Graduate Students Orientation
(Department of Computer Science)

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For All Graduate Students
Contacts and Communication

- Make sure you are on the grad@cs.kent.edu mailing list
  - https://listmail.cs.kent.edu/mailman/listinfo/cs-grad
  - Receiving grad announcements
  - Otherwise you will miss announcements, opportunities, etc.

- Graduate inquiries
  - Primary contact: e-mail: gradinfo@cs.kent.edu
    - Marcy and I both get the messages
  - Secondary contact: peyravi@cs.kent.edu
  - In person:
    - Marcy Curtiss, Graduate Secretary
      - 241B, phone: 330-672-9047
    - H. Peyravi, Graduate Coordinator
      - During office hours and by appointment
      - Room 262, phone: 330-672-9062
  - URL: http://www2.kent.edu/CAS/CS/graduate/index.cfm
    - A lot of useful information
The Role of GSC

1. Directs/oversees graduate studies programs
2. Develops, maintains, and evaluates criteria for different aspects of the programs such as:
   - Quality of graduate programs
   - Approval of thesis and dissertation committees
   - Degree requirements
   - Interdisciplinary activities
   - Monitors/approval of CPT/OPT programs
3. Recruiting quality graduate students
4. Periodic evaluating graduate students
5. Writing reports for various internal and external organizations
6. Periodic self-assessment of the graduate program
7. Organizing and managing Preliminary examinations
8. Graduation approvals
9. Monitoring graduate students performance
GSC Members

2014-2015 GSC Members
- Feodor Dragan
- C. C. Lu
- J. Maletic
- H. Peyravi
- M. Curtiss (Ex-officio)
- Graduate Student Representative: Dianne Foreback
  - Make sure to vote
- H. Peyravi, coordinator
Graduate Assistantships

- **Approximately 15 students are supported**
  - Highly competitive

- **Categories**
  - GA ⇒ provided by the university ≈ 5-8
    - TA ⇒ funds from College of Arts & Sciences
  - RA
    - Supported by faculty grants
    - Numbers vary
  - Part-time instructors
Advance Planning

- Reduce later headaches by advance planning
- Graduate school is a lot of work
  - Requires strong motivation, preparations and focus
- Why graduate school?
  - Looking for an opportunity to learn a great deal and detail about a specific area
  - Delaying your job hunt for one reason or another
    - Probably not a good reason

Workload

- The normal work load for a full-time student is 3 courses per semester
  - Taking more courses may negatively affect your GPA
  - It is important to have higher GPA when competing in a job market
- Be aware of all final exams (or potentially the mid-term exams) are schedule the same week
- See road map
  http://www2.kent.edu/CAS/CS/graduate/currentgradstudents.cfm
Stay Informed

**Bookmark the following**

- Department Current Students
  - [http://www2.kent.edu/CAS/CS/graduate/currentgradstudents.cfm](http://www2.kent.edu/CAS/CS/graduate/currentgradstudents.cfm)

- College Graduate deadlines
  - [http://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-deadlines](http://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-deadlines)

- University Calendar & Deadlines
  - [http://www.kent.edu/registrar/calendars-deadlines](http://www.kent.edu/registrar/calendars-deadlines)
Be Aware: Good Academic Standing

Maintaining Good Academic Standing is a university requirement and graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) at all time. Additionally, a graduate student who receives more than 8 credit hours of grades lower than B (3.0) or more than 4 credit hours of grades lower than C (2.0) is subject to dismissal.

The department takes one of the following actions if a student does not maintain Good Standing.

**Departmental Actions**

- **A warning** notice will be given at any time to a student who receives a grade lower than B (3.0). The student must get advisors approval to take courses. The student can not take more than 9 credit hours per semester.

- **A Probation** notice will be given at any time to a student whose GPA is less than 3.0 OR the student has two courses with grades lower than B (3.0). The student must get advisors approval to take courses. The student can not take more than 9 credit hours during the Probationary Period. The student will be notified of dismissal for the following semester if Good Standing is not obtained/maintained during the Probationary Period.

- **A Dismissal** notice will be given at any time to a student if the student receives more than 8 credit hours of grades lower than B (3.0) OR more than 4 credit hours of grades lower than C (2.0) OR student’s GPA stays below 3.0 for more than 2 semesters OR Good Standing is not obtained after the Probationary Period.
Be Aware: Administrative Policy Regarding Misconduct

• University Policy 3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism
  ▶ "I did not know" ⇒ doesn’t help

• None of these will be tolerated and will be dealt strictly by the policies given in Chapter 3 of the University Policy Register

• The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations

• See http://www2.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779 for more detail
Practical Training

■ General Rule:
  ▶ A privilege, not a right
  ▶ Must be recommended by the advisor
  ▶ Must be approved by CS PT chairman
  ▶ Must be approved by International Student and Scholar Services office
  ▶ Must be granted by INS
    • Takes a few months
  ▶ Application can be denied at any stage

■ Two types:
  1. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
    • The work is an integral part of academic program
    • Intended as internships in the field of study before graduation
    • CPT is not an excuse to work outside
    • Could be full-time or part-time
    • Must remain full-time student during the academic year
  2. Optional Practical Training (OPT)
    • Can be authorized before or after degree completion
    • Before degree completion
      ☆ During semester ≤ 20 h/w
      ☆ During breaks could be full-time
    • After degree completion
      ☆ Maximum 12 months

■ OPT normally can not be taken after CPT
Part II

For Thesis/Dissertation Students
Doing Research I

**Thesis/Dissertation Students**

- Find an area that would be fruitful down the road
- Find at least two faculty members you would be interested in working with
- Have a broad background in your area of interest
- Start thinking early about sources of funding
  - GA/TA/RA
  - NSF fellowship
  - grants.gov

- Graduate school is normally an unstructured environment
  - 9-hour coursework per semester
  - Prelim exams for PhD students
  - Finding a research topic
  - Reading research papers
  - Writing thesis
  - Attending conferences

- It is not sufficient to just come up with brilliant ideas and implementing them
Successful researchers
- spend the majority of their time reading papers,
- discussing ideas with colleagues, and
- writing and revising papers

Keep track of research activities in your field
- Write down speculations
  - Interesting problems
  - Possible solutions
  - Random ideas
  - References

Your first publication should be a comprehensive bibliography of papers in your area
Staying Motivated

- Sometimes it can be hard to stay motivated
  - e.g., insecurity and anxiety

- Realize these are normal feelings
  - Talk to a close friend and/or your advisor
  - Organize activities to manage your time
  - Setting up regular meeting with your advisor

- Break down your research project into smaller pieces
  - Divide and conquer strategy works well
  - Focus on the goal of each chapter, section, etc.

- Writing the thesis is the hardest part
  - An art
  - Get advise from authors

- Getting feed-back in the MS/PhD seminars
  - It is essential that you learn to cope with criticism
Become Part of the Research Community

- **Attending conferences**
  - Meet people and exchange ideas
  - Get a good sense of the current state of research
  - You can write a better paper

- **Identify and follow up the activities other institutions or research industry doing in your area**

- **Give practice talks**
  - Time management
  - Organization

- **Become a member of professional societies**
  - IEEE
  - ACM
  - CRA
Questions?