

Duke CS 4+1 MS Program: Information for Duke Undergraduates

The CS 4+1 MS program offers an opportunity for Duke undergraduates to earn an MS degree in CS (MSCS) with an extra (fifth) year at Duke. The MSCS degree is in addition to your undergraduate degree. This 4+1 program may be a good path for you if you are able to take two or more “extra” graduate courses as an undergraduate, beyond any courses you need for your undergraduate degree. The 4+1 MSCS program is suitable primarily for CS majors and CS minors.

Application Process

Applications for Fall 2023 are due October 3, 2023.

To apply to the CS 4+1 program, you complete an application for the MSCS program by October 1 (October 3 for the 2023 cycle) of your senior year. Required documents include a resume, three recommendation letters, transcripts, a Statement of Purpose, and an optional Diversity Statement. Please see the [Graduate School application instructions](#) for information about the MSCS application process, including forms, documents, and dates. Also check the [CS Admissions FAQ](#) for answers to your questions. Note: GRE scores are **optional** for 4+1 applicants in the October 1 admissions cycle for MSCS.

We have an initial cap of 10-15 students for the 4+1 program. In deciding if this program is suitable for you, please keep in mind that this is a complete MS program on a compressed timeline and therefore is demanding in terms of time and effort. Admissions is based in part on whether your record shows that you can meet the demands of the program. The program is suitable primarily for majors and minors in CS.

We plan to complete admissions decisions by early November. If you are admitted, please consult with the CS graduate program office (DGS office) by December 1 of your senior year to plan your course schedule.

Admission to 4+1 is provisional and contingent on completing your undergraduate degree and two extra graduate courses; see below. By the end of your senior year you should have completed all requirements for the undergraduate degree, including any major and minor requirements. As a 4+1 student, you are considered an undergraduate until the completion of your undergraduate degree, after which you are a graduate student.

MSCS Degree Requirements

In order to obtain a 4+1 degree, you must fulfill the requirements of the regular [MSCS program as listed here](#) ([MSEC requirements here](#)). Our MS program requires 30 credits of graduate coursework—the equivalent of 10 graduate courses. You will have two semesters as a graduate student to fulfill the MSCS degree requirements. If you need

longer, please reach out to the CS DGS office. See the [Bulletin of the Graduate School](#) for information and policies from Duke's Graduate School.

All of the pathways for the MSCS program are available to 4+1 students, including project/thesis versus course-only options and the listed concentrations, e.g., AI/ML or Cybersecurity. Consider what options are appropriate for you.

We encourage you to take the course-only option, given the compressed nature of the 4+1 program. We recommend the project/thesis option only if you have completed initial research (e.g., independent study) as an undergraduate, and this work can serve as the basis for your MS research with a CS faculty member who will serve as your advisor. If you wish to pursue the project/thesis option, contact the DGS office during your first semester as a graduate student.

The 4+1 program allows you to count up to 4 graduate courses from your undergraduate years towards the MS degree. ***Duke does not allow double-counting, so that a course can be counted either towards the undergraduate degree or the MS degree, but not both.*** We require that you take two extra graduate courses as an undergraduate, but recommend no more than two unless needed to plan a feasible sequence for your year as a graduate student.

Please indicate your tentative course plan—including extra graduate courses to be taken as an undergraduate—in your Statement of Purpose when you apply. Check the [MSCS requirements](#) (or [MSEC requirements](#)) carefully. In particular, note that any course you plan to count toward the MS degree—even if it is taken as an undergraduate—must be a graduate course (numbered 500 or higher), not necessarily a CS course, but with a grade of B- or higher, and not also used to meet any requirement for the undergraduate degree.

Tuition and Financial Aid

You are charged undergraduate tuition until the completion of your undergraduate degree, and Graduate School tuition subsequently. MSCS 4+1 students will typically incur two full-time terms of tuition (flat rate) to the Graduate School in year five.

Financial aid arrangements are handled by the respective financial aid offices. Undergraduate financial aid does not continue after completion of your undergraduate degree. Please refer to the [Bulletin of the Graduate School](#) for details on financial aid for graduate students. As a graduate student, you also have the option to earn a stipend by applying for graduate Teaching Assistantships in the CS Department. We have some scholarship assistance available to help meet program recruiting goals. If you want to be considered for such assistance, please include a Diversity Statement with your application.

Contact

For questions about the program or the application process please contact the CS graduate program office (DGS office): dgs@cs.duke.edu

For questions about course planning please contact the CS undergraduate program office (DUS office): dus@cs.duke.edu

Please direct questions about your graduate application or financial aid to [The Graduate School](#).

Video: Learn More about this Program

Duke MS in CS 4+1 Program for Undergrads: Professor Jeff Chase, Director of Graduate Studies at Duke Computer Science presents the new 4+1 year program for Duke students to receive both an undergraduate degree and MS degree in Computer Science in five years in this June 1, 2022 virtual information session.

https://youtu.be/ykWgpKo_uDc

