Department of Computer Science Graduate Admissions

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Admission Requirements
The admission requirements spelled out below apply to the MS, ME and the PhD programs. Applicants should be aware that admission is very competitive, and that meeting the requirements does not guarantee admission.

Admission to the PhD program is especially competitive and successful applicants will in general have records considerably stronger in breadth or quality than these minimum standards suggest. PhD applicants with a very strong background in areas other than computer science are encouraged to apply. (Students wishing to get both MS and PhD degrees can apply to the PhD program and get the MS degree while enrolled in the PhD program. Alternatively students may apply to the MS program, and later on apply to the PhD program.)

Applicants for graduate study in computer science must hold at least a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an institution comparable to the University of Colorado. They should have considerable programming experience, a number of computer science courses, and sufficient mathematical maturity to understand pure mathematics courses at the upper division (junior/senior) level.

Mathematics Courses
The applicant's academic background should include at least three semesters of mathematics at the level of sophistication of calculus or above, courses such as calculus, differential equations, linear algebra, probability, statistics, and abstract algebra. The courses should indicate that the applicant has achieved the mathematical maturity expected of an upper-level mathematics undergraduate.
Computer Science Courses
At least five one-semester courses in Computer Science that are beyond the introductory level are required. These are intended to demonstrate the applicant’s breadth of basic Computer Science knowledge in the areas of computer hardware, software, and theory. The courses should include the equivalent of the following University of Colorado offerings:

- Hardware Requirement: CSCI 2400 (Computer Systems).
- Software Requirement: Any one of CSCI 3155 (Principles of Programming Languages) or CSCI 3753 (Operating Systems).
- Theory Requirement: CSCI 2270 (Computer Science 2: Data Structures) and either CSCI 3104 (Algorithms) or CSCI 3434 (Theory of Computation).
- Other Area Requirement: One upper division course (i.e., one at the junior/senior, 3000/4000 level) in another area of Computer Science. These areas include artificial intelligence, databases, numerical computation, parallel processing and software engineering.

More advanced versions of all courses are acceptable. Courses classified in the Other Area Requirement may occasionally be substituted for courses classified in the Hardware, Software or Theory Requirement. However, the courses in the Hardware, Software and Theory Requirements are prerequisites to many of the graduate-level offerings and applicants who are admitted lacking their equivalent will usually be required to make them up.

Grade Point Average
Applicants should have a grade point average of at least 3.0 (on a scale of 4.0). Applicants having the listed qualifications will, if accepted, be classified as regular degree students. However, admission to the graduate programs is competitive, and a grade point average at this level will not ensure admission. Applicants with an average below 3.0 and above 2.75 and applicants lacking certain of the admission requirements listed above, if accepted, can only be accepted as provisional degree students.

GRE Scores
PhD applicants are required to submit scores from the general GRE (scores are only valid for 5 years). GRE scores for MS applicants are optional, in general; they are encouraged if the work is at an institution lacking a strong national reputation; they are required if the undergraduate grade point average is below 3.0 and above 2.75.

See GRE revised General Test for more information. You may also contact the GRE Helpline to get answers to your questions about the revised test.

How to Apply
Applicants for admission to the graduate programs in Computer Science at the University of Colorado Boulder should do the following to apply:

- Visit Applying to CU-Boulder to complete the application.
- Your completed application for the graduate program in Computer Science must contain each of the following required materials to be considered for admission:
  1. The Department Application for Computer Science Graduate Program. This document is required to be uploaded with the online application.
2. The Online Application.
3. A $50 application fee ($70 for International Applicants). This can be submitted online via credit card while applying online. (Please see Application Fee Waiver Policy below.)
4. The Standard Graduate Record Examination for general aptitude (verbal and quantitative) is required for entrance into the PhD Program. (MS optional and required only for students with lower than 3.0 and higher than 2.75 GPA.) You may learn where and when to take the GRE from the Educational Testing Service. The "Institute Code" for the University of Colorado Boulder for the GRE test is "4841" and the "Department Code" is "0402". Typical graduate record exam (GRE) scores of admitted applicants are 560 verbal and 775 quantitative for tests taken prior to August 2011. We do not have typical GRE scores for admitted applicants using the new scoring system yet.
5. A TOEFL score of 560 in paper based; 220 CBT or 83 iBT or an IELTS score of 6.0 is required for international students unless you meet the graduate admissions English Proficiency Requirements. The "Institute Code" for the University of Colorado Boulder for the TOEFL test is "4841". The "Department Code" for this test is "0402" for paper based and CBT TOEFL, while it is "78" for iBT TOEFL.
6. At least three letters of recommendation. It is highly recommended that these letters be obtained from members of the academic community. Please request your referees to submit letters of recommendation via the online application system under "Background Information". Please note that your recommenders will not receive notification to complete the recommendation until after you have submitted your application.
7. One original transcript from each college or university you have attended, even if no credit was received. Community or junior colleges are included. The institution must mail the transcript directly to us.
8. A Statement of Purpose regarding why you want to pursue graduate work in Computer Science and what you would like to do after you have received your graduate degree. This document is required to be uploaded with the online application under section A of "Upload Documents".

Application Fee Waiver Policy:

If you are applying to the PhD program, your application fee will be waived if you have been personally invited to apply by a Computer Science faculty member. We need an email from the faculty member supporting your claim to process the waiver.

Both domestic and international applicants can qualify for the waiver.

If your waiver is approved, you will need to select the "pay by check" option when submitting your online application. Please feel free to contact CS Graduate Admissions if you have any questions about this.

Domestic Applicants:
All parts of your application, transcripts, supporting credentials, and correspondence in reference to your application should be sent directly to:

Graduate Admissions
University of Colorado Boulder
3100 Marine Street, Suite A122
553 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0553

For overnight or express mail send to:
Graduate Admissions
University of Colorado Boulder
3100 Marine Street Building RL3
Suite A122
Boulder, CO 80303-1058
303-492-6301

International Applicants:
All parts of your application, transcripts, supporting credentials, and correspondence in reference to
your application should be sent directly to

Graduate Admissions
University of Colorado Boulder
3100 Marine Street, Suite A122
553 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0553
USA
Questions should be directed to CS Graduate Admissions.

Application Deadlines
MS, ME and Doctoral students are admitted each year for the Fall semester. The deadline for all
applications is December 15. Applications received by the deadline will receive full consideration during
the review process.

Notification Dates
Decision letters will be mailed to all applicants by March 30.