MS Degree in Computer Science (MCSC): Requirements and Timelines

Division of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge

All LSU Graduate School regulations and procedures apply (http://gradlsu.gs.lsu.edu). In addition, the degree requirements and timelines set by the CSE Division apply. The MS degree requires 37 hours of credit at the graduate level (core courses, electives, seminar, and thesis/project). It is the student’s responsibility to read, understand, and satisfy the Graduate School and CSE Division requirements.

Year one:
- Attend graduate student orientation/reception.
- Meet with the Graduate Advisor in the first week of the semester.
- Take three core courses in the first year (must score B- grade or better, otherwise, retake the course).
- Enroll in graduate seminar (CSC 7800) course.
- File a plan of study for the concentration area and thesis/project option chosen in the first semester.
- Form the project/thesis committee consisting of the Major Professor (a professorial faculty from the CSE Division) as the chair and 2 other members.

Year two:
- Enroll in the remaining courses (electives) as required by the concentration and the option chosen.
- Decide on a thesis/project topic, which must be approved by the Major Professor.
- Project/thesis work must begin in the 3rd semester (or earlier) and span for two consecutive semesters (register only for 3 credit hours in CSC 7090 or 6 credit hours in CSC 8000 each semester).
- Take the Final Exam usually in the second semester. The thesis/project must be submitted to the committee 2 weeks in advance, and the exam must be announced 3 days prior to the exam date.

The course requirement consists of 3 core courses (worth for 9 credit hours), one from each category:
- Algorithms (CSC 7300) or Theory of Computation (CSC 4890)
- Programming Languages (CSC 4101 or CSC 7101) or Operating Systems (CSC 4103 or CSC 7103)
- Databases (CSC 4402 or CSC 7402) or Machine Learning/Data Mining (CSC 4444 or CSC 7333 or CSC 7442)

The student must pass each core course with B- or better grade, otherwise the course must be repeated, or a different core course should be taken. Enroll in at least one core course in the 1st semester. The thesis option (CSC 8000) requires 12 credit hours whereas the project option (CSC 7090) requires 6 credit hours. The student must also earn credit in CSC 7800 Research Seminar in the first year.

Electives depend on the concentration and option chosen. Five electives (15 credit hours) for the thesis option or seven electives (21 credit hours) for the non-thesis option must be chosen from the student's area of concentration. The maximum number of interdisciplinary electives from other departments allowed is two (6 credit hours) for default “Core Computer Science” concentration and is four (12 credit hours) for other concentrations. For each concentration and option, at least half of the courses (including both core and electives taken) must be at the 7000 level.

For more information, refer the complete MS policy of the CSE Division (www.cse.lsu.edu) and contact the Graduate Advisor Costas Busch (busch@cse.lsu.edu)

The residency requirement consists of two successive regular semesters of full-time course work.
- Almost all core and electives courses are offered once a year (either fall or spring semester).
- Registration for additional hours in CSC 7090 and CSC 8000 is allowed only with approval by the committee and the Graduate Advisor. Also, the student may enroll in CSC 7999 but it does not substitute an elective.
- A faculty from other department or an adjunct faculty can only serve as the co-advisor (co-chair). The committee chair (co-chair) and at least one member must be from the Graduate Faculty of the CSE Division.