

Carnegie Mellon University
Carnegie Mellon Institute
for Strategy & Technology



GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026

For the use of CMIST graduate students entering a program in fall 2025

**Master of Information
Technology Strategy (MITS),
Master of Science in Security,
Technology, and International
Relations (MS STAIR),
MS STAIR-Accelerated Master's
Program (MS STAIR-AMP)**

The Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences



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1 Welcome

Welcome to the next exciting chapter of your academic and professional journey! We are thrilled to have you join our graduate program, where you'll be challenged to grow, inspired to lead, and equipped with the skills to make a meaningful impact in your field. As you embark on this experience, know that you are part of a diverse, driven, and supportive community committed to innovation, collaboration, and excellence. Graduate school is not just about mastering content—it's about discovering your strengths, building lasting connections, and shaping your future. Take advantage of every opportunity, ask bold questions, and don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone. We are here to support you every step of the way. Welcome aboard—and we can't wait to see all that you accomplish!

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

1. Your Program Handbook (this document)
2. [University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook](#) (Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs)
3. [The Word Student Handbook](#)

2 Departmental Mission, Vision, and Values

[Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology](#)

Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) launched a major new interdisciplinary institute, the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST), in 2023. CMIST is a university-wide initiative devoted to the wise development, use, and governance of new and emerging technologies that are changing the national and international security landscape.

The home for Carnegie Mellon University's (CMU) study of Political Science and International Relations, CMIST hosts academic programs that enable students to wrestle with a wide range of issues, including the future of democracy, the relationship between technology and politics, the drivers of war and peace, domestic politics across countries, and the formulation of effective foreign policies. Our students and faculty investigate issues in security and technology,

grand strategy and national security, cybersecurity and international conflict, military strategy and doctrine, the politics of key regions of the world, international political economy and economic policy, representation and voting rights, climate change and development, repression and human rights, international law and diplomacy, political psychology and public opinion, and social change and revolution.

CMIST also ties Carnegie Mellon's strengths in building new technologies to crucial questions of strategy, security, ethics, and policy. Taking advantage of the intellectually rich Carnegie Mellon setting, CMIST is uniquely poised to take advantage of the university's strengths in computer science and engineering and its distinctive tradition of collaborative, cross-university, cross-disciplinary research. CMU is ranked #1 in the subfields of artificial intelligence, computer engineering, cybersecurity, information systems, and software engineering. It has leading research institutes in areas such as robotics, machine learning, natural language technologies, human-computer interaction, engineering and public policy, and public policy and management--all designed to reach across disciplinary boundaries to solve key problems and address the highest-priority challenges facing humanity. CMIST is where we address the challenges of new and emerging technologies through a political science lens, focused on maximizing the benefits and reducing the risks to human beings, national security, and global stability, now and into the future.

3 Degrees Offered

Degree Titles as they will appear on diplomas:

MITs (standard) and the **MITs – Applied Study**:

- *Master of Information Technology Strategy*

MS STAIR and the **MS STAIR-AMP**:

- *Master of Science in Security, Technology, and International Relations*

4 Using the Graduate Student Handbook

This document is intended to be a source of information for graduate students in the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology within the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Here you can find information on a broad range of policies, procedures, and university and program-specific resources, ranging from academic policies to campus dining

options. We hope you will find the guide useful. Be aware, however, that CMIST adheres to all university guidelines and procedures, detailed below.

All CMU graduate students are also expected to review and abide by the CMU Graduate Handbook, which can be found online at the [Graduate Handbook Suite](#).

5 University Policies & Expectations

It is the responsibility of each member of the Carnegie Mellon community to be familiar with university policies and guidelines. In addition to this departmental graduate student handbook the following resources are available to assist you in understanding community expectations:

- The Word/Student Handbook:
<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/index.html>
- Academic Integrity Policy:
<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html>
- University Policies Website:
<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/>
- Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs:
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/index.html>

Due to the changing nature of conditions and expectations surrounding public health and safety requirements please visit: <https://www.cmu.edu/coronavirus/> for the most up to date information.

Please see [Section 16](#) and [Section 17](#) for additional information about The Word and University resources.

6 Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar can be found at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/hub/calendar/index.html>

and provides information on all deadlines including registration dates, class start dates, add/drop deadlines, exam dates and more.

7 Departmental Information

7.1 Departmental Personnel

Name/Title	Office	Email
Audrey Kurth Cronin <i>Director</i>	Posner 385A	cmist-director@andrew.cmu.edu
Emily Half <i>Deputy Director, Academic Affairs</i>	Posner 391	ehalf@andrew.cmu.edu
Ralph Lopez <i>Deputy Director, Security and Policy Studies</i>	Posner 255	rafaell@andrew.cmu.edu
Jess Regan <i>Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer</i>	Posner 389	jregan2@andrew.cmu.edu
Mark Gardner <i>Graduate Program Manager</i>	Posner 387D	markgard@andrew.cmu.edu
Jacquelyn Hopkins <i>Office Manager</i>	Posner 388	jhopkin2@andrew.cmu.edu
Harry Krejsa <i>Director of Studies, Washington Office</i>	Suite 510 (Washington Office)	harrykrejsa@cmu.edu
Ashley Barnes <i>Washington Program Manager</i>	Suite 510 (Washington Office)	ashleyba@andrew.cmu.edu
Meg Neill <i>Office Manager, Washington Office</i>	Suite 510 (Washington Office)	megn@andrew.cmu.edu
Richard Scheines <i>Dean of College</i>	Baker 154	scheines@cmu.edu
Sharon Carver <i>Assoc. Dean for Educational Affairs</i>	MMCH	sc0e@andrew.cmu.edu
Ayana Ledford <i>Associate Dean for Community Impact and Educational Outreach</i>	BPH 128B	ledford@andrew.cmu.edu
Dietrich Computing & Operational Support	N/A	hsshelp@andrew.cmu.edu

CMIST Faculty and a full departmental directory are listed on the [CMIST website](#).

- Please contact the graduate program manager, Mark Gardner, with any questions or concerns.
- Additionally, students may confer with the university Office of Graduate

and Postdoc Affairs, grad-ed@cmu.edu, on issues of process or other concerns as they navigate conflicts.

- Department Office/Building Security, Repairs and Services –Report damages and repairs needed to the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs or CMIST Office Manager.

7.2 Advising and Role of Graduate Program Manager

The Graduate Program Manager will serve as the primary advisor to all CMIST graduate students. The advisor's role is to:

- offer advice on appropriate courses to meet individual career goals;
- recommend faculty mentors for networking opportunities;
- support students through the internship search process and long-term career planning;
- monitor student progress throughout the program;
- process student petitions, requests, and forms;
- recommend and refer to campus support resources, if needed;
- recommend disciplinary or academic action, if needed;
- meet at the conclusion of each semester to discuss student progress and to provide progress documentation to the student.

While completing summer internships, students will remain in communication primarily through regularly scheduled Zoom meetings as advising needs arise. The graduate program manager provides students access to a digital appointment scheduler that all students (Pittsburgh or DC-based) can utilize as needs arise.

7.3 CMIST Branding Policies

CMIST Approach to Branding for Name, Logo, and Unitmark

The name of our organization is the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology, otherwise known as CMIST. It is important to identify ourselves by either our full name or by our acronym at all times. In a formal setting please spell out the organization's full name when first mentioning and then use parentheses (if in writing) to indicate that we are informally addressed as CMIST. Ex. Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST). This is also to be communicated verbally in formal settings such as speeches, introductions, or in networking settings. To ensure accurate communication of our brand, it is NOT to be truncated to "Institute for Strategy and Technology" either verbally or in writing.

Students may use the CMIST logo and unitmark for internal CMIST projects. For any use external to CMU-related activities, please coordinate with CMIST's Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer, Jess Regan, to ensure approved and proper use and adherence to CMU's branding guidelines.

A CMIST-branded PowerPoint template is available for student use. Please contact Jess Regan or the graduate program manager to gain approved access to this template.

CMIST Use of Social Media

Our social media channels are an important part of our marketing and branding strategy at CMIST. We continually strive to share engaging and relevant content that highlights the authentic student experience, showcases our current CMIST students' academic and professional achievements, and helps inspire prospective students.

Please reach out to our Communications Specialist, Lindsay Marcellus (lmarcell@andrew.cmu.edu) with any suggestions for topics for news stories for the CMIST website or highlights to share on our social media platforms. Additionally, we encourage participation on our channels. Our general handle is **@cmist_cmu** and you can find CMIST on Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, X, BlueSky, and Facebook.

7.4 Departmental Resources

Work Spaces

- Link Lounge, Posner 2nd floor between Posner and Hall of the Arts
- Hunt Library has individual or group study spaces [for students to reserve](#).
- Cohon Center Study Rooms are available for students to reserve. Students should email the [Information Desk](#) to inquire about these reservations.
- The [CPDC](#) also has a few study rooms available for students who need a private place to do remote interviews. These are located on the lower level of the Cohon Center.

Conference Rooms

Posner 383 is accessible to students using their ID cards to gain entry to the space. This room can be available as a workspace for students, but upon entry, students must check the reservation schedule on the door to make sure it is

available. Students using this space should never have or keep the door propped open. All scheduled reservations for Posner 383 will take precedence over any other uses for that room.

Please contact Emily Half (ehalf@andrews.cmu.edu) or Jacquelyn Hopkins (jhopkin2@andrew.cmu.edu) to reserve Posner 383 for group project meetings or collective study hours for classes.

Reporting Damages, and/or Security Concerns in Posner Hall (Security Resources)

To report damages to spaces in Posner Hall, please contact Jacquelyn Hopkins (jhopkin2@andrew.cmu.edu) immediately.

To report security concerns in Posner Hall or elsewhere on campus, please contact campus police department (412-268-2323)

Shared CMIST Kitchen (POS 384)

The kitchen in POS 384 is a shared space for CMIST staff, faculty, and students. CMU ID cards will grant access for any CMIST graduate student after 5 p.m. and during the weekend. Graduate students are invited to use the refrigerator to temporarily store food or beverages. No food or beverage should be left in the refrigerator for more than 24 hours; any food left untouched will be discarded after 24 hours.

Graduate students are also invited to use the microwave and sink, as needed. Everyone who utilizes this space is responsible for cleaning up after themselves and taking care of the shared equipment. If a graduate student does not abide by these guidelines, they will be assessed a singular warning before their privileged use of the kitchen is taken away.

Carnegie Mellon University
Carnegie Mellon Institute
for Strategy & Technology

Master of Information Technology Strategy (MITS)

PROGRAM INFORMATION



8 MITS Degree Requirements and Related Policies/Protocols

8.1 Degree Rationale

The [Master of Information Technology Strategy \(MITS\)](#) is a cooperative endeavor administered by the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST) and in partnership with the College of Engineering and the School of Computer Science. This program creates leaders in the IT strategy space by allowing students to tailor their degree to an area of interest and teaching students how the IT puzzle pieces fit together -- both of which make students valuable to employers.

The program's two tracks provide flexibility, but their brevity – the longer of the two takes sixteen months to complete -- is well-suited for those who want to quickly advance their professional career. Both tracks involve a required Capstone Project, in which teams of four to six students partner with a company, research center, or organization to help them solve a strategic problem.

The program offers four areas of specialization: Data Analytics, Information Security, Technology Strategy & Governance, and Software and Networked Systems. No matter which concentration a student chooses, they will receive a blend of the other three, meaning they will leave Carnegie Mellon with a well-rounded skill set that makes them an attractive candidate on the job market. MITS is a STEM-designated degree according to the US Department of Homeland Security, meaning international students may apply for a longer period of Optional Practical Training.

Graduates go on to careers as data scientists, software engineers, military cyber operations officers, artificial intelligence and machine learning engineers, and business technology analysts for companies such as Oracle, Microsoft, Barclays, Deloitte, Apple, Google, DoorDash, and Visa.

8.2 Degree Requirements

The **Master of Information Technology Strategy (Standard)** is a 12-month program with a culminating capstone project.

The **Master of Information Technology Strategy – Applied Study** is a 16-month program that includes the MITS (Standard) curriculum with a required summer internship and a culminating capstone project.

Within both programs, students are given an in-depth look at four concentration areas:

- **Information Security:** an understanding of cyber threats and mitigation of their impact ensures that graduates are equipped to address the dangers of cyber-attacks.
- **Technology Strategy & Governance:** An understanding of the impact of emerging technologies on international and national security, strategic decision-making, governance, and policy development.
- **Data Analytics:** to be successful, tomorrow's leaders in Information Dominance must be proficient in extracting knowledge from large data systems. Such extraction requires mastery in techniques such as machine learning, social network analysis, and large-scale data reduction and filtering.
- **Software and Networked Systems:** an understanding of system and software architecture is essential for the management of safe, secure, and reliable information structures.

Study is split between the College of Engineering, the School of Computer Science, and the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology.

8.3 MITS Program Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and manage software applications, databases, and network infrastructures using industry-standard programming languages and tools.
2. Apply cybersecurity principles and cloud computing strategies in order to safeguard digital assets and support adaptive, scalable technology environments.
3. Apply data mining, machine learning, and statistical modeling techniques in order to analyze large datasets and derive actionable insights for decision-making.
4. Assess emerging technological trends and innovations, providing strategic and persuasive recommendations tailored to industry, policy, and stakeholder needs.
5. Assess ethical frameworks, governance models, and strategic thinking to guide responsible and effective IT leadership and innovation.

6. Articulate technical information, strategies, and insights—both verbally and in writing—to technical and non-technical audiences.
7. Creatively craft compelling visual representations of data, such as dashboards and infographics, to communicate complex IT and business trends to varied stakeholders.
8. Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and interdisciplinarily using informed inquiry, active listening, and team-building strategies to solve complex problems.

8.4 Changing Tracks in the MITS Program

Students must select which track (standard or applied) before the first day of classes begin in their first semester. Standard track students will be unable to switch to the Applied track after classes begin in their first semester.

Applied students who are unable to secure an internship before March 31st will automatically be changed into the “Standard” track, which means they will enroll and complete their capstone project and any other outstanding curricular requirements during the summer semester and graduate in August. International students to which this designation applies are required to communicate this enrollment change with their OIE advisor.

Internships must be officially accepted, verified by the graduate program manager, and approved by the department by March 15th unless the graduate program manager provides written approval to extend this deadline.

8.5 Required Units for Degree Attainment (126/129 units)

The **Master of Information Technology Strategy** is a full-time campus degree program. It is designed to be completed in three consecutive semesters, beginning in fall and concluding the following summer with a **total of 126 units** completed.

- **Core Courses (48 units)** (See [Section 8.6](#) below)
- **Area of Concentration (24 units)**
 - The area of concentration provides an opportunity to build upon core course knowledge, and to develop expertise in a specific area. Students choose a focus area (2 courses, or 24 units) from amongst the following concentration areas: Data and Analytics, Technology Strategy & Governance,

Information Security, Software and Networked Systems. For a list of courses, arranged by area of concentration, see the [website](#).

- **Elective Coursework (12 units)**
 - Students may explore their area of concentration further, or pursue topics outside their area of concentration through electives. At least one course (12 units) must be taken outside of their area of concentration. (See [section 10.3](#) for more information about what can count as an elective)
- **Summer Internship (3 units- Applied Track only)**
 - The summer internship provides Applied Track MITS students the opportunity to synthesize their curricular skills and knowledge with a real-world professional experience. Read more about the required Internship expectations and experience below in [Section 8.2](#) below.
- **Capstone Project (36 units)**
 - The capstone project course provides students with the opportunity to engage in a mentored team project sponsored by a real-world industry partner, to delve deeply into a problem, and to create a solution relevant to information technology strategy. (See [Section 8.7](#) below for more information)

8.6 Core Courses (48 units)

Core courses establish the necessary background and a common competence level in each of the four thematic areas. **Students must take at least one core course option from each of the concentration areas below** for a total of forty-eight units minimum.

All course descriptions can be found through [SIO](#) or the [Schedule of Classes searchable website](#). Find a course description for each CMIST course on the [CMIST website](#).

Data Analytics

- Option 1: 10-601/10-701 Introduction to Machine Learning (fall/spring)
- Option 2: 17-685/17-801 Dynamic Network Analysis (spring)
- Option 3: 05-834/11-663 Applied Machine Learning (fall)

- Option 4: 17-634 Applied Machine Learning AND (spring 1st half mini) 17-644 Applied Deep Learning (spring 2nd half mini)

Note: Students in the Data Analytics Concentration may not take Options 3 or 4 to fulfill their requirement; Students may not take options 3 or 4 AND 10-601/701 to satisfy core/concentration requirements.

Technology Strategy & Governance

- Option 1: 84-605 The Future of Warfare (fall)
- Option 2: 84-650 A Strategist's Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (spring)
- Option 3: 84-663 Click. Hack. Rule: Understanding the Power and Peril of Cyber Conflict (fall)
- Option 4: 84-674 An Introduction to Technology and War (fall)
- Option 5: 84-687 Remote Systems and the Cyber Domain in Conflict (spring)

Information Security

- Option 1: 17-631 Information Security, Privacy, and Policy (fall)
 - *Note: Recommended for students with little to no prior exposure to IS*
- Option 2: 14-741 Introduction to Information Security (fall/spring)
- Option 3: 19-734/05-836- Usable Privacy and Security (spring)
- Option 4: 95-748 Software and Security (fall 2nd-half mini) (prerequisite: basic programming skills) AND 84-683 National Cyber Policy & Strategy (spring 2nd half-mini)

Note: Students may not take any of the above options as concentration or elective courses

Software and Networked Systems

- Option 1: 15-640 Distributed Systems (fall/spring, prerequisite 15-513)
- Option 2: 15-641 Networking and the Internet (fall, prerequisite 15-513)
- Option 3: 18-741 Computer Networks (fall)
- Option 4: 17-635 Software Architecture AND 17-632 Software Project Mgmt (spring 1st half minis)
- Option 5: 17-636 DevOPS: Engineering for Secure Development and Deployment (spring)

MIT Policy Seminars: 84-791 and 84-792 (3 units each = 6 units)

The Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST) will host several lectures and speaker series that address topics spanning the intersection of security and technology, international relations, political science, and more. Examples of these appropriate series would be CMIST's Scientists & Strategists speaker series or Lawfully Speaking events, to name a few. We will bring senior leaders to the CMU community who are experts in these fields and have made remarkable contributions to these and other fields. CMIST graduate students will enroll in the three-unit Policy Seminar for their first fall and spring semesters and be expected to participate in and reflect on their interactions throughout the CMIST-hosted lectures and roundtable discussions. The Policy Seminar courses are only open to CMIST graduate students.

8.7 MITS Capstone Project

Each MITS graduate will complete a culminating capstone project in their final semester (summer semester for standard; 2nd fall semester for Applied). This project coincides with a required 36-unit course (84-781) and is intended to give students support in project management, collaboration strategies, and project guidance.

MIT capstone students will be expected to attend a once-a-week Capstone Course (50 minutes) to help facilitate collaborative dynamics, critical thinking and reflection, and workshopping presentation/communication skills related to project deliverables. Course supervision is provided by a MITS advisor or affiliated faculty member.

Due to the variety of sponsored projects, all project deliverables are negotiated and developed with the affiliated faculty member, advisors, and the project's sponsors before a factorable letter grade is awarded.

If MITS students would like to recruit their own capstone project, they will need to contact the graduate program manager before the end of the semester that precedes their capstone semester (August graduates by December; December graduates by May). Projects will only be considered if a CMU faculty and/or verified professional completes the Project Proposal form as the project's intended advisor/sponsor; students will not

participate in the proposal process but they can help the graduate program manager to be in touch with interested sponsors/advisors of specific projects.

MITS Capstones must be collaborative projects–no individual projects will be accepted. A student-recruited project must be framed as a project for at least three MITS students. No MITS capstone projects can be combined with other programs' projects without prior approval from the graduate program manager.

Please see the [MITS program website](#) for more information.

8.8 Petitioning For Courses Outside of the Approved Curriculum List

MITS students are able to petition to have a course outside of the approved curriculum list count as a concentration or elective course. Core courses outside of the approved curriculum list will not be approved. To facilitate this petition, students must email the graduate program manager the following information:

- The 5-digit Course Code and Course Title
- Instructor's Name
- Catalog description of course- copy/pasted directly from SIO or catalog
- Petitioned requirement that the course will fulfill in the MITS program (specific concentration or elective requirement)
- A few sentences giving a rationale for why this course fits with the MITS program requirement and their own individual interests or goals.

Petitions must be sent to the graduate program manager at least a week in advance of the Course Add Deadline of the semester which it is offered.

The graduate program manager will directly inquire to the faculty member and course managers to advocate for each petition request.

The MITS Executive Committee reserves the right to decline petitions. All petition decisions will be communicated by the graduate program manager to the student with a rationale for why the decline was issued.

MITS students are not eligible to take *every* graduate-level course that is offered at CMU. Faculty of courses not on the approved list will likely have

a say in whether MITS students are eligible to reserve a seat in their class. Students may reach out to the faculty members directly to inquire about seat availability and it is strongly recommended that the graduate program manager be CC'd on these communications.

Refer to [Section 10.3](#) in this handbook for more information on what CMIST counts as an “Elective” course.

8.9 MITS Sample Plan of Study- Standard Track

Fall	Spring	Summer
Information Security Core Course (12 units)	Software & Networked Systems Core Course (12 units)	MITS Project (36 units)
Data Analytics Core Course (12 units)	Concentration Course (12 units)	
Technology Strategy & Governance Core Course (12 units)	Concentration Course (12 units)	
Policy Seminar I (3 Units)	Policy Seminar II (3 units)	
15513/11637 or Concentration Course (12 units)	<i>Optional</i> Approved Elective (12 units)	<i>Optional</i> Approved Elective (6-12 units)

8.10 MITS-Applied Study Breakdown

The **Master of Information Technology Strategy – Applied Study** is a full-time campus degree program. It is designed to be completed in three semesters with a summer internship between the second and third semesters.

The MITS – Applied Study is a 16-month program that begins in August and concludes in December of the following year. All MITS-Applied Study students will have the same course requirements (126 units) as the MITS

requirements above but are also required to complete a Summer Internship (3 units) before their final fall semester. The MITS-Applied Study program is complete once the student **completes 129 units**.

8.11 MITS-Applied Study Sample Plan of Study

Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall
Information Security Core Course (12 units)	Software & Networked Systems Core Course (12 units)	Required Internship (3 units)	MITS Project (36 units)
Data Analytics Core Course (12 units)	Concentration Course (12 units)		
Technology Strategy & Governance Core Course (12 units)	Concentration Course (12 units)		
Policy Seminar I (3 Units)	Policy Seminar II (3 units)		
15513/11637 or Concentration Course (12 units)	<i>Optional</i> Approved Elective (12 units)		<i>Optional</i> Approved Elective (6-12 units)

8.12 MITS-Applied Internship Overview

The **MITS-Applied Study** Internship (3 units) is completed during the summer before their final fall semester.

These students are required to complete a minimum 8-week full-time summer internship of their choosing. MITS Internships

- need not be confined to Pittsburgh or Washington, DC,
- should have a clear relationship to the MITS program
- should be suited to the graduate level.
- Are not assessed a tuition charge during the summer semester

Expectations

Students should begin working early with the Graduate Program Manager in their first fall semester of the MITS program to identify and apply for internships. Individual strategy meetings will be held with each student to jump-start the process. CMIST will provide assistance with:

- application material development,
- the placement process,
- funding opportunities.

International students are required to consult with the [Office of International Education](#) for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship/co-op or consulting opportunity.

International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus work authorization. Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and international students will benefit from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible.

Resources to Explore Potential Internships

- Faculty Recommendations
 - College Career Services
 - Department's Regular Email Blasts
 - Graduate Program Manager's Office
 - Career and Professional Development Center
- <https://www.cmu.edu/career/>

Internship Verification and Approval Process

Once a student has officially accepted an internship and is given the contact information of their direct supervisor, they must fill out the MITS Summer Internship Supervisor Contact form. The graduate program manager will then contact the internship supervisor directly to verify the internship placement, duration, agreed work hours, and general relation to the MITS curriculum. Upon receiving verification, the graduate program manager will communicate approval or disapproval directly to the students via email. If the internship is approved, then the student will be instructed to register for the required internship course for the summer semester.

Internships must be officially accepted, verified by the graduate program manager, and approved by the department by March 31st unless the graduate program manager has given written permission to extend the deadline.

Post-Internship Expectations

Students will be required to complete a self-reflection of their internship experience before the first day of the 2nd fall semester that details the work they performed, reflections on the skills they developed, and what impact the experience has had on their career goals.

Internship supervisors will also be expected to complete a post-internship assessment of the student's work. These will be taken into consideration as final grades are awarded for the summer internship course.

Carnegie Mellon University
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**Master of Science in Security,
Technology, and International
Relations (MS STAIR)
&
MS STAIR Accelerated
Master's Program (MS STAIR-AMP)**

PROGRAM INFORMATION



9 MS STAIR and MS STAIR-AMP Degree Requirements and Related Policies/Protocols

9.1 Degree Rationale

The [Master of Science in Security, Technology, and International Relations](#) is a master's degree that prepares tomorrow's professionals for strategic leadership in analyzing, managing, predicting, and adapting to new technologies' impact on the United States and the rest of the world. The program offers outstanding training in the analytical tools of political science and international relations, alongside an exceptional foundation in Carnegie Mellon University's cutting-edge technological advances, to give our graduates the essential skills to shape a better, safer future.

MS STAIR students will spend their fall and spring semesters in Pittsburgh, taking courses at Carnegie Mellon's main campus and applying for summer internships with the support of CMIST advisory staff and faculty. Students will relocate to Washington, DC, for a summer semester to complete an internship and curricular methodology requirement before graduation.

The 12-month program is well-suited for individuals who want to quickly advance their professional career as it encompasses advanced curricula in international security and international relations topics that intersect with emerging and developing technologies. Courses in qualitative and quantitative social science methods for program evaluation and policy writing enhance our students' expertise in informing and persuading diverse audiences across various industries. Culminating in a summer semester interning in Washington, students synthesize classroom learning objectives with practical and hands-on experiential learning opportunities.

9.2 Degree Requirements

The **Master of Science in Security, Technology, and International Relations (Standard)** is a 12-month program that includes a fall and spring semester in Pittsburgh, PA and the final summer semester happening in Washington, DC as students complete an internship experience.

The **Master of Science in Security, Technology, and International Relations- Accelerated Masters Program (AMP)** is a 9-month (2 semester)

program. Participation in the CMU Washington Semester Program (CMU/WSP) is a prerequisite for the MS STAIR-AMP. For the accelerated version, students will have already completed a semester in DC with an internship through the CMU/WSP during their undergraduate coursework at CMU. They will complete the graduate coursework in one additional academic year (5th year) and graduate in May.

9.3 MS STAIR & MS STAIR-AMP Program Learning Outcomes

- LO1: Explain arguments and models in the study of innovation and diffusion of security-related technologies, in the United States and internationally.
- LO2: Assess a range of new or developing technologies, including their essential technical characteristics, potential uses, and their overall ethical, strategic, political, economic, and practical advantages and disadvantages.
- LO3: Identify unanswered questions about the future of key emerging technologies and develop viable, implementable policy options for those technologies.
- LO4: Assess the advantages and disadvantages of regulating new technologies by international organizations or domestic agencies and the security implications of alternatives to regulation.
- LO5: Understand the fundamentals of rigorous qualitative and quantitative research design and research tools and be able to apply them to conduct political science research.
- LO6: Read critically and be able to draw connections between different disciplinary approaches to understanding power, governance, and political institutions.
- LO7: Be able to effectively and persuasively communicate analysis to affect public policy and discourse about international relations, political science, law, and emerging technologies.
- LO8: Be equipped to engage in great debate and discourse with interdisciplinary teams motivated toward bridging between scientific, engineering, humanistic, or computer science expertise, and geopolitical, political, economic, and strategic policymaking.

9.4 Required Units for Degree Attainment (138 units)

MS STAIR requires 138 units completed between 3 semesters.

MS STAIR-AMP requires 36 units of prerequisites (84-360 & 84-336 or 84-339) accomplished during the CMU/WSP and 102 units completed between 2 semesters at the Pittsburgh main campus for a total of 138 units.

The unit breakdown of courses is as follows:

- Security & Technology Core Courses (36 units)
- Advanced Topics Core Courses (24 units)
- Methodology Courses (24 units for standard; 12 units for AMP)
- Elective Courses (24 units) – see [Section 10.3](#) below for CMIST's policy on Elective courses.
- Policy Seminar (6 units)
- DC-based Graduate Internship (24 units for standard; 84-360 is a prerequisite for AMP and counts toward this requirement.)

9.5 Core Courses (72-84 units)

Security & Technology Core Course Options (must take 3 courses in first two semesters):

- 84-605: The Future of Warfare (12 units)
- 84-649: Digital Diplomacy: Cybersecurity Challenges and Global Governance (12 units)
- 84-650: A Strategist's Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (12 units)
- 84-663: Click. Hack. Rule: Understanding the Power & Peril of Cyber Conflict (12 units)
- 84-668: Technology Ethics (12 units)
- 84-670: Nuclear Security & Arms Control (12 units)
- 84-671: International Governance of Artificial Intelligence (12 units)
- 84-672: Space and National Security (12 units)
- 84-674: An Introduction to Technology and War (12 units)
- 84-675: Geopolitics of Innovation (12 units)
- 84-687: Remote Systems and the Cyber Domain in Conflict (12 units)
- 84-690: Social Media, Technology, and Conflict (12 units)

Advanced Topics Core Courses (must take all courses):

- 84-720: Advanced International Security (12 units)

- 84-726: Advanced International Relations (12 units)

Methodology Courses (standard must take all; AMP only takes one indicated below with *)

- 84-703: Employing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Policy Analysis (12 units)*
- 84-704: Policy Analysis, Writing, and Presentation Skills (12 units)
 - MS STAIR-AMP students take 84-336 or 84-339 (12 units) during their undergraduate coursework as a prerequisite for admission, which counts towards this requirement.

Policy Seminars: 84-791 and 84-792 (3 units each = 6 units)

The Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST) will host several lectures and speaker series that address topics spanning the intersection of security and technology, international relations, political science, and more. Examples of these appropriate series would be CMIST's Scientists & Strategists speaker series or Lawfully Speaking events, to name a few. We will bring senior leaders to the CMU community who are experts in these fields and have made remarkable contributions to these and other fields. CMIST graduate students will enroll in the three-unit Policy Seminar for their first fall and spring semesters and be expected to participate in and reflect on their interactions throughout the CMIST-hosted lectures and roundtable discussions. The Policy Seminar courses are only open to CMIST graduate students.

All course descriptions can be found through [SIO](#) or the [Schedule of Classes searchable website](#). Find a course description for each CMIST course on the [CMIST website](#).

9.6 MS STAIR Internship Overview (standard only)

The **MS STAIR Graduate Internship** (24 units) is completed during the final summer semester.

Students are required to complete a minimum 8-week summer internship working at least 20 hours a week. MS STAIR Internships

- should be located in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area
- should have a clear relationship to the MS STAIR program
- should be suited to the graduate level

Expectations

Students should begin working early with the Graduate Program Manager in their first fall semester of the MS STAIR program to identify and apply for internships. Group workshops and individual strategy meetings will be held with each student to jump-start the process. CMIST will provide assistance with:

- location and interpretation of relevant internship job postings
- application material development,
- interview preparations
- funding opportunities

International students are required to consult with the [Office of International Education](#) for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship/co-op or consulting opportunity. International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus work authorization. Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and international students will benefit from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible.

Resources to Explore Potential Internships

- CMIST Internship Application and Placement Guide
- CMIST's Weekly Email Blasts
- Graduate Program Manager's Office
- Career and Professional Development Center
<https://www.cmu.edu/career/>
- Faculty Recommendations
- Aggregate job listing websites like [USAjobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov), Indeed, LinkedIn, and Handshake

Internship Verification and Approval Process

Once a student has officially accepted an internship and is given the contact information of their direct supervisor, they must fill out the MS STAIR Summer Internship Supervisor Contact form. The graduate program manager will then contact the internship supervisor directly to verify the internship placement, duration, agreed work hours, and general relation to the MS STAIR curriculum. Upon receiving verification, the

graduate program manager will communicate approval or disapproval directly to the students via email. Once the internship is approved, then the student will be instructed to register for the required internship course for the summer semester.

Internships must be officially accepted, verified by the graduate program manager, and approved by the department by May 1st unless the graduate program manager has given written permission to extend the deadline.

Post-Internship Expectations

During or shortly after the final week of the summer semester, Students will prepare a brief in-person presentation that details what they did for their internship, reflects on how their internship related to completed coursework in the program, and an overview of how the internship prepared them for their next professional journey after graduation. These presentations will take place at the CMIST DC-campus and will be followed by a commemorative graduation reception.

Internship supervisors will also be expected to complete a post-internship assessment of the student's work. These will be taken into consideration as final grades are awarded for the summer internship course.

9.7 MS STAIR Sample Plan of Study- Standard Track

Fall	Spring	Summer
84-703: Qual/Quant. Methods for Policy Analysis	84-726: Adv. International Relations	MS STAIR Graduate Internship (course number TBD)
84-720: Adv. International Security	84-792: Policy Seminar II	
84-791: Policy Seminar I	S&T Core III	
S&T Core I	Elective I	

S&T Core II	Elective II	84-704: Policy Analysis, Writing, and Presentation Skills
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9.8 MS STAIR-AMP Sample Plan of Study

Prereqs.	Fall	Spring
84-360: Washington Semester Program (24 units)	84-703: Qual/Quant. Methods for Policy Analysis	84-726: Adv. International Relations
	84-720: Adv. International Security	84-792: Policy Seminar II
	84-791: Policy Seminar I	S&T Core III
84-336: Implementing Public Policy (12 units) OR 84-339: Seminar in Public Policy Research (12 units)	S&T Core I	Elective I
	S&T Core II	Elective II

9.9 Petitioning For Courses Outside of the Approved Curriculum List

MS STAIR students are able to petition to have a course outside of the approved curriculum list count as an elective course. Core courses outside of the approved curriculum list will not be approved. To facilitate this petition, students must email the graduate program manager the following information:

- The 5-digit Course Code and Course Title

- Instructor's Name
- Catalog description of course- copy/pasted directly from SIO or catalog
- Petitioned requirement that the course will fulfill in the MS STAIR program (specific concentration or elective requirement)
- A few sentences giving a rationale for why this course fits with the MS STAIR program requirement and their own individual interests or goals.

Petitions must be sent to the graduate program manager at least a week in advance of the Course Add Deadline of the semester which it is offered.

The graduate program manager will directly inquire to the faculty member and course managers to advocate for each petition request.

The Graduate Program Manager reserves the right to decline petitions. All petition decisions will be communicated by the graduate program manager to the student with a rationale for why the decline was issued.

Refer to [Section 10.3](#) in this handbook for more information on what CMIST counts as an "Elective" course.

Carnegie Mellon University

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CMIST Departmental Policies



10 CMIST Department Policies

10.1 Department's Statute of Limitations

CMIST graduate programs are intentionally designed to be a set length of time. Extensions beyond the below stated are very rare and will only be considered as a result of extraordinary circumstances. These must be negotiated and approved with the department.

- The MITS (standard) is designed to be completed in 12 months with 3 consecutive semesters (fall, spring, and summer);
- MITS Applied Study is designed to be a 16-month program which includes a required summer internship (fall, spring, summer, and 2nd fall);
- MS STAIR-AMP is designed as a two semester program (fall and spring)
- MS STAIR (standard) is designed to be completed in 12 months with 3 consecutive semesters (fall, spring, and summer).

International students are encouraged to contact OIE to make the same inquiry as F-1 and Post-OPT visa statuses may be negatively impacted by program extensions.

Please contact the Graduate Program Manager in a timely manner as personal needs for an extension arise.

10.2 Registration Process/Procedures

Students will register for their courses through the Student Information Online (SIO) system: www.cmu.edu/hub/sio. Students must meet with the Graduate Program Manager each semester prior to registration to confirm curricular requirements will be met.

Course registrations are completed by the student online.

CMIST (and the university) reserves the right to cancel any announced course if the enrollment is too low. CMIST also reserves the right to make changes in the schedule of hours, units, or in instructional staff.

It is the responsibility of each student to register for courses. This can be done at any time, beginning with the pre-registration period and ending with the add/drop period. Dates can be found on the official academic calendar.

Students must register for each course, whether for credit or audit. A student whose name is not on the roster for a particular course on the first day of class may be denied admission to the course.

10.3 Electives

What is an elective?

An elective is a course taken in addition to the core, capstone project, pre-requisite and required courses, is in an area of interest to the student, and is applicable to their degree. The most common choice is to select outside of the student's declared concentration, from the pre-approved list of concentration courses available on the respective program's curriculum website.

MIT students should plan to select technical courses, although some exceptions to this rule will be considered. All MIT students are required to take a minimum of 12 units of elective coursework. Units associated with elective courses vary.

MS STAIR students are required to take 24 units of elective courses; most of which are related CMIST graduate level courses with a few exceptions outside of CMIST.

All students are advised to discuss their choice of electives with the Graduate Program Manager and receive approval before enrolling. If a student wishes to take an elective outside of the pre-approved courses, only those electives that have been approved by the academic advisor will be accepted towards degree completion requirements.

What courses count as electives?

Generally, electives are chosen from the pre-approved list of concentration courses, but they can come from any school or department within Carnegie Mellon as long as:

- the student has not already taken the course;
- the course is a graduate-level course (600 or above)
- the course has been approved by the graduate program manager.

CMIST graduate students will only be allowed to take graduate level courses (600+ course code) to fulfill their curricular requirements in the graduate programs.

The *only* exception to this is if a MITS student chooses to take 15-503/513 “Introduction to Computer Systems” either in the summer as a “pre-master’s course” or during their enrolled semesters. This course is a required prerequisite for many of the Software and Networked Systems courses and thus can be counted towards the elective requirement for the program.

Although elective courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis, be advised that only elective courses with letter grades (A, B, C, D) can be used toward degree completion requirements.

10.4 Use of Artificial Intelligence for Coursework and Research/Teaching Work

It is CMIST’s expectation that students are familiar with the campus-wide guidance for responsible usage of AI when they are completing graded and ungraded assignments in their coursework and for any departmental research and/or teaching assistantship work.

Students are also encouraged to review the specific expectations and guidelines set forth by instructors for each of their enrolled classes. Every faculty has the right to determine their own classroom policy on AI-usage as it pertains to that class. These policies can be found in each respective course syllabi and should be read in their entirety to ensure compliance.

10.5 Attendance Expectations and Definitions

All attendance requirements for courses are set individually by the respective faculty member or course instructor. Students are to consult their course syllabi or speak directly with faculty/instructors for questions regarding types of absences, attendance record keeping practices, implications of poor attendance, definition, enforcement, and implications of tardies, and make-up work procedures.

10.6 Withdrawing From a Course Policy/Process

Students must follow the procedures and deadlines for adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses as identified on the academic calendar.

Information can be found at

<https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/course-changes/index.html>.

All students must contact the graduate program manager before initiating

a course withdrawal or change.

10.7 Protocol For Evaluation of Transfer Credit

Students who have taken and successfully completed graduate-level courses in areas relating to their degree may petition for these credits to apply toward their degree requirements, as long as the following conditions are met:

1. No course credit will be given for courses that were already used to obtain a graduate degree.
2. The petitioned course must be in an area/discipline closely aligned with the student's intended area of graduate study.
3. Students must obtain and present a transcript with the final earned grade from the institution where the course was taken, as well as supporting artifacts specific to the course at the time it was taken (i.e., course description, syllabus, learning/educational outcomes, student work product such as project, report, analysis, etc.)
4. Final earned grade in petitioned courses must be 'B- or better'.
5. All petitioned courses must be graduate level, or equivalent to a CMU 500-series (or higher) course.

Each transfer request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A decision will be made on the course's transferability by the Graduate Program Manager only after the applicant has been notified of their acceptance to the program. A maximum of two (2) courses may be accepted in transfer and applied toward degree completion elective or pre-requisite requirements. All remaining elective courses, and all core curriculum and project courses, must be completed through Carnegie Mellon. Courses approved for transfer will appear on the student transcript as 'transfer credits'.

No transfer course credit will be awarded for incoming students related to their professional or life experiences prior to their enrollment in the program.

If a student wishes to transfer from a CMIST program to a different program (in CMU or otherwise), there is no guarantee that the curriculum completed will transfer to another institution or department at CMU. These decisions are at the sole discretion of the accepting institution to which the student has been admitted.

10.8 Double Counting Courses

Courses taken as a graduate student are not eligible to be counted to satisfy more than one curricular requirement.

10.9 Teaching/Research Assistant Requirements

Various Graduate Assistant positions may offer a stipend, hourly wage, or be connected to a graduate fellowship agreement. These are available in CMIST as well as throughout campus. Students are encouraged to apply independently at their discretion.

- College of Engineering: <https://engineering.cmu.edu/education/graduate-programs/financial-support/fellowship-assistantships.html>
- Machine Learning: <https://www.ml.cmu.edu/academics/ta.html>
- School of Computer Science: <https://www.ugrad.cs.cmu.edu/ta/>
- Statistics and Data Science: <https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/statistics-datascience/resources/ta-handbook/become-a-ta.html>

CMIST graduate students who are assigned a Research Assistant (RA), Teaching Assistant (TA), or Departmental Assistant (DA) position will be expected to adhere to the following requirements:

- Complete the agreed upon hours per week under the fellowship or hiring agreement.
- Document weekly work completed via a digital timelog that is available to the assigned faculty member/supervisor and the graduate program manager, as needed.
- Attend regularly scheduled virtual or in-person meetings with faculty or supervisor for the duration of the hired semester.
- Maintain an active communication channel with the faculty or supervisor.
- Agree upon clearly defined deliverable deadlines with the faculty or supervisor and maintain a record of those agreements.

Students assigned to RA, TA, or DA positions will be subject to two evaluations during the course of each semester they are assigned. Assigned faculty or supervisors will evaluate student worker performance

based on their reasonable availability, professionalism, and the quality of work performed.

Failure to meet the stated expectations above will result in a probationary period in which the student will meet bi-weekly with the graduate program manager to facilitate an improvement plan. Students on probation will be given a written letter that details what improvements are expected of them to continue in that role. Continued failure to meet expectations beyond the probationary period may result in the loss of financial aid associated with the position or termination of employment.

Research Assistant (RA) Duties May Include:

- Contribute to quantitative/qualitative research projects;
- Draft briefings on current foreign policy issues using database and archival research; and/or
- Provide logistical assistance as needed for research-based travel opportunities.

Teaching Assistant (TA) Duties May Include:

- Attend all class sessions and read required weekly material;
 - Assist professor with grading of exams and quizzes; and
 - Hold office hours and review sessions to address student questions.
- TAs will be provided a shared workspace in POS 276 to conduct office hours.

Graduate students are required to have a certain level of fluency in English before they can instruct in Pennsylvania, as required by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act of 1990. Through this Act, all institutions of higher education in the state are required to evaluate and certify the English fluency of all instructional personnel, including teaching assistants and interns. The full university policy can be reviewed at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/faculty/evaluation-certification-english-fluency-instructors.html>

The fluency of all instructional personnel will be rated by Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center to determine at what level of responsibility the student can TA. In addition to administering the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Test (a mandatory screening test for

any non-native speaker of English), Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center helps teaching assistants who are non-native English speakers develop fluency and cultural understanding to teach successfully at Carnegie Mellon. Visit the Student Academic Success Center website for additional information:

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/>

10.10 Leave of Absence Protocol

All CMU graduate students are eligible to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) from their respective programs if extreme circumstances present cause for the student to pause their studies. Review the appropriate conditions for LOA on the [University Policy website](#).

Taking a LOA at any point during their graduate studies will almost certainly mean that the student would be required to take a full year off from the program. International students' student visas do not remain active during the LOA period, so it is likely that an international student would be required to return to their home country for that period.

There is not an option to take a single semester off from a CMIST graduate program due to the respective programs' curriculum design.

If a student is planning to take a LOA, their first course of action is to discuss this with the graduate program manager to see if this is the best option given the specific circumstances. The student will be required to submit a Leave of Absence form to initiate the process. Early in the semester before the student is scheduled to return to the program, the student will be required to submit a Return from Leave of Absence form to the graduate program manager so that the student's enrollment status can be updated.

Tuition reimbursement for students who initiate a leave of absence in the middle of a semester is based on the percentage of the semester completed. After a certain date in a semester, tuition reimbursement may not be available to students. Refer to the tuition adjustment timeline schedule on [Student Financial Services's website](#).

11 Grading and Evaluation

11.1 CMIST Grading Scale/System

CMU graduate students in the master's year, will follow the following graduate grading scale outlined below.

Grade	Quality Points	Definition
A	4.0	
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	
C-	1.67	
R	0.0	Failure
P	Non-Factorable	Passing ($\geq$ B-)
N	Non-Factorable	Not Passing ($<$ B-)
O	Non-Factorable	Audit
W	Non-Factorable	Withdrawal
I	Non-Factorable	Incomplete
AD	Non-Factorable	Credit granted for work completed at another institution or examination credit

CMIST conducts academic progress reviews of its graduate students each semester in the fall and spring terms in order to monitor individual student performance. In assessing a student's performance, CMIST looks at academic achievement, personal responsibility, and overall progress. Should a student's effort fall below the acceptable level of academic performance and/or fail to meet standards established by Carnegie Mellon and CMIST, the student will be appropriately notified, presented with a suggested plan for improvement, and notified of the risks associated with failure to improve.

11.2 Department Policy on Grades for Retaking a Course

Any student who fails a course will have the failure reviewed by the faculty committee during the end-semester academic review. Under advice from the committee, the graduate program manager may require the student to repeat the course in order to complete the degree completion requirements.

When a course is repeated, all grades will be recorded on the official academic transcript and will be calculated in the student's QPA. This is the case regardless if the first grade for the course is a passing or failing grade, including pass/fail. When a student takes a course they have already passed, only one set of units will count toward graduation requirements.

11.3 Department Policy on pass/fail, satisfactory/unsatisfactory

All courses to be used toward degree completion requirements must be letter-bearing. Students may take courses above and beyond the requirements for their degrees on a pass/fail basis, with the understanding that they will not fulfill degree requirements. Note that Dietrich College does not consider a C+ or below as a “passing” grade at the graduate level: <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/grade-options/pnp-conversion.html>.

11.4 Incomplete Grades Policy/Process

Carnegie Mellon students are expected to complete a course during the academic semester in which the course was taken. However, if the instructor agrees, a grade of “I” (incomplete) may be given when a student has been unable to complete the work of a course. Moreover, the work completed up to that date must be of passing quality and the grade of incomplete provides no undue advantage to that student over other students.

In awarding an “I” grade, an instructor must specify the requirements for the completion of the work and designate a default letter grade in the event that the student fails to complete the remaining work.

Students must complete the required course work by no later than the end of the following academic semester, or sooner if required by the instructor. The instructor must record the permanent course grade by the last day of the examination period of the following semester, or the default grade will be automatically assigned by the Registrar.

Incomplete Grades Delaying Graduation

If an Incomplete grade is earned during the semester in which the student expects to graduate, the student may accept the grade of “I” (Incomplete), thus delaying graduation until the successful completion of the course

11.5 Independent Study/Directed Reading

An independent study (IS) course is one that is:

- designed by the student for further study in a particular area of interest, and
- used when there is no formal course available in a given subject area.

Independent study courses may be 6 or 12 units. Each Independent Study course, regardless of the proposed units, will fulfill the requirement of one elective course only. A maximum of one (1) Independent Study is permitted toward degree completion requirements.

An Independent Study course must be advised and approved by at least one faculty member, as well as the Graduate Program Manager. Agreement to supervise an Independent Study course is purely voluntary on the part of the faculty member. It is the duty of the student, therefore, to negotiate the terms and conditions of the Independent Study with the pertinent faculty member(s) or members of the technical staff who will be supervising the study. These individuals are referred to as “Independent Study Supervisors”.

The “Proposal for Independent Study” form must be submitted no less than 2 weeks before the end of the semester preceding the term in which the proposed IS will take place. Forms can be accessed by contacting the graduate program manager directly.

11.6 Review/Redress of Academic Conflicts

CMIST graduate students are recommended to review and abide by the university’s [Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures](#) provided by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs office. Grievances can include:

- Appealing Final Grades
- Appeal of Academic Actions (declined petition, probation, suspension, dismissal, etc.)
- Appeal from Academic Disciplinary Actions
- Community Standard Violations
- Return from Leave of Absence
- General Grievances

Students should refer to the [Carnegie Mellon Code](#) for a full description of university standards related to codes of conduct.

11.7 GPA and QPA Requirements for Graduation

To receive a CMIST graduate degree, students must successfully complete all appropriate courses with an overall quality point average (QPA) of at least 3.0. If a grade lower than “B-” (B minus) is received in any core, concentration, methodology, capstone/internship or seminar course, the course must be repeated or another course must be taken to satisfy the same requirement, regardless of the QPA. Receiving a “B-” (B minus) or lower in any course may jeopardize the student’s good academic standing in the program.

11.8 Satisfactory Academic Standing

Student progress will be monitored each semester. Should a student’s cumulative or semester QPA in graduate coursework drop below 3.0 during any semester, they may be placed on departmental probation for the following semester and required to improve their performance to the acceptable 3.0 QPA during that period. Terms of probation will be at the discretion of the department, but may include suspension of applicable departmental fellowships, mandatory course retakes, or required advisor meetings. Failure to improve a QPA to 3.0 or better within the following semester of coursework may result in termination from the program.

Refer to specific programmatic [QPA requirements in the section above](#).

11.9 Policy on Academic Probation in Final Semester

If a CMIST graduate student does not complete all course requirements before their final semester in the program, they will be placed on academic probation for that semester.

CMIST graduate students are required to complete all core, concentration, and policy seminar courses before the beginning of their final semester. Failure to meet this requirement will result in probationary status for the final semester and may require the student to enroll or overenroll in courses during the final semester.

Regardless of additional curricular requirements in that final semester, **MIT**s capstones only run during the fall and summer semesters. For this

reason, the student on probation will be expected to fully participate in the MITS capstone project/course in addition to completing curricular requirements. Should the student fall behind in either the MITS Capstone or the additional courses, the priority should be given to the Capstone project. It is possible that the student on probation may have to withdraw from the courses and plan to complete these courses in a subsequent semester—which would delay their graduation by a semester. In this instance, the student would be responsible for covering the cost of adding an additional semester and they will remain on academic probation until they complete and graduate from the program.

MS STAIR students are required to complete all coursework except for 84-704 and the internship before the start of their final summer semester. Failure to meet this requirement will result in probationary status for the final internship semester and may require the student to delay graduation to complete coursework in subsequent semesters. There is a potential that an MS STAIR student can take one remote CMU class during the internship semester from DC, but there is no guarantee that a relevant remote course will be offered each summer to satisfy missing unit requirements.

If the student ends up extending the program due to probationary status, the student would be responsible for covering the cost of adding any additional semester and they will remain on academic probation until they complete and graduate from the program.

Please review the Leave of Absence Protocol ([Section 10.10](#) above) as an alternative option to consider.

12 Changes to Policies or “Grandfathered” Policies

Students are automatically tied to the specific handbook document most recently published by the CMIST department before the student’s first semester in the program.

When policies change, it is because the department recognizes that the newly-adopted rule is an improvement. Students enrolled in a degree program that is affected by a change in policy may, in some cases, choose to be governed by the policy in effect at the time of their matriculation.

Should a student want to petition to be covered by a “newer” policy than what is stated in their official handbook, the student must first be in good

academic standing in the program at the time of the petition. The petition must be put in writing and provided to the graduate program manager in a timely fashion. No policy petitions will be accepted after the final course drop deadline of their final semester in the program.

13 Financial Support

13.1 Statement of Department Financial Support

Students are expected to make normal progress toward their degree in order to graduate within the standard timeframe for their program of study. Under US Federal Title IV regulations, student eligibility for federal financial aid is contingent upon enrollment in and successful completion of courses that are counted as credit toward their current degree program. To receive the maximum amount of federal and state financial aid for which they may be eligible, students must enroll each semester in at least 36 units that count toward their current degree level.

Students should consult with their designated college liaison in The HUB regarding billing and financial aid, particularly for early completion, longer-than-standard completion, or integrated bachelor and master's degree programs.

13.2 Types of Department Funding

Conference Funding is a funding application process provided by GSA and the Provost's Office for students, student work groups or groups to attend a conference, whether as a participant or as a presenter. The process is managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/index.html>

13.3 Travel/Conference and Research Funding

The intent of funding is to support CMIST graduate student research by providing financial assistance in the form of expense reimbursement to be used toward the costs incurred in either conference attendance or research projects. Funding will be provided in the form of reimbursement.

For conference attendance, graduate students must supply proof their paper has been accepted for presentation. Poster presentations are not

accepted for reimbursement. For conference attendance, registration fees and travel expenses (hotel/airfare) are the most commonly approved reimbursement.

Students should submit the “CMIST Graduate Student Funding Application” no earlier than one semester before the expected expenses are to be incurred, and no later than one month before the date of the conference or expected research expenses. Please contact the graduate program manager to gain access to this application form.

Scholarly Project, Conference, and Professional Engagement Funding is a source of small research grant funds provided by GSA and the Provost’s Office and managed by the Graduate Education Office. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/research-funding/index.html>

13.4 Requirements for the Continuation of Funding

Students receiving departmental funding must remain in good academic standing for the duration of their scholarship. The department reserves the right to withdraw funding in the following circumstances:

- A student remains on academic probation for a second consecutive semester.
- A student takes a Leave of Absence away from the program for more than one semester.
- A student receives less than a 2.0 cumulative QPA in any given semester.

The graduate program manager will remain in contact with the student leading up to any final departmental decision being made. Should CMIST decide to initiate the withdrawal of scholarship funds, the student would be notified via an official letter emailed to their CMU account with a recommendation to discuss the decision with the graduate program manager.

13.5 Office of the Dean of Students Emergency Support Funding

Graduate students who find themselves in need of immediate funds for emergency situations should contact the Office of the Dean of Students:

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/dean/>

to inquire about the types of emergency funding available to enrolled students.

Carnegie Mellon University

Carnegie Mellon Institute
for Strategy & Technology

Highlighted University Resources for Graduate Students



Note: The following pages are meant to broadly include only some of the resources available to graduate students. It is not an exhaustive appendix of resources, and students are strongly encouraged to visit the various websites linked below for the most up-to-date information.

14 Key Resources for Graduate Student Support

14.1 Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate>

graded@cmu.edu

The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs provides university-wide support for all graduate students and academic programs, with a focus on supporting graduate student success at Carnegie Mellon. Examples of resources offered through the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs include, but are not limited to:

- Website with university resources, contact information for CMU programs and services, possible financial assistance and potential funding opportunities, and various procedural and policy information
- Newsletter to all graduate students with information on activities, resources, and opportunities
- Professional development seminars and workshops, and various programming and events for the graduate student community

The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs also works directly with the colleges and departments on issues related to graduate students and serve as a resource for developing policy and procedures. The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs partners with many other offices and organizations, such as the Graduate Student Assembly, to support the holistic graduate student educational experience.

14.2 Office of the Dean of Students

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/dean/>

The Office of the Dean of Students provides central leadership of the curricular experience at Carnegie Mellon including the coordination of student support. Graduate students will find the enrollment information for Domestic Partner Registration and Parental Accommodations in the Office of the Dean of Students or on their website. This Office also manages the Student Emergency Support Funding process. There are currently three forms of support funding for enrolled students: emergency student loans, student parental loans, and the Tartan Emergency Support Fund. Inquiring students will be provided with additional information about the various types of funding during a consultation meeting with a member of the Dean of Students team. Tuition costs are not

eligible for Student Emergency Support funding.

College Liaisons and the Student Support Resources team serve as additional resources for graduate students. College Liaisons are senior members of the Division of Student Affairs who work with departments and colleges addressing student concerns across a wide range of issues. College Liaisons are identified on the Important Contacts list in Student Information Online (SIO). The Student Support Resources team offers an additional level of support for students who are navigating a wide range of life events. Student Support Resources staff members work in partnership with campus and community resources to provide coordination of care and support appropriate to each student's situation.

14.3 The Division of Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs includes (not an exhaustive list):

- Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation
- Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC)
- Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion
- Cohon University Center
- Counseling & Psychological Services (CaPS)
- Dining Services
- Office of Community Standards and Integrity (OCSI)
- Office of Student Leadership, Involvement, and Civic Engagement (SLICE)
- University Health Services (UHS)
- Wellness Initiatives

14.4 Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-diversity/>

Diversity and inclusion have a singular place among the values of Carnegie Mellon University. The Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion actively cultivates a strong, diverse and inclusive community capable of living out these values and advancing research, creativity, learning and development that changes the world.

The Center offers resources to enhance an inclusive and transformative student experience in dimensions such as access, success, campus climate and

intergroup dialogue. Additionally, the Center supports and connects historically underrepresented students and those who are first in their family to attend college in a setting where students' differences and talents are appreciated and reinforced, both at the graduate and undergraduate level.

Initiatives coordinated by the Center include, but are not limited to:

- First generation/first in family to attend college programs
- LGBTQ+ Initiatives
- Race and ethnically focused programs, including Inter-University Graduate Students of Color Series (SOC) and PhD SOC Network
- Women's empowerment programs, including Graduate Women's Gatherings (GWGs)

14.5 Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/>

The Eberly Center offers a wide variety of confidential, consultation services and professional development programs to support graduate students as teaching assistants or instructors of record during their time at Carnegie Mellon University and as future faculty members at other institutions.

Regardless of one's current or future teaching context and duties, Eberly's goal is to disseminate evidence-based teaching strategies in ways that are accessible and actionable. Programs and services include campus-wide Graduate Student Instructor Orientation events and our Future Faculty Program, both of which are designed to help participants be effective and efficient in their teaching roles. The Eberly Center also assists departments in creating and conducting customized programs to meet the specific needs of their graduate student instructors. Specific information about Eberly Center support for graduate students is found at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/graduatestudentsupport/>

14.6 Graduate Student Assembly

<https://www.cmu.edu/stugov/gsa/>

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) is the branch of Carnegie Mellon Student Government that represents and advocates for the diverse interests of all graduate students at CMU. GSA is composed of representatives from the different graduate programs and departments who want to improve the graduate student experience at the different levels of the university. GSA is funded by the Student Activities Fee from all graduate students. GSA passes

legislation, allocates student activities funding, advocates for legislative action locally and in Washington D.C. on behalf of graduate student issues and needs, and otherwise acts on behalf of all graduate student interests. GSA's recent accomplishments are a testament to their making a difference, and steps to implementing the vision laid out by the strategic plan.

<https://www.cmu.edu/stugov/gsa/about-the-gsa/strategic-plan.html>

GSA offers an expanding suite of social programming on and off-campus to bring graduate students from different departments together and build a sense of community. GSA is the host of the Graduate Student Lounge on the 3rd floor of the Cohon University Center. GSA also maintains a website of graduate student resources on and off-campus. GSA continues to rely on student feedback to improve the graduate student experience at CMU. Feel free to contact them at gsa@cmu.edu to get involved, stop by their office in the Cohon University Center Room 304 or become a representative for your department.

14.7 Office of International Education (OIE)

<https://www.cmu.edu/oie/>

Carnegie Mellon hosts international graduate and undergraduate students who come from more than 90 countries. The Office of International Education (OIE) is the liaison to the University for all non-immigrant students and scholars, as well the repository for study abroad opportunities. OIE provides many services including: advising on personal, immigration, study abroad, academic, and social and acculturation issues; presenting programs of interest such as international career workshops, tax workshops, and cross-cultural and immigration workshops; international education and statistics on international students in the United States; posting pertinent information to students through email and the OIE website and conducting orientation and pre-departure programs.

14.8 Veterans and Military Community

<https://www.cmu.edu/veterans/>

Military veterans are a vital part of the Carnegie Mellon University community. Graduate students can find information on applying for veteran education benefits, campus services, veteran's groups at CMU, and non-educational resources through the Veterans and Military Community website. There are also links and connections to veteran resource in the Pittsburgh community. The ROTC and Veteran Affairs Coordinator can be reached at

urovaedbenefits@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-8747.

14.9 Carnegie Mellon Ethics Hotline

<https://www.cmu.edu/hr/resources/ethics-hotline.html>

The health, safety and well-being of the university community are top priorities at Carnegie Mellon University. CMU provides a hotline that all members of the university community should use to confidentially report suspected unethical activity, violations of university policy, or violations of law. Students, faculty and staff can anonymously file a report by calling 1-844-587-0793 or visiting <https://cmu.ethicspoint.com/>. All submissions are reported to appropriate university personnel and handled discreetly.

The hotline is NOT an emergency service. For emergencies, call University Police at 412-268-2323.

14.10 Policy Against Retaliation

It is the policy of Carnegie Mellon University to protect from retaliation any individual who makes a good faith report of a suspected violation of any applicable law or regulation, university Policy or procedure, any contractual obligation of the university, and any report made pursuant to the Carnegie Mellon University Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.

Additional details regarding the Policy Against Retaliation are available at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/whistleblower.html>

15 Key Offices for Academic & Research Support

15.1 Computing and Information Resources

<https://www.cmu.edu/computing/>

Computing Services maintains and supports computing resources for the campus community, including the campus wired and wireless networks, printing, computer labs, file storage, email and software catalog. As members of this community, we are all responsible for the security of these shared resources. Be sure to review the Safe Computing

(<https://www.cmu.edu/computing/safe/>) section and the University Computing Policy

(<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/information-technology/computing.html>)

Visit the Computing Services website (<https://www.cmu.edu/computing/>) to learn more. For assistance the Computing Services Help Center is available at 412-268-4357 (HELP) or ithelp@cmu.edu.

15.2 Student Academic Success Center

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/>

The Student Academic Success Center's (SASC) work to support success focuses on creating spaces for students to engage in their coursework and approach to learning through many group and individual program options. SASC supports student success by providing academic coaching, subject-specific tutoring, effective communication strategies, accommodations for students with disabilities, and language support for multilingual learners. SASC engages with faculty and staff to improve the coordination and professional development for academic advisors. Visit the SASC website for more information about services offered in areas such as communication and language support; language and cross-cultural support; and learning support.

15.3 University Libraries

<https://www.library.cmu.edu/>

The University Libraries offers a wide range of information, resources, and services supporting graduate students in coursework, research, teaching, and publishing. The library licenses and purchases books, journals, media, and other needed materials in various formats. Library liaisons, consultants, and information specialists provide in-depth and professional assistance and advice in all-things information, including:

- Locating and obtaining specific resources
- Providing specialized research support
- Advanced training in the use and management of data

Sign up for workshops and hands-on topic-specific sessions such as data visualization with Tableau, cleaning data with OpenRefine, and getting started with Zotero. Weekly drop-in hours for Digital Humanities and for Research Data Research Management are scheduled during the academic year. Start at the library home page to find the books, journals, and databases you need; to identify and reach out to the library liaison in your field; to sign up for scheduled workshops; and to connect with consultants in scholarly publishing, research data management, and digital humanities.

15.4 Research at CMU

<https://www.cmu.edu/research/>

The primary purpose of research at the university is the advancement of

knowledge in all fields in which the university is active. Research is regarded as one of the university's major contributions to society and as an essential element in education, particularly at the graduate level and in faculty development. Research activities are governed by several university policies. Guidance and more general information are found by visiting the Research at Carnegie Mellon website.

15.5 Office of Research Integrity & Compliance

<https://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/>

The Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) is designed to support research at Carnegie Mellon University. The staff work with researchers to ensure research is conducted with integrity and in accordance with federal and Pennsylvania regulation. ORIC assists researchers with human subject research, conflicts of interest, responsible conduct of research, export controls, and institutional animal care & use. ORIC also provides consultation, advice, and review of allegations of research misconduct.

16 Key Offices for Health, Wellness & Safety

16.1 Counseling & Psychological Services

<https://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>

Counseling & Psychological Services (CaPS) affords the opportunity for students to talk privately about academic and personal concerns in a safe, confidential setting. An initial consultation at CaPS can help clarify the nature of the concern, provide immediate support, and explore further options if needed. These may include a referral for counseling within CaPS, to another resource at Carnegie Mellon, or to another resource within the larger Pittsburgh community. CaPS also provides workshops and group sessions on mental health related topics specifically for graduate students on campus. CaPS services are provided at no cost. Appointments can be made in person, or by telephone at 412-268-2922.

16.2 Health Services

<https://www.cmu.edu/HealthServices/>

University Health Services (UHS) is staffed by physicians, advanced practice clinicians and registered nurses who provide general medical care, allergy injections, first aid, gynecological care, and contraception as well as on-site pharmaceuticals. The CMU Student Insurance Plan covers most visit fees to see

the physicians and advanced practice clinicians & nurse visits. Fees for prescription medications, laboratory tests, diagnostic procedures and referral to the emergency room or specialists are the student's responsibility and students should review the UHS website and their insurance plan for detailed information about the university health insurance requirement and fees.

UHS also has a registered dietician and health promotion specialists on staff to assist students in addressing nutrition, drug and alcohol and other healthy lifestyle issues. In addition to providing direct health care, UHS administers the Student Health Insurance Program. The Student Health Insurance plan offers a high level of coverage in a wide network of health care providers and hospitals. Appointments can be made by visiting UHS's website, walk-in, or by telephone, 412-268-2157.

16.3 Campus Wellness

<https://www.cmu.edu/wellness/>

At Carnegie Mellon, we believe our individual and collective well-being is rooted in healthy connections to each other and to campus resources. The university provides a wide variety of wellness, mindfulness and connectedness initiatives and resources designed to help students thrive inside and outside the classroom.

16.4 Religious and Spiritual Life Initiatives (RSLI)

<https://www.cmu.edu/wellbeing/resources/religious-spiritual/index.html>

Carnegie Mellon is committed to the holistic growth of our students, including creating opportunities for spiritual and religious practice and exploration. RSLI has relationships with local houses of worship from various traditions and many of these groups are members of CMU's Council of Religious Advisors. They also offer programs and initiatives that cross traditional religious boundaries in order to increase knowledge of and appreciation for the full diversity of the worldview traditions. RSLI staff are available to support students across the spectrum of religious and spiritual practice and would be more than happy to help you make a connection into a community of faith during your time at CMU.

16.5 University Police

<https://www.cmu.edu/police/>

x2323

The University Police Department is located at 4551 Filmore Street. The

department's services include police patrols and call response, criminal investigations, fixed officer and foot officer patrols, event security, and crime prevention and education programming as well as bicycle and laptop registration. Visit the department's website for additional information about the staff, emergency phone locations, crime prevention, lost and found, fingerprint services, and annual statistic reports. Carnegie Mellon University publishes an annual campus security and fire safety report describing the university's security, alcohol and drug, sexual assault, and fire safety policies. The report also contains statistics about the number and type of crimes committed on the campus and the number and cause of fires in campus residence facilities during the preceding three years. Graduate students can obtain a copy by contacting the University Police Department at [x2323](tel:412-268-2323). The annual security and fire safety report is also available online at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/police/annualreports/>

16.6 Shuttle and Escort Services

<https://www.cmu.edu/parking/transport/>

Parking and Transportation coordinates the Shuttle Service and Escort Service provided for CMU students, faculty, and community. The Shuttle & Escort website has full information about these services, stops, routes, tracking and schedules.

17 The WORD

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/>

The WORD is Carnegie Mellon University's online student handbook and serves as the foundation for the department (and sometimes college) handbook. The WORD contains university-wide academic policy information and resources, community policies and resources, and describes the university level procedures used to review possible violations of these standards. It is designed to provide all students with the tools, guidance, and insights to help you achieve your full potential as a member of the Carnegie Mellon community. Graduate students are encouraged to bookmark this site and refer to it often. University policies can also be found in full text at: <https://www.cmu.edu/policies/>.



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