Computer Science
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Student Handbook

Master of Science in Computer Science (MS-CS) on Coursera

2024 Fall 1 – 2025 Summer 2

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Welcome

Welcome to the University of Colorado (CU) Boulder's Master of Science in Computer Science (MS-CS) on Coursera. Our cutting-edge program is designed for the 21st century learner on the Coursera learning platform and prepares engineers, applied scientists, and technical professionals for career advancement in advanced technical and technical leadership roles. The fully online MS-CS on Coursera presents three major innovations for students:

- **Access.** The program is designed to provide global access to graduate-level education and uses *performance-based admissions* rather than traditional admissions standards. Anyone who can complete graduate-level computer science coursework is eligible to enroll in the MS-CS degree program.
- **Curriculum.** The degree curriculum is modular and self-directed. Our computer science professors have split semester-long courses into single, one-credit courses. These courses naturally fit together in a sequence, but we encourage students to construct their degree plan as needed. Note the degree requires students to complete at least nine full specializations: five full breadth specializations and four or more full elective specializations. The MS-CS curriculum addresses a range of areas including theory, software, systems, machine learning, and ethics, including 15 breadth credits and 15 elective credits.
- **Learning.** The program is guided by the belief that learning belongs to the learner. To be successful, each student must commit to their learning by creating a clear plan of courses, a schedule for study, and a strategy for taking courses.

We recommend students explore MS-CS courses in the non-credit format prior to taking them for credit. This allows students to determine if the course's content and the instructor's teaching style fits their learning plan. See How It Works and Non-Credit and For-Credit Experiences on Coursera for more information on upgrading from the non-credit to the for-credit experience.

CU Boulder stands fully behind the degree. Students taking the MS-CS on Coursera earn the same credentials as students enrolled on campus. There are no designations on official CU transcripts, diplomas, or certificates that this is an online program offered on the Coursera platform.

The program specifics are reviewed on the College of Engineering and Applied Science (CEAS) website. This document provides students with the policies governing the MS-CS degree. CU graduate degree programs are governed by the University's and Graduate School's rules, policies, and procedures. The MS-CS on Coursera is also subject to CU Boulder policies governing degrees hosted on Coursera as well as program-specific policies outlined in this student handbook (updated annually).

We welcome student contact.

- Prospective students and students enrolled in non-credit courses may contact us at mscscoursera-info@colorado.edu.
- Students enrolled in for-credit courses may contact their Course Facilitators or the MS-CS graduate advisor at mscs-coursera@colorado.edu with questions.

We are proud for you to join our community and forge a new kind of education for the 21st century. Welcome to CU Boulder's Master of Science in Computer Science program on Coursera.

Admissions

There is no traditional application for admission for these programs. Students do not need to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or English proficiency exams like the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS). They never need to submit letters of recommendation or application essays. Neither a prior degree nor university transcripts are required for admission. Because these are purely online programs, students do not need to complete a background check to enroll.

The MS-CS on Coursera program uses **performance-based admissions** for enrollment, which means students earn program admission simply by performing well in a three-course pathway. Specifically, a student pursuing admission to the MS-CS degree program must complete the following four steps:

1. Earn at least a grade of B in one of the three-course for-credit pathways.
   Achieve a computed pathway grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00.
2. Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 for all for-credit courses taken in the program.
3. Declare their intent to seek the degree via the Enrollment Form, which they can do while enrolling in any for-credit course during any enrollment period. This can be before, during, or after starting work in a pathway.

Upon completion of these four steps, the student is admitted to the MS-CS on Coursera degree program. Students may successfully complete a designated pathway and declare their intent to see the degree at any point in their academic journey. Completion of a pathway is not required for students to begin earning academic credit, only to earn the degree. Pathway courses are a required part of the curriculum, allowing students to make direct progress toward the degree while working toward program admission. To remain in good standing in the program, students must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher.

Non-degree-seeking students may also enroll in for-credit courses. All courses attempted and/or completed for credit will appear on official CU Boulder transcripts (unless dropped by the drop deadline) and will count toward the cumulative GPA.

Curriculum & Requirements

Graduate Certificates

A graduate certificate is a sequence of courses totaling 9-12 credit hours that has been approved by the Graduate School at CU Boulder. Students may enroll in graduate certificates as either non-degree-seeking or degree-seeking students.

CU certificates on Coursera are **stackable**, meaning degree-seeking students can count credits first earned as part of a CU certificate toward the 30-credit MS-CS degree, as well.

All CU certificates on Coursera require students to earn a cumulative certificate GPA of 3.00 or higher before conferral. Individual certificates may have additional requirements.

It is your responsibility to ensure you take courses in the correct order to earn the certificates you are most interested in. Multiple certificates may require the same courses, and *you cannot double count courses between multiple certificates*. CU certificates on Coursera are automatically conferred once all requirements are met. After graduation, credit that has been applied toward the degree cannot be applied toward additional certificates.

Graduate certificate credentials are conferred by the CU Boulder campus.

Computer Science Graduate Certificate

The Artificial Intelligence Graduate Certificate requires 12 credits to be completed in 4 full specializations. A specialization is a grouping of 3 courses in a topic. Each course is 1 credit.

The graduate certificate in Artificial Intelligence (AI) provides students a strong foundation in key AI topics. Students apply Machine Learning (ML) algorithms to real world data sets; examine ethical issues in the design and implementation of current and future computing systems and technologies; create an appreciation for the tight interplay between mechanism, sensor, and control in the design of robotic and intelligent systems; and study vital topics in generative AI reinforcement learning, natural language processing, and autonomous systems.

Credits earned in the AI Graduate Certificate can count toward the MS-CS degree and the AI certificate. You can complete your AI certificate in parallel with your MS-CS degree.

University Catalog requirements for the AI graduate certificate

Certificates from Other CU Boulder Degrees on Coursera ("Outside Certificates")

MS-CS on Coursera students may currently pursue CU Boulder graduate certificates on Coursera offered by the Master of Engineering in Engineering Management (ME-EM) on Coursera, the Master of Science in Data Science (MS-DS) on Coursera, and the Master of Science in Electrical Engineering (MS-EE) on Coursera programs.

You must officially declare your intent to pursue any certificate offered by another CU degree on Coursera before graduation and within two years of completing all requirements for that certificate. To officially declare your intent to pursue one of these outside certificates, you simply need to enroll in at least one course via the enrollment form for that certificate's home program. For example, to earn the Data Science Graduate Certificate offered by the MS-DS on Coursera program, you must enroll in at least one course via the MS-DS enrollment form.

Master's Degree

Degree Requirements

Degree requirements in effect per the Special Programs section of the University Catalog at the time of your first enrollment for-credit in any MS-CS course will apply to you during your course of study. Any revisions to the requirements after the term that you first enroll for credit in any course in the MS-CS on Coursera will not apply to you retroactively. Use the University Catalog for the term you first enrolled in the program until you graduate, as that governs your graduation requirements. You can also use your degree audit in BuffPortal to verify your individual degree requirements and catalog year.

The MS-CS on Coursera is a non-thesis degree program that requires 30 credit hours of degree-eligible graduate-level coursework. This includes 15 credits of breadth coursework and a choice of 15 credit hours of elective coursework from the options listed below. Students must complete 15 credits of elective coursework, including at least four full elective specializations. (Note: up to six credits from other CU Boulder degrees on Coursera can be applied toward MS-CS elective credit requirements. See Other Elective Courses ("Outside Electives") for details.)

Before the MS-CS degree is awarded, students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 and a grade of B or better in each breadth class (including the two required pathways and the three required breadth specializations). Elective courses in which grades below C (2.0) are received may not be applied toward degree requirements.

Courses may not be double counted toward two credentials of the same level. This means students can apply credit from a particular course toward one graduate certificate and one graduate degree, but they cannot apply credit from a particular course toward two graduate certificates or two graduate degrees. CU degrees and certificates on Coursera are automatically conferred once all requirements are met.

A cross-listed course is a course that is offered under two or more programs (e.g., Dynamic Programming, Greedy Algorithms is offered as both CSCA 5414 and DTSA 5503). You may not earn credit for more than one version of a cross-listed course.

Breadth Courses (15 credits)

Students must complete two pathway specializations and three additional breadth specializations for a total of 15 breadth credits:

Pathway: Foundations of Data Structures and Algorithms (3 credits)

- CSCA 5414 Dynamic Programming, Greedy Algorithms – Cross-listed with DTSA 5503
- CSCA 5424 Approximation Algorithms and Linear Programming
- CSCA 5454 Advanced Data Structures, RSA, and Quantum Algorithms

Pathway: Network Systems: Principles and Practice (Linux and Cloud Networking) (3 credits)

- CSCA 5063: Network Systems Foundation

- CSCA 5073: Network Principles in Practice: Linux Networking
- CSCA 5083: Network Principles in Practice: Cloud Networking

Machine Learning: Theory and Hands-on Practice with Python (3 credits)

- CSCA 5622 Intro. to Machine Learning: Supervised Learning – Cross-listed with DTSA 5509
- CSCA 5632 Unsupervised Algorithms in Machine Learning – Cross-listed with DTSA 5510
- CSCA 5642 Introduction to Deep Learning – Cross-listed with DTSA 5511

Computing, Ethics, and Society (3 credits)

- CSCA 5214 CSCA 5214: Computing, Ethics, and Society Foundations
- CSCA 5224 Ethical Issues in AI and Professional Ethics
- CSCA 5234 Ethical Issues in Computing Applications

Foundations of Autonomous Systems (3 credits)

- CSCA 5834: Modeling of Autonomous Systems
- CSCA 5844: Requirement Specifications for Autonomous Systems
- CSCA 5854: Verification and Synthesis of Autonomous Systems

Cross-listed courses are courses that are offered under two or more programs (e.g., Dynamic Programming, Greedy Algorithms is offered as both CSCA 5414 and DTSA 5503). They are considered equivalent when evaluating progress toward degree requirements. You may not earn credit for more than one version of a cross-listed course.

Elective Courses (15 credits)

Students must complete 15 credits of elective coursework, including at least four full elective specializations. They can choose from the following options. (Note: up to six credits from other CU Boulder degrees on Coursera can be applied toward MS-CS elective credit requirements.

Data Mining Foundations and Practice (3 credits)

- CSCA 5502 Data Mining Pipeline – Cross-listed with DTSA 5504
- CSCA 5512 Data Mining Methods – Cross-listed with DTSA 5505
- CSCA 5522 Data Mining Project – Cross-listed with DTSA 5506

Natural Language Processing: Deep Learning Meets Linguistics (3 credits)

- CSCA 5832 Fundamentals of Natural Language Processing
- CSCA 5842 Deep Learning for Natural Language Processing
- CSCA 5852 Model & Error Analysis for Natural Language Processing

Introduction to Human-Computer Interaction (3 credits)

- CSCA 5859 Ideating and Prototyping Interfaces

- CSCA 5869 User Interface Testing and Usability
- CSCA 5879 Emerging Topics in HCI: Designing for VR, AR, AI

Software Architecture for Big Data (3 credits)

- CSCA 5008: Fundamentals of Software Architecture for Big Data – Cross-listed with DTSA 5507
- CSCA 5018: Software Architecture Patterns for Big Data – Cross-listed with DTSA 5508
- CSCA 5028: Applications of Software Architecture for Big Data – Cross-listed with DTSA 5714

Introduction to Robotics with Webots (3 credits)

- CSCA 5312 Basic Robotic Behaviors and Odometry
- CSCA 5332 Robotic Mapping and Trajectory Generation
- CSCA 5342 Robotic Path Planning and Task Execution

Object-Oriented Analysis & Design (3 credits)

- CSCA 5428 Object-Oriented Analysis & Design 1 (course name TBD)
- CSCA 5438 Object-Oriented Analysis & Design 2 (course name TBD)
- CSCA 5448 Object-Oriented Analysis & Design 3 (course name TBD)

Generative AI (3 credits)

This specialization is currently in development.

- CSCA 5112: Introduction to Generative AI
- CSCA 5122: Modern Applications of Generative AI (in development)
- CSCA 5132: Advances in Generative AI (in development)

Internet Policy: Principles and Problems (3 credits)

This specialization is currently in development.

- CSCA 5433: When to Regulate? The Digital Divide and Net Neutrality
- CSCA 5443: Protecting Individual Privacy on the Internet
- CSCA 5453: Cybersecurity in Crisis: Information and Internet Security

Introduction to Computer Vision (3 credits)

This new specialization is currently in development.

- CSCA 5222: Introduction to Computer Vision
- CSCA 5322: Deep Learning for Computer Vision
- CSCA 5422: Computer Vision for Generative AI

Fundamentals of Data Visualization (1 credit)

- CSCA 5702 Fundamentals of Data Visualization – Cross-listed with DTSA 5304

Deep Learning Applications for Computer Vision (1 credits)

- CSCA 5812 Deep Learning Applications for Computer Vision – Cross-listed with DTSA 5707

The Department of Computer Science will continue to roll out additional program curriculum that may not be reflected in the catalog currently. Cross-listed Courses

Cross-listed courses are offered under two or more programs (e.g., Dynamic Programming, Greedy Algorithms is offered as both CSCA 5414 and DTSA 5503). They are considered

equivalent when evaluating progress toward degree requirements. You may not earn credit for more than one version of a cross-listed course.

Other Elective Courses (“Outside Electives”)

Up to six graduate-level credit hours (e.g., two full specializations) of courses offered by other CU degrees on Coursera may be applied as elective credits toward the MS-CS on Coursera degree. (Note that students must complete at least four full elective specializations as part of their 15-credit elective coursework requirement. See Elective Courses (15 credits) above for details.) All courses must be graduate level, offered through Coursera, and meet all applicable academic standards. This includes most courses offered by the ME-EM on Coursera, the MS-DS on Coursera, and the MS-EE on Coursera programs.

Credit from the following courses *cannot* be applied toward MS-CS on Coursera requirements:

- DTSA 5302 Cybersecurity for Data Science
- DTSA 5303 Ethical Issues in Data Science
- DTSA 5501 Algorithms for Searching, Sorting, and Indexing
- DTSA 5502 Trees and Graphs: Basics
- DTSA 5707 Deep Learning Applications for Computer Vision - The exclusion of this course will take effect in AY 24-25. If you enrolled in AY 23-24 this course was still part of your catalog year and accepted toward electives in the MS-CS degree.

Courses that begin with a "CSCA" prefix and courses that are cross-listed with a CSCA-prefixed course are not considered outside electives and do not count against this six-credit limit.

Students wishing to complete degrees in more than one program must complete all the requirements for both degrees with no shared or overlapping course work.

Non-Credit and For-Credit Experiences on Coursera

Non-Credit & Coursera Completion Certificates

All MS-CS on Coursera courses are hosted on the Coursera platform. A typical non-credit **course** includes content, discussion forums, and homework assignments of level and scope similar to assignments made in an equivalent on-campus course in the same subject. Many of the courses are organized into sequences called **specializations**, a series of courses linked together to cover a topic more fully. Non-credit students may use specializations to earn course and specialization **completion certificates from Coursera**, but non-credit courses and specializations do not carry CU Boulder credit and are not recorded on CU Boulder transcripts.

A student enrolled in a non-credit version of an MS-CS on Coursera course may elect to pay tuition and upgrade to the for-credit version of the course at any time in their learner journey. However, MS-CS credits are only applicable to the MS-CS degree for up to eight years; after that point, students must re-enroll and pay tuition for any expired credits that are required for graduation. (See

Time Limit for details.)

Work performed in the non-credit portion of the course (e.g., assignments and quizzes) automatically transfers with the student to the for-credit option, and the student can then continue to complete any remaining homework, exams, projects, and lessons. Due to their interactive nature, discussion board posts and peer-graded assignments may not transfer from session to session if you drop/withdraw and later re-enroll in a particular class. Be sure to save your work outside of the Coursera platform.

Students may upgrade from non-credit to for-credit at any time during the enrollment window via the enrollment form. Each enrollment period begins two weeks before the first day of class and ends two weeks before all coursework is due. In addition, please note the following:

1. All for-credit coursework is due by the last day of the session. Most peer reviews are due three days before the last day of the session.
2. Previously completed assignments will be automatically applied to your for-credit experience.
3. Prior to accessing for-credit content for the first time, you must activate/link your student accounts and pass a short (4–5 hour) non-credit onboarding course. You only need to complete these steps once.
4. Please note that if you start a non-credit course within the same month that you upgrade to the for-credit version, you will not receive a refund for the monthly subscription associated with the non-credit course. The monthly subscription fee is paid to Coursera, not to the University of Colorado Boulder.

For-Credit & CU Boulder Credentials

A course is not considered credit-bearing until a student enrolls in the for-credit session of the course by paying CU Boulder tuition. Enrolling in the for-credit session enables access to additional credit-bearing content and assessments.

For-credit CU Boulder courses on Coursera may include proctored assessments or use project-based assignments.

Individuals may take for-credit CU Boulder courses on Coursera as either **non-degree-seeking** students (in which case they do not seek admission to the MS-CS on Coursera degree program) or as **degree-seeking** students (in which case they have followed the steps above to enroll in the MS-CS on Coursera degree program).

Prerequisites & Assumed Background Knowledge

There are no course prerequisites or corequisites for MS-CS courses on Coursera. Nevertheless, it is important that students are prepared for individual courses. Course descriptions found in the CU Boulder catalog, on the CU Boulder Curriculum page, and on the Coursera platform will advise students of assumed incoming knowledge, and students are strongly encouraged to take course sequences in the order they are presented on the Coursera platform. Students are also encouraged to take a non-credit version in some form before moving to the for-credit version to determine whether they can succeed, especially if they are unsure whether they have the background knowledge required for a course.

Courses & Credit Hours

Each MS-CS course on Coursera with a "CSCA" prefix is worth one credit hour. Elective courses offered by other CU degrees on Coursera like the ME-EM on Coursera, the MS-DS on Coursera, and the MS-EE on Coursera programs may offer different credit hour amounts. It is your responsibility to track your progress and ensure you meet all graduation requirements.

Individual courses in the program have an anticipated completion timeline of between four and six weeks. The program's credit hour system reflects its commitment to maintaining the rigor of the on-campus experience in an online setting by narrowing and focusing the content on a specific topic.

Financial Information

Tuition

Tuition is assessed at a linear rate based on credit hours and may vary by program. Please refer to the Bursar Office's website for officially published tuition rates. Students are granted access to for-credit components of a course after their tuition has been paid and verified.

For accepted payment methods, please refer to the Bursar's Degrees on Coursera.

Tuition payments cannot be rolled over to future sessions.

If a tuition payment does not process successfully and/or students have a past due balance, a financial hold is placed on the student's account and the student will be prevented from registering for future courses at CU Boulder until the past due amount is paid in full. Former or current CU Boulder students wishing to enroll in MS-CS on Coursera courses who have unpaid debts may have these debts deducted from payments made to the MS-CS on Coursera program and before MS-CS on Coursera tuition charges are paid. If applicable, the students may be dropped from enrolled classes for non-payments or invalid payments. The Bursar's Office will collect on the unpaid balance according to the Bursar's Office collection policies.

If a student enrolled in the MS-CS on Coursera program wishes to take additional courses on Main Campus or through Continuing Education, they must enroll through the appropriate channels and will be charged separately for those courses. Students will also be required to pay the required mandatory fees associated with their new enrollment.

The CU Employee Tuition Assistance Benefit cannot be applied towards the MS-CS on Coursera program.

MS-CS on Coursera courses are not eligible for coverage by RA/TA waivers.

Courses taken in degrees hosted on Coursera are eligible for third party sponsorship. The students are required to make a payment at the time of enrollment request. The students will receive a refund once the University receives the sponsorship authorization, and the sponsorship applies to the student accounts.

The tuition dispute is available for the students in degrees hosted on Coursera, refer to the Bursar's Office website tuition dispute process. The non-attendance cannot be used as a reason for tuition dispute for degrees hosted on Coursera.

Student Fees

Currently, there are no student fees charged to students in the MS-CS on Coursera program. Course tuition also includes access to CU on Coursera, Digital Library resources, the Handshake online employment platform and networking tool, the Quinncia online resume review service, and the Forever Buffs alumni association.

Other Fees

Students who enroll in for-credit MS-CS on Coursera courses and pay tuition do not need to pay for a Coursera subscription. Current students in the CU on Coursera degree programs have access to CU on Coursera. Currently, students do not need to pay for exam proctoring costs. Students may be charged on an at-cost basis for such items as credit card fees.

Financial Aid

At this time, no financial aid will be administered for the MS-CS on Coursera program.

Calendar & Course Sessions

Non-credit course sessions are typically self-paced with assignment due dates programmed and updated by the Coursera platform.

For-credit sessions run in 8-week increments throughout the calendar year. Students have the ability to upgrade a course to the for-credit experience, complete all additional for-credit coursework, and earn credit and a grade in a fashion approximating an on-demand service.

Students enrolled in a for-credit session will be expected to complete and submit work by the 8-week session end date. At the end of a for-credit session, the session closes; and all enrolled students are assigned a letter grade. Most peer reviewed assignments are due three days before the last day of the session.

We look forward to each student succeeding in this program. To that end, we recommend students take a lighter course load for their first 8-week session—enrolling in only one or two courses. By doing so, students can best determine time commitment and workload. This allows students to get a better idea of how to plan for future sessions. We always recommend that students start their courses in the open/non-credit version first, no matter what their degree progress. Only when they are ready to complete the course and earn credit toward their degree do we suggest they upgrade to the for-credit experience.

Students who want to complete the degree in two years must take 2–3 courses per 8-week session.

Calendar for Proctored Exams and Projects

MS-CS courses on Coursera may use ProctorU to proctor tests and exams. Students in MS-CS courses must complete final exams and projects that use the ProctorU remote proctoring service in each session starting at **9:00 am Mountain Time** on the day classes begin and ending at **4:50 pm Mountain Time** on the day classes end.

You must schedule your proctored experience at least 72 hours in advance of your desired day and time. For example, if the ProctorU availability window closes at 4:50 pm on a Friday, the last time you could schedule a proctored exam or project would be at 4:50 pm that Tuesday.

To secure your desired proctoring session time, log into ProctorU to schedule your session as soon as you know your desired session date and time.

View the calendar for each session to see deadlines for scheduling and completing proctored exams and projects.

Transfer of Credit

Due to this program's innovative nature, credit earned at other institutions or other University of Colorado Boulder programs are not transferable at this time to the MS-CS on Coursera.

Other institutions may accept transfer credit from the MS-CS on Coursera at their discretion based upon their transfer of credit standards.

Changing Degree Programs

Students may change degree programs by following the steps outlined in this section. Students are responsible for understanding possible consequences of changing programs *before* they take the steps below.

1. Be sure you understand the differences between your current degree program and the program you are hoping to change to.
    - **Degree structure:** CU Boulder degrees on Coursera share a similar structure that uses performance-based admission, pay-as-you-go tuition, and options for both non-credit and for-credit experiences.
    - **Recommended prerequisite knowledge:** Though CU degree programs on Coursera do not have formal prerequisite requirements, each program lists particular subjects that you should be familiar with to be successful.
    - **Admissions requirements:** Ensure you understand the available pathway courses, as well as grade and GPA requirements for both programs. Admission to one program does not carry to another program.

Curriculum: Make sure you understand if and how any coursework you have completed will apply to the new degree program you are considering. Determine how any Cross-listed Courses or Cross-listed Courses

Cross-listed courses are offered under two or more programs (e.g., Dynamic Programming, Greedy Algorithms is offered as both CSCA 5414 and DTSA 5503). They are considered equivalent when evaluating progress toward degree requirements. You may not earn credit for more than one version of a cross-listed course.

- Other Elective Courses ("Outside Electives") you have already completed will affect your degree progress.
- **Grade requirements:** Programs may have different minimum grade requirements for admission and graduation. For example, the MS-DS requires a C or better on all courses for graduation (and a 3.0 pathway GPA for admission), whereas the MS-CS requires a B or better on all breadth courses and a C or better on all elective courses for graduation (and a B or better on each pathway course for admission). All programs require students to maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA for admission and graduation.

- **Tuition:** Tuition rates vary by program.

2. Indicate your change in degree interest properly, as noted below:
    - DO indicate degree interest on your new enrollment form. Start using your new degree enrollment form to select, enroll in, and pay for for-credit courses. Indicate that you are interested in pursuing a degree on your new enrollment form.
    - DO NOT indicate degree interest on the old enrollment form. There is a question on every program's enrollment form asking if you would like to officially declare your intent to pursue a degree from that program and be considered for degree admission. Please do NOT select this option if you intend to pursue a different degree. If you indicate degree interest on your previous program's enrollment form, you will need to complete extra steps later to change your degree choice.
    - If you already officially indicated you were interested in pursuing a degree from your previous program on the enrollment form, you must take additional steps to change your degree:
        - Start using the new enrollment form to select, enroll in, and pay for for-credit courses.
        - Indicate you are interested in officially pursuing a degree in your new program on this new enrollment form. (Note that this alone will not change your program.)
        - Email reg-specialprograms@colorado.edu to request a program change or use this form to discontinue your previous program after you have been admitted to the program.
3. Meet all admission requirements for your new degree program, as outlined in that program's student handbook.
    - You can only officially indicate your intent to pursue a particular degree on that program's enrollment form. (E.g., you can only indicate your intent to pursue the MS-CS degree via the MS-CS enrollment form.)
4. Wait until admission decisions are released. Decisions are released once per session, approximately 3-4 weeks after the end of the session.

Academic Records & Policies for For-Credit Courses

Course Repetition & Grade Replacement

The cumulative GPA and credit totals are based on all courses attempted.

MS-CS on Coursera students may repeat as many different courses as they like. The Grade Replacement Policy allows students in eligible courses with qualifying grades, to repeat courses and replace credits in the cumulative GPA calculation. In this process, all courses attempted will still appear on the transcript.

To be eligible for grade replacement, you must:

- Have previously taken an eligible MS-CS on Coursera course for credit and earned a C+ or lower.

- Have no record of academic dishonesty for the course in question.
- Still be working toward graduation. Graduates are not eligible for grade replacement for courses taken prior to earning their degree.

- See the Grade Replacement Policy for more details.

Course Drops, Tuition Refunds, Withdrawals & Grades

Because the MS-CS on Coursera has flexible course start dates, all drops, tuition refunds, withdrawals and grades are handled at the individual course level. It is the student's responsibility to monitor these deadlines. Coursera and CU Boulder are not responsible for notifying the students of these deadlines. To drop or withdraw from a course, students must complete the appropriate form on the CU Boulder Registrar's Special Programs page.

Course Drop & Refund

To drop a class and receive a full refund, two requirements must be met:

1. The student must submit a drop request within 14 days of the class start date or their enrollment date, whichever is later, and
2. The student must not have accessed restricted content (e.g., password quiz, honor code verification, final assessment such as final exam/project, etc.) in the course or received a course grade. See Grades if restricted content has been accessed.

When a course is dropped under these conditions, it will not appear on the student's record. All refunds are returned to the payment method on file within 10 business days. For questions about this policy or timeline, please contact reg-specialprograms@colorado.edu.

Examples: The following examples help to illustrate the timeline for students to drop and receive a refund:

- *Enrolled Before Class Start*: A student enrolls in a class before it begins. Class starts on the 1st of the month. The deadline for the student to drop this class and receive a refund is 11:59 pm Mountain Time on the 14th of that same month.
- *Enrolled After Class Start*: A student enrolls in a class after it begins. Class starts on the 1st of the month, but the student enrolls on the 10th of the month. The deadline for this student to drop the class and receive a refund is 11:59 pm MT on the 23rd of that same month.

If a student enrolls in a course and does not complete the course, tuition payments cannot be rolled over to future sessions.

Course Withdrawal

Students who request to withdraw from the course after the 14-day period and who have not accessed the restricted content (e.g., password quiz, honor code verification, final assessment such as final exam/project, etc.) may withdraw from the course until the session end date, prior to 17:00 hours (5:00 pm Colorado Mountain Time). When a student withdraws from a course under these conditions, they are not eligible for a refund and will receive a grade of W on their academic record. W grades have no bearing on GPA and credit total.

Neither Coursera, nor the University of Colorado, nor the Computer Science program at CU Boulder is responsible for students who delay too long and experience technical or other difficulties; it is the student's responsibility to act responsibly and promptly when making these kinds of decisions.

As noted under Tuition, if a tuition payment does not process successfully, a financial hold is placed on the student's account and the student will be prevented from registering for future courses at CU Boulder until the outstanding amount is paid in full.

See Program Withdrawal for more information about withdrawing from the MS-CS on Coursera program.

Grades

Students who access restricted content (e.g., password quiz, honor code verification, final assessment such as final exam/project, etc.) are ineligible for a drop, withdrawal, or refund, and are assigned a final grade.

Upon completion of all required coursework and within a couple of weeks following the session end date, a letter grade is recorded on the student's CU Boulder transcript.

Students who complete some but not all coursework and who specifically do not complete the password quiz to unlock the final exam (or equivalent, like an honor code verification) will be assigned administrative Ws after the session end date passes.

Grades of Incomplete (I) are not assigned as part of the program, and a Pass-Fail (P/F) grading basis is not offered.

Academic Standing, Time Limit, Discontinuance & Withdrawal

Academic Standing

Degree-seeking students admitted to the MS-CS on Coursera are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher for good academic standing in the program and to earn the degree.

If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.00, the student is considered in academic **recovery**. The student will remain in academic recovery until the cumulative GPA is raised to 3.00, at which point the student is returned to good academic standing.

If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.50, they will be **academically dismissed** from the degree program. Such students may continue to take for-credit courses as non-degree-seeking and may be able to earn a certificate but cannot earn a degree. To be reinstated to the degree program after dismissal, the student must raise their cumulative GPA to 3.00 and complete the other requirements for admission, including the successful completion of a new pathway.

The MS-CS degree cannot be awarded until the minimum 3.00 cumulative GPA has been achieved.

Time Limit

Courses used toward the MS-CS on Coursera degree must have been completed within 8 years of the degree conferral date. Courses taken more than 8 years prior to graduation will appear on the transcript and be calculated in the cumulative GPA but may not be used toward the degree. Students may continue to pursue the degree even after eight years, but they must accrue 30 credits within an 8-year window in order to earn the degree.

The 8-year restriction is applied to courses on a rolling basis and is determined by the date that credit was awarded in the course.

DiscontinuanceStudents admitted to the MS-CS on Coursera degree program are not otherwise required to take a minimum number of credit hours over any given period and are not required to apply for a leave of absence when not enrolled in courses. However, students admitted to the degree program who have not enrolled for two years will be discontinued until they enroll in a new for-credit course. At that point, the student will automatically be reinstated.

Program Withdrawal

Students admitted to the MS-CS on Coursera program may formally withdraw from the program by contacting the academic program advisor who will, in turn, notify the Office of the Registrar to discontinue the student.

Non-degree seeking and certificate students (not admitted to the degree program) may simply stop enrolling in future courses. No withdrawal formalities of any sort are necessary.

See Course Withdrawal for more information about withdrawing from individual courses.

Privacy Policy

This program adheres to the University of Colorado Boulder's commitment to the protection of individual privacy. See the CU Boulder Privacy Statement for details.

In order to preserve the integrity of this program, some exams and projects will have live proctoring managed by ProctorU. Read the ProctorU Privacy Policy for details.

Program Faculty, Course Facilitators, Degree Governance & Student Support

Program Faculty

All courses and specializations affiliated with the MS-CS are designed and taught by instructors with Graduate School faculty status.

Course Facilitators

Course facilitators—typically graduate students knowledgeable in the subject matter—will assist in administering courses. Course facilitators participate in the course discussion forums, respond to student feedback, address issues with the course and its features on the platform, and convey any relevant issues to the instructor of record and relevant program administrators.

Degree Program Governance

The MS-CS on Coursera is governed by the Computer Science Graduate Committee. The Computer Science Graduate Committee is charged with overseeing the strategic direction of the degree, as well as reviewing its program-specific processes and policies annually.

Student Services Provided to Enrollees in the Program

Academic Support

A student's primary academic support will be via peer mentorship and course facilitators.

Graduate Advising for the Program

Students enrolled in for-credit courses may contact the MS-CS on Coursera graduate advisor at mscs-coursera@colorado.edu.

Career Services & Alumni Association

Students who are admitted into the degree will receive lifelong access to Handshake and other selected services and resources via CU Boulder Career Services and the Forever Buffs alumni network.

Diplomas

Degrees are conferred three times annually. Check the graduation calendar for semester-specific dates. Diplomas are issued to graduating students in both paper and digital formats. See Order a Diploma or Certificate.

Certificates

Certificates are automatically awarded and transcribed on the student's transcripts after the certificate requirements are met. Certificates are issued in both paper and digital formats. See Order a Diploma or Certificate.

Commencement

Students who graduate from the program and earn the MS-CS on Coursera degree are welcome to attend on-campus graduation ceremonies but are not obligated to do so.

Academic Dishonesty & Honor Code

The University of Colorado Boulder takes issues of academic dishonesty extremely seriously.

Students in all of CU Boulder's courses, whether non-credit or for-credit, are expected to perform to the highest standards of academic honesty.

Students enrolled in for-credit courses are members of the CU Boulder community and are subject to the Honor Code Office's policies and procedures.

Any suspected violations of the Honor Code, including reports of violation from the Program's proctoring service, will be submitted to the CU Boulder Honor Code Office (honor@colorado.edu).

Students who violate the Honor Code are subject to discipline, including possible academic penalties and non-academic sanctions. The course instructor will assign relevant academic sanctions for students found to have violated University rules on Academic Dishonesty, if applicable.

Find more details on the Honor Code at the Honor Code Office website and in the CU Boulder policies governing degrees hosted on Coursera.

Citations and AI Use

As a best practice, graduate students should always cite any source or tool used for their work. This includes using generative AI tools (ChatGPT, DALL-E, etc.) for assistance in ideation, writing, or language and grammar help and, as well as any other tools that are not specifically intended for use in your course.

If you have questions about the use of a tool or resource, reach out to your course facilitator (mscs-coursera@colorado.edu) *before* using it.

Petition, Appeal & Grievance Issues

Petitions, appeals, connectivity issues and grievances should be handled at the lowest level possible, within the individual course if appropriate. This policy applies to platform issues as well as discussion forum, course content, assessment, and degree issues.

Concerns regarding platform issues should be directed to Coursera's technical support team at mscs-coursera@colorado.edu.

Learning management system issues (i.e., CU Boulder software as distinct from Coursera software) should be directed to the CU Boulder Office of Information Technology (oithelp@colorado.edu). This includes issues with Canvas LMS, the platform where all CU Boulder students must complete a non-credit Mandatory Community Equity Training course after program admission. See the Current Students page of the CEAS website for course details.

Concerns regarding discussion forum, content, assessment, and degree issues should be brought directly to the individual course's course facilitator. If the course facilitator cannot resolve the issue, they will escalate the issue through the following resolution hierarchy:

1. Course Facilitator
2. Course Coordinator

3. Instructor of Record
4. Faculty Director
5. Computer Science Graduate Committee
6. Department Chair

Concerns regarding the degree itself, and not having to do with a particular course, follow a different pathway. These should begin with the Graduate Advisor and then move accordingly:

1. Graduate Advisor
2. Faculty Director
3. Computer Science Graduate Committee
4. Department Chair
5. Graduate School Dean

In all cases, the program policy is to resolve student concerns at the lowest level possible, without escalation.

Connectivity Issues

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have a stable exam environment when taking proctored assessments. Coursera and CU Boulder are not responsible for internet connectivity issues.

Grade Appeals

The instructor of record has primary authority and responsibility in all aspects of evaluating student course performance and assigning grades.

If a student believes that a course grade is incorrect, the student should first contact the course facilitator or instructor of record. Failing resolution at this level, the student may make a formal, written grade appeal to the program faculty director.

The written grade appeal must document the basis for the appeal and should state the specific remedy desired by the student. The appeal should include the following:

1. The student's full name, email, phone number, and date
2. The course title, course number, section, instructor full name, and session start and end dates
3. The details of the case, including the steps taken to resolve and, if a specific test or homework is concerned, the nature of the problem
4. The student's desired outcome

The appeal must be submitted within 30 days of the conclusion of the course to mscs-coursera@colorado.edu. The instructor of record will be given an opportunity to respond in writing to the faculty director regarding the student's appeal.

The faculty director will respond within 30 days that either (1) the original grade stands, or (2) that a revised grade be assigned. The faculty director will submit a short written statement summarizing the reasons for the decision. The director will submit an official change of grade request if a grade change is justified.

In cases where the instructor or student do not agree with the director's decision, the faculty director shall submit all materials to the Dean of the college (or a designee) where the course is rostered who will make a final decision on the student's grade appeal. In the case of an interdisciplinary course not rostered within a home department or college, materials shall be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School. There is no further appeal beyond this.

Grievances

Programs follow the Graduate School policy for grievances. The first step in the Grievance Process and Procedure requires a student to first file a grievance through the program, and then file an appeal to the Graduate School if the issue is not resolved through the program-level process. The program-level grievance shall be initiated by submitting the Graduate Student Grievance form to the faculty director. The grievance must be reviewed by an ad-hoc faculty committee or steering committee before an appeal can be filed directly to the Graduate School. Additionally, the University of Colorado Boulder has a guide for information related to appeals, complaints, and grievances, including those for distance and online students.

Students located outside of Colorado must first seek resolution with the University of Colorado Boulder by filing a complaint with the appropriate person or office. If the student bringing the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of the university's internal processes, the student may file a complaint with the university's SARA Portal Entity at the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

The University of Colorado Boulder also provides access to a list of all state contacts for filing complaints should the person wish to pursue these venues.

Regardless of location, if students are unsatisfied with the resolution and all other avenues provided have been exhausted, unresolved complaints may be filed with the Higher Learning Commission, the University's regional accreditor.

Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604
Telephone: 800-621-7440
info@hlcommission.org
http://www.hlcommission.org

Accommodations for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your program at mscs-accommodation@colorado.edu in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see Temporary Medical Conditions on the Disability Services website.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these policies, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email cureport@colorado.edu. Information about university policies, reporting options, and support resources can be found on the OIEC website.

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. One of the free, confidential resources to help someone explore their options and receive trauma-informed counseling is CU's Office of Victim Assistance (OVA), 303-492-8855.

To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit Don't Ignore It.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) & the Higher Education Opportunity Act

State Authorization

The University of Colorado participates in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) – an agreement among states, territories, and the District of Columbia that establishes a level of quality in distance education and offers consumer protection to students. As a participant in SARA, the University of Colorado Boulder agrees to comply with applicable state and federal regulations in order to offer educational opportunities outside of Colorado.

International Students: International Students are advised to understand and be apprised of the norms, rules, regulations, and requirements related to programs offered online in their country of residence, particularly if the country will charge any additional taxes, withholdings, or fees associated with programs offered online.

International students are encouraged to contact the International Student and Scholar Services in the Office of International Education if they have any questions.

Higher Education Opportunity Act

The Higher Education Opportunity Act requires institutions of higher education to disclose and make available to current and prospective students safety-related, financial, graduation rate, athletics, and cost information, as well as instructions on how to obtain more information.

Students may review these required disclosures for CU Boulder at the Your Right to Know website.

Accreditation & Designations

The University of Colorado Boulder is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and includes programs delivered by correspondence and distance education.

See CU Boulder policies governing degrees hosted on Coursera for HLC and Department of Education definitions of *correspondence education*, *correspondence courses*, and *distance education*.

Please note programs offered by the University of Colorado Boulder that are designated as correspondence education are not eligible for Financial Aid.

Additional Policies for CU Boulder Degrees Hosted on Coursera

See CU Boulder policies governing degrees hosted on Coursera for details about additional policies that apply to this program.