

## **BSIS Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

A student has an obligation to exhibit honesty, and to respect the ethical standards of the information professions in carrying out his or her academic assignments. All SIS students are responsible for adhering to policies on academic integrity, which are available on the SIS [Web site](#). The School's academic integrity guidelines follow the University's guidelines with several procedural changes. Please see the guidelines for details.

### **Degree Requirements**

To be awarded a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Information Science, the student must:

- Earn a minimum of 120 credits with a minimum of 15 of those credits in a related field. A related field consists of five courses from the same academic area. All of the final 30 credits and at least 15 credits in Information Science (INFSCI) must be taken through SIS.
- Possess an overall cumulative and Information Science GPA of at least 2.50.
- Satisfy the distribution of studies requirement.
- Fulfill any remaining requirements that may have been noted at the time of entrance (e.g., English composition, language requirements, and statistics requirements).
- To apply for graduation, you should make an appointment with the Undergraduate advisor in the term BEFORE you expect to graduate.
- Other than courses designated as electives, students must have received a letter grade of "C" or better for each course.

### **Specific Requirements for Graduation**

The requirements outlined in this section represent minimum degree satisfaction.

#### **English Composition Requirements**

All students entering Arts and Sciences (A&S) as freshmen are required to take a writing placement examination. (For more information on the A&S composition requirement see [Skills Requirements in the Arts and Sciences section of this bulletin](#).)

In addition, Information Science students are required to take ENGCOMP 0400 Written Professional Communication, ENGCOMP 0440 Critical Writing, or ENGCOMP 0450 Research Writing.

#### **Language Requirements**

All students entering the Information Science program are required to satisfy a foreign language requirement. This requirement can be fulfilled by one of the following:

- Two years of the same foreign language in high school completed with a grade of C or better each year,
- One year of a foreign language in high school completed with a grade of C or better and one term of the same foreign language in college completed with a letter grade of C or better, or
- Two terms of the same foreign language in college completed with a letter grade of C or better.

If the foreign language requirement has not been satisfied by the time of admission, the student will be required to resolve this deficiency by the end of the second term at SIS. In addition, all Information Science students are required to complete LING 1000 Introduction to Linguistics or PHIL 0500 Introduction to Logic with a letter grade of C or better.

### **Quantitative Requirements**

All Information Science students must complete one of the following mathematics courses with a letter grade of C or better:

- Math 0120 Business Calculus
- Math 0220 Analytical Geometry and Calculus 1
- Math 0400 Discrete Mathematical Structures

In addition, a statistics course must be completed with a letter grade of C or better. See this [Web site](#) for listing of specific statistics courses.

### **General Distribution of Studies Requirement**

All students are required to complete 9 credits in each of the three traditional divisions of A&S: the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. A copy of the Information Science-approved list of courses may be obtained from the BSIS [Web site](#).

**Literature:** A minimum of one literature course selected from the Information Science-approved list and completed with a letter grade of C or better.

**Music and Art:** A minimum of one course selected from the Information Science-approved list and completed with a letter grade of C or better.

**Communication:** A minimum of one of the following communication courses with a letter grade of C or better:

- COMMRC 0300 Communication Process
- COMMRC 0520 Public Speaking

**Social Science:** A minimum of two courses from among three different fields (Political Science, Sociology, Economics) selected from the Information Science-approved list must be completed with a letter grade of C or better.

**History and Culture:** A minimum of one course from the Information Science-approved list must be completed with a letter grade of C or better.

**Psychology:** All Information Science students must complete one of the following courses with a letter grade of C or better:

- PSY 0010 Introduction to Psychology
- PSY 0012 Foundation of Psychology
- PSY 0015 Intro to Psychology as a Natural Science

**Natural Science:** Students must complete a two-course sequence in biological sciences, neurosciences, chemistry, geology and planetary science, or physics and astronomy, selected from the Information Science-approved list. In addition, one course in a field different from the two-course sequence will be required. All courses must be completed with a letter grade of C or better.

## **Information Science Course Requirements**

Core courses must be taken by all students

INFSC 0010 Introduction to Information Systems & Society

INFSCI 0017 Object-Oriented Programming 1 for Information Science

INFSCI 1022 Database Management Systems

INFSCI 1070 Introduction to Telecom and Networks

INFSCI 1024 Information Systems and Analysis

INFSCI 1044 Human Factors in System Design

Students may then choose to tailor their studies by taking one of our industry-advised specializations.

### *Information Systems*

This specialization in information systems enables students to use object-oriented design tools to design, build, implement, and test Web-based information systems. Coursework may include INFSCI 0019 Object-Oriented Programming 2 for Information Science, INFSCI 1068 Geographic Information Systems, INFSCI 1025 Information Systems Design, and INFSCI 1092 Special Topics: Systems. See the course descriptions [here](#) for more details and prerequisites.

### *Networks and Security*

This specialization offers skills needed to design, build, and test LANS, WANS, Wireless, Internet, and Web-based networks. Coursework might include INFSCI 1071 Application of

Networks, INFSCI 1074 Computer Security, INFSCI 1072 Introduction to Wireless Networks, and INFSCI 1073 Application Development for Mobile Devices , INFSCI 1070 Introduction to Telecom and Networks), INFSCI 1075 Network Security and INFSCI 1092 Special Topics: Systems. See the course descriptions [here](#) for more details and prerequisites.

### *User-Centered Design*

This specialization provides the visual and human-computer interaction skills needed to design and build prototypes of information systems interfaces as well as to perform usability testing of these systems. Coursework might include INFSCI 1052 User-Centered Design, INFSCI 1014 Graphics, INFSCI 1059 Web Programming, and INFSCI 1092 Special Topics: Systems. See the course descriptions [here](#) for more details and prerequisites.

## **Advising**

Since several of the Information Science courses may be taken during the first and second years of study, Information Science faculty cooperate with Arts and Sciences (A&S) and College of General Studies (CGS) advisors to help students plan the first two years of study. Information Science courses taken during the first two years serve two purposes:

- For those students who are undecided on a major, early contact with Information Science can provide a basis for deciding whether or not to major in the subject; and
- For those students who have already decided on Information Science as a major, the courses can indicate more fully the topics that are of interest and also reduce the load to be taken during the third and fourth years.

Once students have been accepted into the Information Science program, they are assigned an advisor. Initially, the student and advisor discuss the student's program in Information Science, a related field, and other academic options. Each term, the student and advisor should review the student's progress and select the courses to be taken to satisfy the student's program goals. In addition, the student and advisor should discuss career goals, educational plans, and any academic-related problems.

SIS policy emphasizes the role of an advisor in providing advice for academic decisions, and students are urged to take full advantage of their advisor's experience and knowledge as often as needs arise. To avoid schedule conflicts, students are strongly advised to telephone their advisors for an appointment.

## **Academic Standards**

Students in the program are expected to complete 24 credit hours of work each academic year with a GPA of at least 2.50 (12 credit hours for students granted part-time status). They are also

expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 and a 2.50 GPA in Information Science courses. Failure to meet any or all of these conditions automatically places a student in academic jeopardy. Students who fail to meet these conditions for two consecutive terms and who, in their most recent term of residence, failed to complete 12 credits (6 credits for part-time students) with a GPA of 2.50 are liable to be suspended. Students who have been suspended are not permitted to enroll in University courses for one calendar year.

Students who have been admitted to the Information Science program are eligible to continue as long as a satisfactory academic standing is maintained or until the degree has been earned. The SIS statute of limitations requires that all of the credits required for the Bachelor of Science degree, whether earned in residence or transferred from another institution, must have been earned within 12 years prior to the date on which the degree is awarded. However, when given evidence that the previous courses still provide adequate preparation for courses yet to be taken and still represent a reasonable part of the total academic program, the SIS director of the undergraduate program may waive this limitation. In such cases, the waiver is for a specific period during which the program must be completed.

## **Credit Load**

A normal credit load ranges from 12 to 18 credits per term, with a minimum of 24 credits in an academic year. Any term credit load in excess of 18 credits requires the recommendation of the SIS director of the undergraduate program and approval of the dean. No more than 60 credits may be taken in one department or school, and usually not more than 40 credits are considered desirable in a well-balanced program.

## **Course Repetitions**

Required courses for an Information Science major must be repeated or replaced by a comparable course if a grade of C- or lower is received. If a grade of C- or lower is earned in a prerequisite course, the course must be repeated before the higher-level course may be taken. If a grade of C- or lower is earned in any course taken to satisfy a degree requirement, the course must be repeated or replaced. Course repetitions are subject to the following limitations:

- No course passed with a C or higher letter grade or with an S grade should be repeated.
- The grade earned by repeating the same course replaces the grade originally earned, although the original grade is not removed from the transcript. The grade originally earned is not counted in the computation of the GPA. The new grade does not increase the number of credits counted toward graduation unless an F grade is replaced by a higher grade or an S grade.
- No course may be repeated at any other institution.
- A specific course may be taken for credit only once.

## **Similar Course Content**

Students should not take courses with similar content from other departments. Limitations have been imposed on certain computer programming language and psychology courses. A listing of

these limitations may be obtained from the Office of the SIS director of the undergraduate program.

### **Courses Taken Elsewhere**

Students in good academic standing may attend a summer or special session of another accredited institution in order to supplement their program. The students should meet with and obtain approval from either the BSIS Program Director or their Advisor PRIOR to registering for these special courses. Students who have already completed 90 credits of coursework are not allowed to take courses elsewhere. Generally, courses may not be a repetition of any course previously taken (passed or failed).

To obtain permission to attend another institution, a student must have begun his or her program at the University of Pittsburgh or have been admitted as a transfer student from another institution with no more than 60 advanced standing credits.

A maximum of two summer or special sessions may be taken at other institutions with a maximum of two courses per session. After completing such courses, an official transcript should be submitted to the BSIS office.

### **Transfer Credits**

Students admitted by transfer will have their transfer credits evaluated subject to the following conditions:

- Students who have not satisfied the foreign language requirement (detailed under the Program Description section) shall be required to do so in the first two terms of residence at SIS.
- An official transcript of all courses taken at other institutions must be submitted at the time of application, whether or not it is intended that such courses be counted toward the degree. For acceptance, courses must be passed with a satisfactory grade (C or equivalent) and must be earned at an institution accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting association. Grades for such courses are not used in computing a student's GPA nor in determining probationary status or eligibility for graduation honors.
- Generally, courses that have a reasonable counterpart in the curricula of the various schools/departments of the University of Pittsburgh are eligible for transfer.
- The number of credits granted for a course cannot exceed the number on the transcript from the institution where they were earned nor, usually, exceed the number to be earned in the corresponding course at the University of Pittsburgh.
- No transfer credits may be part of the final 30 required credits for the degree. These credits must be earned in residence at SIS. Credits earned at regional campuses and in foreign programs are considered as transfer credits.
- Credits accepted for advanced standing must have been earned within 12 years of the date when the degree requirements must be completed.
- Transfer credits for courses that do not have reasonable counterparts in the curricula of the various schools or departments of the University cannot be used to satisfy

requirements for the degree, unless approved by the SIS director of the undergraduate program.

- No more than 90 credits may be transferred from a four-year institution, and no more than 60 credits may be transferred from a two-year institution.
- If a course for which advanced standing credit has been granted is repeated, the advanced standing credit is canceled.

## **Credit by Examination**

Students may earn credits toward graduation not only by successfully completing courses but also by taking special examinations. Each test for credit by examination must be arranged with the school/department offering the course for which credit is desired. The examination must be in a specific course offered by the faculty of the school or department. Schools/departments may specify the time and type of examination as well as which courses are possible to elect as credit.

Students may not take credit by examination for material prerequisites for college admission. If, during their high school careers, students have mastered material traditionally covered in college courses and not required for college admission, they may request credit by examination for the material if the school's or department's equivalent course is one for which it generally permits credit by examination. Credit by examination cannot be obtained for a college-level course for which credit has already been awarded, nor can it be used to alter a grade already received. Credit may not be earned by examination in lower-level sequence courses when the student has already obtained credit for a higher-level course in the sequence. Students are not permitted to audit courses without registering and then apply for credit by examination. Students wishing to earn credit by examination should consult the school/department in which the course is given and then obtain the requisite form from the appropriate dean's office. There is a fee for the examination whether or not credits are earned.

## **Grades**

The School of Information Sciences uses both the University's letter grade and Satisfactory/No-Credit (S/NC) grade options (formerly the S/N option) (see [Grading and Records](#) for more information). In addition to the general University rules governing those grading systems, there are a few formal limitations to the SIS student's freedom of choice regarding grading systems:

- Students must decide by one week after the end of the add/drop period which grading system they propose to use for each of their courses. This decision may not be changed, nor may a grade of one kind received for a course be changed to a grade of the other kind (e.g., from an S/NC grade (formerly the S/N option) to a letter grade).
- Schools/departments may decide which courses may be taken on the S/NC system (formerly the S/N option).
- No courses required for the information science major, the related field, information science distribution, general distribution, English composition, or language requirements may be taken on the S/NC system (formerly the S/N option).
- Students are limited to a total of 18 credits of S grades that may be applied to the 120 credits required for the degree.

- Students should be sure, before deciding on the grading system for a course, that their decision will not have an adverse effect on their plans for a major.
- Under certain circumstances, schools/departments may declare a course available only on the S/NC system (formerly the S/N option). In such courses, students may not elect to receive a letter grade.

Evaluation of a student's ability and achievement in a course is not eliminated by the Satisfactory/No-Credit (S/NC) system (formerly the S/N option). Recitations, tests, and papers may all be required and assessed by instructors who will convey to the student their judgments of the worth of the student's work. Because the publicly recorded evaluation is minimal, students should use the instructor's comments in the most helpful way possible: as a guide to their own future course of study and for assessment of their own potential.

Since it is difficult to evaluate transcripts containing very few letter grades, students seriously considering transferring to the Information Science program or considering graduate study should keep this in mind. The student may wish to ask instructors from whom they have taken courses on the Satisfactory/No-Credit (S/NC) system to write letters of recommendation for them immediately at the end of the course. The office of the SIS director of the undergraduate program will supply forms for such letters and will make them a permanent part of the student's file. Students may also wish to keep portfolios of their best academic work and other evidence of ability and accomplishment with which they might supplement the formal transcript and letters of evaluation when they apply for transfer or for graduate study. This recommendation is useful for all students whatever grade options they select.

## **Dean's List**

Early in each term, a list is compiled of students whose academic record in the preceding term indicates outstanding academic achievement. To be placed on the SIS Dean's List, a student must have earned at least 12 credits with a grade of A, B, or C; must have no grade lower than C; and must have a term GPA of at least 3.25. Full-time and part-time students are eligible for placement on the Dean's list.

## **Reinstatement**

Students who have resigned or been suspended and other students who have been away from the University for more than one term may apply for reinstatement. Students interested in reinstatement should contact the [BSIS office](#). A reinstatement application should be submitted to the Undergraduate Admissions and Evaluation Committee at least one month prior to the beginning of the term in which the student plans to enroll. Favorable action may be expected if students provide evidence that they can pursue an academic program with some prospects for success. Since registration advising meetings are usually held from the seventh to the 12th week of the preceding term, applications for reinstatement should be received within that period so that the faculty advisor may assist in planning the program and in registering the student. The student's status upon reinstatement will be that attained at the end of his or her last term in residence or at the beginning of the term during which resignation took place. Applicants will be notified by letter of the action taken on their requests. Any courses that students take at another

institution during a period of suspension shall not be granted credit by SIS after the student has been reinstated unless the student petitioned the faculty and received permission in advance.

## **Dismissal**

A suspended student who is subsequently reinstated remains on probation for at least one term and until the cumulative GPA has been raised to at least 2.50 and the information science major GPA has been raised to at least 2.50. As long as the reinstated student remains on probation, failure in any term to complete 12 credits of work (or those credits for which a part-time student has registered) with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.50 and an information science GPA of 2.50 will constitute grounds for dismissal from SIS for five years.

## **Special Academic Opportunities/Programs**

The following additional academic opportunities are available through the School of Information Sciences:

### **Cooperative Program with the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg**

A cooperative arrangement between SIS and the Greensburg campus of the University of Pittsburgh makes it possible for Greensburg students to major in information science. Students may complete most of their course work, including work in major courses, on the Greensburg campus but will typically want to cross register for some courses on the Pittsburgh campus to take advantage of courses and laboratories not available at Greensburg. The Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Information Science is awarded by SIS. For additional information about this program, students should contact Karen M. Antoniak at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

### **Double Degrees**

Students in the School of Information Sciences may choose to simultaneously pursue more than one undergraduate degree, either within the College of Arts and Sciences or in another undergraduate school of the University. SIS also offers a joint degree program with the College of Business Administration. In general, earning two degrees requires a minimum of 150 credits and completion of the curriculum requirements of both schools. Detailed information about double degrees or joint programs is available from the [BSIS office](#).

### **Second Degree Program**

**Those who already have received Baccalaureate degree and wish to earn a BSIS degree are encouraged to apply to:**

**The BSIS office (if you've received a Baccalaureate degree within the last 12 years).**

**The University of Pittsburgh's Office of Admissions and Financial Aid (if you earned a Baccalaureate degree from an institution other than the University of Pittsburgh within the**

**last 12 years). You will need to complete a Transfer Application and submit any requested fees.**

### **Enrollment in Graduate Courses**

Undergraduates with sufficient preparation are encouraged to take advantage of the rich variety of graduate courses offered by the departments and schools of the University. Students enrolled in the Information Science program may use credits in graduate courses toward their undergraduate degree. To enroll in a graduate course, students must obtain the written consent of the instructor of the course, have a 3.00 cumulative GPA, and have the approval of the director of the undergraduate program. No special forms are required.

### **Independent Study Courses**

The Information Science program offers the student the option of conducting an independent study with a faculty member in the School of Information Sciences. Students who have a special project or wish to work in an area not adequately covered by regular iSchool courses should request a faculty member to supervise independent work aimed at their particular interests, and, if accepted, they should register for INFSCI 1080 Independent Study. Any student registering for an information science independent study course must have at least five information science courses completed, a 3.00 cumulative GPA, and consent of the faculty advisor and faculty sponsor.

To obtain permission to complete an independent study, students must submit a proposal presenting a design for the project and must find a faculty sponsor who will serve as director. The proposal must include detailed plans for the project. Substantial written work or some other form of creative product is usually one outcome of an independent study course.

### **School of Information Sciences Course Offerings**

Courses offered by the School of Information Science are available at:  
[www.ischool.pitt.edu/bsis/course-of-study/course-descriptions.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/bsis/course-of-study/course-descriptions.php)