraduate study and/or graduate-level study. However, accomplishments demonstrated through work experience and recommendation letters from the applicant's academic adviser or employer will also play an important role in making the admission decision. The most qualified applicants will be accepted into the program until all spaces for new students are filled.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students) for more information.

Degree Requirements

Master of Science (M.S.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies)

The M.S. in Informatics requires a minimum of 30 credits at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level, with at least 18 credits at the 500 or 600 series combined; 27 of the 30 credits must be earned at Penn State. These 30 credits are distributed among the following requirements:

Core Courses (3-6 credits)

All candidates are expected to develop a broad understanding of the core constructs of people, information, technology, and the significant
interactions among those elements by taking. Candidates may also take IST 505 to gain a deeper understanding of research design.

**Specialization Courses (12-18 credits)**

In consultation with his/her adviser, a candidate is expected to choose courses in one or more areas customized to support the thesis or scholarly paper. In addition to advanced courses in IST, a support area could be in cybersecurity, data science, law, business, education, engineering, the liberal arts, science, or any area that is linked to the information sciences. A list of suggested specialization courses is maintained by the graduate program office.

**Research Methods (6 credits)**

All candidates must develop a basic understanding of the research methods utilized in the information sciences, by taking at least two research methods courses offered in IST or elsewhere. The focus of the course must be on the methods being learned rather than application of some method to a research topic. A list of courses that will satisfy this requirement is maintained by the graduate program office.

**Thesis or Scholarly paper (3-6 credits)**

Students may choose a thesis or scholarly paper option. Students who choose the thesis option must register for 6 credits of IST 600 or IST 610, write a satisfactory thesis accepted by the master's committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and pass a thesis defense. The thesis should focus on a well-defined problem relevant to the information sciences. Students who choose the thesis option must also complete IST 505. Students who choose the scholarly paper option must register for 3 credits of IST 594 and complete the scholarly paper. The scholarly paper will be a focused piece of technical work that applies the student's expertise and knowledge base, and that is documented and presented as a scholarly paper report. Students who choose the scholarly paper option must write a scholarly paper that is accepted by their M.S. committee. An oral presentation may be required at the discretion of the student's adviser.

**Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies)

The doctoral degree in Informatics requires a minimum of 32 credits, including 8 required core credits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IST 501</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Research Design for Information Sciences and Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Select one of the following foundations courses: 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IST 510</th>
<th>Foundations in Computational Informatics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IST 520</td>
<td>Foundations in Human-Centered Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 530</td>
<td>Foundations in Social Informatics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 590</td>
<td>Colloquium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Methodology Courses** 12

**Specialization Courses** 12

Total Credits 32

To complete a Ph.D. degree, students must in their first semester take the 3-credit introduction to interdisciplinary research methods (IST 501) and one credit of graduate colloquium (IST 590). In their second semester, students must take a second credit of graduate colloquium. During their first two semesters, students must take at least one of the three foundations courses (IST 510, IST 520, or IST 530).

In addition to these first-year requirements, doctoral students must complete 12 credits of research methodology courses selected to introduce or increase proficiency in methods relevant to their doctoral research agenda, and 12 credits of specialization courses, also selected to reinforce their research training.

In addition, all students must be competent in the English language and must have demonstrated skills in the communication of ideas both verbally and in writing commensurate with the requirement of scholarly and professional work. The qualifying examination will be used as an occasion to assess English proficiency and plan for remediation (including additional courses, mentoring, or experiences) for all students. A brief critical literature review in three complementary research areas will be included as part of the qualifying examination. Students must have completed 18 graduate credits before taking the qualifying exam and must pass the qualifying exam within three semesters. Students must pass the Ph.D. comprehensive examination after completion of most of the course work, usually at the end of the student’s second year in the program. A research-based dissertation must be completed under the direction of the Ph.D. committee, with the student submitting a dissertation proposal and defending that proposal in the defense examination. To earn the Ph.D. degree, doctoral students must write a dissertation that is accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the student must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense).

**Degree Requirements**

**Dual-Title Ph.D. in Informatics and Social Data Analytics**

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-208-dual-title-graduate-degree-programs).

**Admission Requirements**

For the Dual-Title Ph.D. in Informatics and Social Data Analytics, students must apply and be admitted to the Informatics graduate program and The Graduate School before they can apply for admission to the dual-title degree program. Applicants interested in the dual-title degree program may make their interest in the program known on their applications to Informatics and include remarks in their statement of purpose that address the ways in which their research and professional goals in Informatics reflect an expanded interest in Social Data Analytics. To be enrolled in the Dual Title Doctoral Degree Program in Social Data Analytics, a student must submit a letter of application and transcript, which will be reviewed by the Social Data Analytics Admissions Committee. An applicant must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) to be considered for enrollment in the dual-title degree program. Refer to the Admission Requirements section of the Social Data Analytics Bulletin Page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/social-data-analytics). Students must apply for enrollment into the dual-title degree program in Social Data Analytics prior to taking the qualifying examination in their primary graduate program.

**Degree Requirements**

To qualify for the dual-title degree, students must satisfy the degree requirements for the Ph.D. in Informatics. In addition, students must complete the degree requirements for the dual-title in Social Data
Analytics, listed on the Social Data Analytics Bulletin page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate programas/majors/social-data-analytics).

The qualifying examination committee must conform to all requirements of the primary program and the Graduate Council. In accordance with the Graduate Council, the qualifying examination committee must include at least one member of the Social Data Analytics Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. The dual-title degree will be guided by the qualifying examination procedure of the primary program and the Graduate Council. In accordance with Graduate Council, there will be a single qualifying examination, assessing both the primary graduate program and the dual-title program. Because students must first be admitted to a graduate major program of study before they may apply to and be considered for admission into a dual-title graduate degree program, dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

The Ph.D. committee must conform to all requirements of the primary graduate program and the Graduate Council. In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for Ph.D. committees (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation), the Ph.D. committee of a Social Data Analytics dual-title doctoral degree student must include at least one member of the Social Data Analytics Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. If the chair of the Ph.D. committee is not also a member of the Graduate Faculty in Social Data Analytics, the member of the committee representing Social Data Analytics must be appointed as co-chair.

The dual-title degree will be guided by the comprehensive exam procedure of the primary graduate program. After completion of required course work, doctoral students in the dual-title doctoral degree program must pass a comprehensive examination. In programs where this includes evaluation of a written exam, the Social Data Analytics representative on the student’s Ph.D. committee will participate in the writing and evaluation of the exam, in accordance with procedures maintained by the primary graduate program. In programs where the comprehensive exam involves defense of a dissertation prospectus, the Social Data Analytics representative on the student’s Ph.D. committee will participate in the evaluation of the prospectus, including ensuring the proposed dissertation has substantial Social Data Analytics content.

Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. Students enrolled in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education in Informatics and Social Data Analytics. The dissertation must be accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

The first two to three years of undergraduate course work follow the same undergraduate curriculum that other students follow in the Information Sciences and Technology major. Information Sciences and Technology undergraduates may apply for admission to the IUG program no earlier than February 15th of their sophomore year and no later than February 15 of their junior year after completing a minimum of 60 credits, if they meet the following admission requirements:

1. Must be enrolled in a College of IST undergraduate degree program.
2. Must have completed 60 credits of an IST undergraduate degree program.
3. Must apply to the IUG program by February 15 of their junior year.
4. Must apply to and be accepted without reservation into the Graduate School and M.S. program in Informatics. Students must complete the Graduate School application (http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/apply/?CFID=4347157&CFTOKEN=809212809140639-22E9BF85-AF21-D9DA-933F3E590BF10EA8&jsessionid=B4304e7b7ae255ec9a524e5b1e5912501).
5. Must have an overall GPA of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) in undergraduate course work and a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all course work completed for the major.
6. Must present an approved plan of study. The plan should cover the entire time period of the integrated program, and it should be reviewed periodically with an adviser.
7. Must present two letters of recommendation from faculty members.
8. Must meet with both the Director of Undergraduate Academic Affairs and the Graduate Program Coordinator to declare interest and receive information about the IUG program.

Students must fulfill all degree requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the double-counting of credits as outlined below. Degree requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Information Sciences and Technology are listed in the Undergraduate Bulletin (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate). Degree requirements for the Master of Science in Informatics degree are listed on the Degree Requirements tab. Students must sequence their courses so all undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled before taking courses to count solely towards the graduate degree. If students accepted into the IUG program are unable to complete the M.S. degree, they are still eligible to receive their undergraduate degree if all the undergraduate degree requirements have been satisfied.

Up to 12 credits may be double-counted towards the degree requirements for both the graduate and undergraduate degrees; a minimum of 50% of the double-counted courses must be at the 500 or 800 level. Credits associated with the culminating experience for the graduate degree cannot be double-counted. The required 3 credits of IST 504 will apply to both the graduate program and the undergraduate program. Students may choose an additional 9 credits to double-count for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IST 411</td>
<td>Distributed-Object Computing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 412</td>
<td>The Engineering of Complex Software Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 413</td>
<td>Usability Engineering</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 420</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Systems and Enterprise Integration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Integrated Undergrad-Grad Programs**

**Integrated B.S. in Information Sciences and Technology and M.S. in Informatics**

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-210 Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate (IUG) Degree Programs (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-210-integrated-undergraduate-graduate-degree-programs).
Integrated B.S. in Security and Risk Analysis and M.S. in Informatics

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-210 Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate (IUG) Degree Programs (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-210-integrated-undergraduate-graduate-degree-programs).

The Integrated Undergraduate Graduate (IUG) program is available for strong undergraduate students who wish to pursue a bachelor’s and master’s degree in a shorter period of time than would be necessary if the degrees were pursued separately.

The first two to three years of undergraduate course work follow the same undergraduate curriculum that other students follow in the Security and Risk Analysis major. Security and Risk Analysis undergraduates may apply for admission to the IUG program no earlier than February 15th of their sophomore year and no later than February 15 of their junior year after completing a minimum of 60 credits, if they meet the following admission requirements:

1. Must be enrolled in a College of IST undergraduate degree program.
2. Must have completed 60 credits of an IST undergraduate degree program.
3. Must apply to the IUG program by February 15 of their junior year.
4. Must apply to and be accepted without reservation into the Graduate School and M.S. program in Informatics. Students must complete the Graduate School application (http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/apply/?CFID=4347157&CFTOKEN=809212809140639-22E9BF85-AF21-D9DA-933F35E90F8B10EAB&sessionid=84304e7b7ae255ec9a524e51b1e3df200183e).
5. Admission requirements for the M.S. in Informatics are listed on the Admission Requirements tab.
6. Must have an overall GPA of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) in undergraduate course work and a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all course work completed for the major.
7. Must present an approved plan of study. The plan should cover the entire time period of the integrated program, and it should be reviewed periodically with an adviser.
8. Must present two letters of recommendation from faculty members.
9. Must meet with both the Director of Undergraduate Academic Affairs and the Graduate Program Coordinator to declare interest and receive information about the IUG program.

Students must fulfill all degree requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the double-counting of credits as outlined below. Degree requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Security and Risk Analysis are listed in the Undergraduate Bulletin (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate). Degree requirements for the Master of Science in Informatics degree are listed on the Degree Requirements tab. Students must sequence their courses so all undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled before taking courses to count solely towards the graduate degree. If students accepted into the IUG program are unable to complete the M.S. degree, they are still eligible to receive their undergraduate degree if all the undergraduate degree requirements have been satisfied.

Up to 12 credits may be double-counted towards the degree requirements for both the graduate and undergraduate degrees; a minimum of 50% of the double-counted courses must be at the 500 or 800 level. Credits associated with the culminating experience for the graduate degree cannot be double-counted. The required 3 credits of IST 504 will apply to both the graduate program and the undergraduate program. Students may choose an additional 9 credits to double-count for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IST 451</td>
<td>Network Security</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 452</td>
<td>Legal and Regulatory Environment of Privacy and Security</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 454</td>
<td>Computer and Cyber Forensics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST 505</td>
<td>Foundations of Research Design in Information Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRA 433</td>
<td>Deception and Counterdeception</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRA 468</td>
<td>Visual Analytics for Security Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRA 471</td>
<td>Informatics, Risk, and the Post-Modern World</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Aid

Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding) section of The Graduate School’s website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants) set by The Graduate School.

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Information Sciences and Technology (IST) Course List (https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/ist)

Learning Outcomes

1. **KNOW**: Demonstrate appropriate breadth and depth of interdisciplinary knowledge, and comprehension of the major issues in information sciences and technology (IST).
2. **APPLY/CREATE**: Use interdisciplinary knowledge and methods of IST to plan and conduct a research thesis.
3. **COMMUNICATE**: Communicate the major issues of IST effectively, including publications in high quality journals and presentations at high value conferences.
4. **THINK**: Demonstrate analytical and critical thinking within IST, including across disciplines.
5. **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**: Know and conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical standards, values, and, where these are defined, the best practices of IST (as expressed in SARI training modules).
## Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>University Park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Program Head</td>
<td>David Joseph Fusco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)</td>
<td>David Joseph Fusco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Contact</td>
<td>Carly Marshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:arc43@psu.edu">arc43@psu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(814) 863-0591</td>
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