While this handbook for Societal Computing is specific to your academic experience in the department, there are several other resources and offices graduate students are encouraged to consult during their tenure at Carnegie Mellon University. Information about The Word, the student handbook, the Graduate Education Office, the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs and others are included in Appendix A of this handbook.

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1. Introduction and Overview

Societal Computing is the branch of computer science concerned both with designing computational technology to shape tomorrow’s digital world and using computational methods to understand the societal challenges a digital world poses. Our program stems from the recognition that there is an intimate and deep relationship between the design, deployment, and configuration of computing technologies on the one hand and societal dynamics, goals, policies, and outcomes on the other. As more and more of our daily
experiences are lived in and through computers and networks, computing technology shapes the landscape in which people socialize, conduct commerce, play, work, and communicate. It also gives rise to new risks and shapes the tools available to avoid or manage them. The design choices for these digitized environments have profound consequences – they create behavioral possibilities for acting, knowing, and controlling our social and physical environment. They provide opportunities and de-facto policies, regulations, and norms that shape societies. They create data for understanding the digital world, but at a scale and speed not analyzable by today’s methodologies.

The Societal Computing program is Carnegie Mellon University’s response to this challenge. We bring to bear a wide variety of tools and disciplines to discover the scientific principles and laws governing the relationship between the design of computing technology and the nature of digital society. Traditional computer science is fundamental to this enterprise, but the multidimensional nature of the questions we address requires cross-disciplinary solutions. In our research and our educational programs, a common foundation is laid not only in current computer science methodologies but also in ideas drawn from sociology, psychology, economics, public policy, cultural studies, machine learning, sustainability, applied statistics, and ethics. We are shaping an integrated, innovative discipline of Societal Computing that provides the tools, techniques, theories, and research methods to address societal issues and continue to make scientific progress in understanding the deep relationship between computing technologies and the society inhabiting the digital landscape they comprise.

2. Advisors
Each student has a faculty advisor charged with guiding the education and monitoring the progress of the student through the program. This personal student-advisor relationship ensures that every student receives the necessary faculty mentoring. Throughout the program, the advisor is responsible for guiding the student’s research and education. Early in the program, the advisor guides the student along with research initiatives and helps with strategic planning for courses and other educational activities. Later, the advisor helps to focus the student’s research interests towards a thesis topic. Toward the end of the program, the advisor chairs the student’s thesis committee and helps to select the other members of the committee. The advisor also provides the student with career advice.

How are advisors initially chosen? The SC PhD Program Director matches each student with a faculty member, taking into consideration their preferences, interests, and background as revealed in their application materials, as well as interest and funding availability among the potential advisors.

There is flexibility in the kind of relationship a student has with their advisor. While the advisor is a student’s primary source of guidance, many students interact closely with faculty other than their formal advisor, for example as part of research collaboration. A few students have two co-advisors. Occasionally evolving research interests and other factors motivate changes in advising relationships. It is OK for students to request a change in advisors. Such changes are approved by the SC PhD Program Director with agreement from the new advisor and a consensus about how to gracefully tie up any loose ends in the previous research project. Any non-courtesy Tenure Track or Research Track faculty member in SCS may serve as a sole advisor or co-advisor. In addition, faculty in other tracks, or in other schools, can serve as advisors with permission of the SC PhD Program Director.

3. Directed Research
During a student’s first two years, they should be doing directed research at least half time; once all coursework is completed and before doing thesis research, full time (except when teaching). Different students and advisors have different ideas of what directed research means and how progress can be
demonstrated. It is the responsibility of both the student and their advisor to formulate for each semester a set of reasonable goals, plans, and criteria for success in conducting directed research.

During any semester, students studying via an internship experience may substitute up to 36 units of Practicum Internship for these research units with permission of the advisor or Program Director. Note that students typically substitute practicum units for research units 3-4 times during their PhD degree program. Substituting more than 4 times requires approval from the PhD Program Director.

At each semi-annual graduate student review meeting, the faculty assess the student’s previous semester’s research progress and the student’s next semester’s research plans to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress. The evaluation of a student’s progress in directed research often depends on the student having produced some tangible results. Advisors are individually responsible for adequately supervising this portion.

4. Degree Attainment/Course Requirements

In the PhD program in Societal Computing (SC), each student must complete 108 University units of graduate courses and receive at least a B- (B minus) with a B (3.0) overall grade average in each course in order to earn a PhD in Societal Computing. Course requirements are intended to ensure that all program graduates have sufficient breadth in SC fundamentals as well as depth in one or more relevant areas of their choice. Students must demonstrate breadth in SC fundamentals by completing (48 units) in 4 area star requirements plus a minimum of (18 units) of the SC PhD Practicum. Depth is provided through the remaining (36 units) of elective coursework, which can be fulfilled from a broad selection of relevant electives – as well as research and project work. Finishing out the 108 units is the Societal Computing Pre-Thesis course (6 Units). The Societal Computing Pre-Thesis course 17-802 (previously 08-802) is provided by each Societal Computing adviser to coach the student in preparing, presenting, and passing a thesis proposal.

In addition to course requirements, students must pass the following: Writing, Speaking, Computation and Teaching requirements. Details regarding all student requirements are below.

4.1 Four Area Star Requirements

The four-star courses (48 units) provide students with a basic grounding in core skills needed for research in Societal Computing, Computational Thinking, Statistics, and Management/Policy. Students are to take a minimum of one 12-unit course (or two 6-unit courses) from each of the required areas. No course may satisfy more than one requirement in its entirety. In rare cases, the units of a course may be split between two categories such as 6 units in one area and 6 in another. Students should discuss exactly which courses are to be taken with their advisor. Please note the below list is illustrative, not comprehensive. At CMU new courses are added most years. If there is a course that you feel is appropriate, simply send an email petition (petition instructions are listed in section #6 below) to the Director of the SC PhD program, Nicolas Christin, and Connie Herold, Academic Program Manager asking to count it.

Each student must pass a one-star course from each of these areas:

**Societal Computing (12 Units Star Course Required)**

A 17- PhD level (or masters with permission of instructor) course taught by Core SC faculty

- 17-722 Building User-Focused Sensing Systems
Computational Thinking Skills (12 Units Star Course Required)

Computational Thinking Skills courses address issues of how to reason computationally. These courses involve the design and development of core algorithms and not just the application of canned programs.

- 05-834 Applied Machine Learning
- 10-701/15-781 Machine Learning
- 10-715 Advanced Introduction to Machine Learning
- 11-711 Algorithms for NLP
- 14-741 Introduction to Information Security (**18-631 may be taken only if 14-741 is full)
- 15-750 Algorithms
- 15-780 Advanced AI Concepts
- 15-830 Computational Methods in Sustainable Energy
- 15-853 Algorithms in the Real World
- 17-737 (Previous 08-737) Artificial Intelligence Methods for Social Good
- 17-759 Advanced Topics in Machine Learning & Game Theory
- 17-821 (Previous 08-810) Computational Modeling of Complex Socio-Technical Systems

Policy and Management (12 Units Star Course Required)

These courses address issues of management and policy. Methods courses are not allowed in this area.

- 17-762 (Previous 08-732) Law of Computer Technology
- 17-731/18-734 (Previous 08-604) Foundations of Privacy
- 17-733 (Previous 08-733) Privacy Policy, Law, and Technology
- 17-801 (Previous 08-801) Dynamic Network Analysis
- 17-803 (Previous 08-803) Empirical Methods for Socio-Technical Research
- 17-821 (Previous 08-810) Computational Modeling of Complex Socio-Technical Systems (if paper uses a model to address a policy or management issue)
- 15-892 Foundations of Electronic Marketplaces
- 19-701 Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis (6 units)
- 19-712/18-842 Telecommunications Technology, Policy and Management
- 47-890 Seminar in Organizational Behavior
- 47-891 Seminar in Organizational Theory (6 units)
- 47-899 Seminar in Social Networks (6 units)
- 90-840 Legislative Policy Making
- 90-866 Large Scale Data Analysis for Public Policy (6 units)
- 90-904/10-830 Research Seminar in Machine Learning and Policy
Statistics (12 Units Star Course Required)
These courses address issues of statistical data analysis, and provide methodological skill in statistics.

- 10-708 Probabilistic Graphical Models
- 10-716 Advanced Machine Learning: Theory and Methods
- 19-703 Applied Data Analysis I (6 Units)
- 19-704 Applied Data Analysis II (6 Units)
- 36-700 Probability and Mathematical Statistics
- 36-705 Intermediate Statistics
- 36-749 Experimental Design for Behavioral & Social Sciences
- 90-906 Intro Econometric Theory
- 94-834 Applied Econometrics I
- 94-835 Applied Econometrics II

4.2 Thirty-Six Elective Units
All students are required to take a minimum of 36 units of PhD-level electives. These electives provide depth in an area of relevance to the student. This requirement can be filled by a combination of mini courses (6 units) and full courses (12 units). Please note that courses must be at the level of 17-700 or higher to count as an SC elective. These electives may be drawn from a variety of sources:

- A specialized independent study on a topic for which there is not a regularly offered course. At most 12 units of independent study may count toward the SC elective requirement.
- Additional courses in SC
- Additional courses in SCS
- Additional PhD level courses at CMU or the University of Pittsburgh. At most one course may be a course at the University of Pittsburgh through PCHE

4.3 Eighteen Units of Societal Computing Practicum Course 17-994
Fall and Spring Semesters, 9 Units Each for 18 Total
Students must take this course in the Fall and Spring semesters for a total of 18 Units.

Practicum Syllabus:

Societal Computing Topics
- Literature review. Write a literature review, working with an advisor to pick a topic and identify research questions. Writing includes critiquing papers being synthesized in the review. This is intended to be a “short form” literature review of approximately 2-4 pages, of the sort that typically introduces a conference paper.
- What makes good interdisciplinary research? While each research group focuses continuously on this topic, the practicum will provide a broader view, e.g., by inviting a senior researcher from ISR or SCS to share reflections on their own research strategies, key choices they made in their careers, and advice they can offer budding researchers.
- What is SC about? Hear from and interact with SC faculty members to see the breadth of research topics, methods, and policy concerns within SC.

Skills
- Presentation skills. This includes presenting a literature review, an elevator speech, and talking to a general audience. Senior students should be involved in critiquing & helping younger students.
Giving feedback and critiquing. Not only is speaking important, but active listening, and skill and constructive critiquing are important skills that the practicum should develop.

Writing and presentation software. Learning “power user” skills for writing and presentation software used by most academics, such as Latex, Word, PowerPoint.

Human subjects. Students should go through the process of preparing an IRB application. Senior students can share their experiences with IRB and human subjects in general.

Time management. There are several possible approaches to this topic including bringing in an outside expert or facilitating a roundtable discussion with senior students.

Ethics. Students should learn about CMU’s policy on plagiarism, as well as ethical considerations for authorship and author order, and more generally the ethics of their profession.

Teaming. Students should learn group skills, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills, possibly via an outside expert or discussion by faculty and senior students.

Grant proposal. Writing a compelling grant proposal is a skill that is vital to the careers of most of our graduates whether they go to industry or academia. Advisors are urged to involve students in the proposals they write, but there is also a role for developing this skill in the practicum.

4.4 Societal Computing Pre-Thesis Course 17-802 (6 Units)

The Societal Computing Pre-Thesis course (17-802) is provided by each Societal Computing advisor to coach the students in preparing, presenting, and passing a thesis proposal. The proposal will generally occur in the semester where this course is taken. If not, an incomplete may be awarded pending the proposal at the advisor’s discretion. In that case, in accordance with university policy, the course must be completed (and the thesis passed) no later than the last day of the following semester, or the default grade will be awarded.

4.5 Computational Thinking

To fulfill the computational thinking and programming requirements for the PhD degree the student must:

- Achieve a high level of competency in designing, implementing and testing algorithms
- Develop a substantial body of code in association with a research project
- Work collaboratively on a computational thinking project

Typically this is achieved through research and development by the student as part of a research team under their PhD advisor. Key requirements include computational thinking, acceptable code development, code development as part of a team, and good documentation practices.

Approval is typically determined during the Doctoral Student Semi-Annual Review.

4.6 Speaking Proficiency

To fulfill the speaking requirement for the PhD, the student must:

- Attend and present in the SC PhD Practicum, at least four times.
- Present at, at least once, at a national or international conference (in a paper, not a poster session or round table).
- Achieve a high level of competency in talk organization, slide development, presentation style, eye contact, and question answering skills.

Approval is typically determined during the Doctoral Student semi-annual review.
4.7 Teaching Requirement
To fulfill the teaching requirement for the PhD degree the student must do one of the following:

- Serve as a full TA for two full-length SC Courses (9 or 12 units)
- Serve as a full TA for one full-length SC Course and one full-length SCS course (9 or 12 units) with the permission of the student’s advisor
- Serve as a full TA for one full-length SC Course and teach the equivalent amount in the CASOS or IDEAS summer institute (requires substantial teaching over multiple years)

Approval is typically determined during the Doctoral Student semi-annual review.

4.7.1 Proficiency Requirements for TAs who are non-native English Speakers
Graduate students are required to have a certain level of fluency in English before they can instruct in Pennsylvania, as required by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act of 1990. Through this Act, all institutions of higher education in the state are required to evaluate and certify the English fluency of instructional personnel, including teaching assistants and interns.

The full university policy can be reviewed at: https://www.cmu.edu/policies/faculty/evaluation-certification-english-fluency-instructors.html

The fluency of all instructional personnel will be rated by Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center to determine at what level of responsibility the student can TA. In addition to administering the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Test (a mandatory screening test for any non-native speaker of English), Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center helps teaching assistants who are non-native English speakers develop fluency and cultural understanding to teach successfully at Carnegie Mellon.

Visit the Student Academic Success Center website for additional information: https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/

4.8 Writing Proficiency
To fulfill the writing requirement for the PhD degree the student must:

- Demonstrate a high level of competency in an organization, clarity of writing in English, cohesive argument, and accurate utilization of references by writing a paper that is accepted for publication by a high-quality peer-reviewed conference, journal (or equivalent, as approved by the SC faculty), or acceptable Thesis Proposal.

Approval is typically determined during the Doctoral Student semi-annual Review

4.9 Independent Study / Directed Reading
An independent study course is appropriate for a learning activity that is neither covered by existing courses nor is independent research. At the PhD level, students tend to focus on formal coursework and independent research, so the independent study course is taken rarely. If you are interested in the possibility, you should speak with the faculty member who would guide you in the independent study, along with your advisor. Please note, the Independent Study should be a structured activity with an outcome that can be evaluated.
5. Evaluation of Students’ Progress

Evaluation and feedback on a student’s progress are important both to the student and to the faculty. Students need information on their overall progress to make long-term plans. The faculty need to make evaluations to advise students, to make support decisions, and to write recommendations to potential employers. The faculty meet at the end of each semester to make a formal evaluation of each student in the PhD program in a Doctoral Review Meeting. The purpose of having all the faculty meet together to discuss each student is to ensure uniformity and consistency in evaluation across all the different areas, by all the different advisors, throughout the years of the SC PhD program as it inevitably changes.

The faculty measure each student’s progress against the goal of completing the PhD program in a reasonable period of time. The evaluation considers all components of the program using indicators and information sources as described below. Requirements need not be fulfilled in any particular order, but each student must show reasonable progress each semester toward satisfying the full set of requirements. Because the critical path to completing the PhD is research, making early and regular research progress is the most important consideration. The faculty inform students of the results of this evaluation through a Doctoral Review Meeting letter. The letter may include specific recommendations for future work or requirements that must be met for continued participation in the program.

5.1 Components and Indicators

In their evaluation, the faculty consider the following components, though naturally only some of these components will be applicable in any given semester. Each component varies in importance depending on the stage of the student’s career, and each student will progress through the requirements as suits their individual needs.

- Directed Research: evaluated by the research supervisor and other collaborating faculty.
- Courses Taken: evaluated by the course instructor — brief prose evaluation/ summary grade.
- Teaching: evaluated by the current advisor
- Skills — Writing, Speaking, Computational: evaluated by the current advisor
- Thesis: status summarized by the thesis advisor with comment by thesis committee members
- Other: lectures given, papers written, etc. as evaluated by relevant faculty

The faculty’s primary source of information about the student is the student’s advisor. The advisor is responsible for assembling the above information and presenting it at the faculty meeting. The student should make sure the advisor is informed about participation in activities and research progress made during the semester. Each student is asked to submit a summary of this information to the advisor at the end of each semester—the Student Statement for Black Friday at https://gsaudit.cs.cmu.edu. This statement is used as student input to the evaluation process and as factual information on activities, and becomes part of the internal student record. It is strongly recommended that the student and advisor meet prior to the faculty meeting to review the information provided in this statement.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the above information, the faculty decide whether a student is making satisfactory progress in the PhD program. If so, the faculty usually suggest goals for the student to achieve over the next semester. If not, the faculty make more rigid demands of the student; these may be long-term (e.g., finish your thesis within a set timeframe) or short-term (e.g. complete one or more specific courses next semester; prepare a thesis proposal by next Black Friday). Ultimately, permission to continue in the PhD program is contingent on whether or not the student continues to make satisfactory progress toward the degree. If a student is
not making satisfactory progress, the faculty may choose to dismiss the student from the program. The faculty also decide whether financial support (including tuition and stipend) should be continued for each student. Termination of support does not always mean dismissal from the program.

5.3 Grades and Grading
Since the PhD program is not based solely on conventional academic courses, it is difficult to associate grades with a student’s accomplishments. For students who complete the program, grades are largely irrelevant. However, a passing grade for graduate courses is B- or better. Program graduates are judged primarily on their professional achievements and the experience they have gained during the program, and on the basis of recommendations from members of the faculty.

5.4 Drop/Add/Withdraw Procedures
Students taking undergraduate- and Master’s-level courses must follow the procedures and deadlines for adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses as identified on the academic calendar.

Information can be found at https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/course-changes/index.html

There is a separate calendar for doctoral level courses.

5.5 CMU Grade Policy
This policy offers details concerning university grading principles for students taking courses and covers the specifics of assigning and changing grades, grading options, drop/withdrawals, and course repeats. It also defines the undergraduate and graduate grading standards: https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/grading.html

5.6 Processing for Appealing Final Grades
Final grades will be changed only in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the instructor and the department, unit or program. Grading is a matter of sound discretion of the instructor and final grades are rarely changed without the consent of the instructor who assigned the grade. The following circumstances are the unusual exceptions that may warrant a grade appeal: (a) the final grade assigned for a course is based on manifest error (e.g. a clear error such as arithmetic error in computing a grade or failure to grade one of the answers on an exam), or (b) the faculty or staff member who assigned the grade did so in violation of a University policy:

https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html

6. Process for Requesting Approval for New Star Courses
The faculty have selected an initial set of approved courses in each category. These are subject to review from time to time to ensure that, if the course content changes, it remains consistent with the purpose of that star.

SC PhD students may request that the faculty approve an additional course in one of the star categories. In general, if the request is approved, the course will be added to the list for other students to take for star credit. When a request is student-initiated, it is the student’s responsibility to make a case supporting STAR status. Students should submit a request to the Director of the SC PhD program, Nicolas Christin, and the SC PhD Program Manager, Connie Herold using the following template:

1. Your name
2. Name and number of the course
3. Course description or URL to course description
4. Which star requirement you want this course to satisfy
5. An indication of approval by your advisor
6. Evidence, including quotes from the course description and syllabus with supporting links, to demonstrate that the course:
   a. Matches the topic and fulfills the particular requirements of the star course category you have requested
   b. Assumes an undergraduate background in the relevant area--no more and no less
   c. Uses multiple forms of evaluation (e.g. assignments, exams, projects, papers, ...)
   d. Is appropriate for PhD studies. For example, if a course is primarily designed for master's students, a justification should be given that the course is also appropriate preparation for PhD studies. Sometimes a course that is missing engagement with research may be adapted for PhD students through additional or replacement assignments that lead PhD students deeper into relevant research topics

Star requests should generally be requested at least 2 weeks prior to the start of classes. This ensures students can register for a course before it fills up, and avoid spending time on a course that is not in the end approved.

Given sufficient information, requests sent to the faculty should receive a response within 2 weeks.

Courses will not, in general, be approved in two categories, but instead will be approved in the category that best fits the primary emphasis of the course (if any). If an exception to this principle is made, the student must choose to which category they will apply the course, and find a different course with which to fulfill the other requirements.

Course curricula may evolve over time due to the advancing state of knowledge, the changing background, and needs of students, or to the strengths that a new instructor brings to bear on a course. Therefore, the faculty may reexamine star courses from time to time in order to verify that the course continues to fulfill the requirements for a star. If it does not, star status may be withdrawn for future offerings of the course.

7. **Written and Oral Communication Skills**
   To be a well-rounded computer scientist, each student's knowledge should extend beyond the basics, and must include:

   - The ability to communicate technical ideas clearly in writing
   - The ability to communicate technical ideas clearly in oral presentation

The program expects students to be proficient in computer programming, but there is no formal checkpoint to certify programming skills. It is left up to the advisor and student to make sure the student has the necessary skills.

8. **Course Waiver for Prior Coursework/PCHE**

Students who have taken PhD level courses at Carnegie Mellon prior to entering the Societal Computing PhD program may request credit for up to two courses, as long as the course taken would satisfy one of
the Star course or elective program requirements. Grades will be recorded as in CMU courses taken while enrolled in the PhD program.

This program does not generally accept transfer credit of courses taken outside of CMU. However, students may request to waive up to two course requirements based on equivalent graduate level courses they have already taken, no more than 12 units of star courses can be waived.

To apply for a waiver, a student must submit a petition to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator within their first year in the program. A separate petition must be submitted for each course to be waived.

The petitioner must make a case for how prior courses are equivalent in substance, submitting a self-contained justification, a syllabus, and a transcript (translated if necessary). As needed, the petitioner can provide additional support for the case by providing slide excerpts, reading lists, homework assignments, work products, or other supporting artifacts. For star courses, the justification must argue why the course(s) match the intent and expectations of the appropriate star requirement, similar to requests for approval for a new star course (described above). To waive a course based on comparable experience, the student should document how the experience demonstrates their systematic knowledge of the relevant material.

Typically, courses may be waived based on rigorous graduate courses taken as part of a Master's degree.

These petitions will be considered by the faculty, typically delegated to a faculty member with expertise in the corresponding star area. The outcome of the petition process will be decided based on provided information on the prior course and the petitioner’s performance in it. The faculty may ask appropriate instructors for assistance in this decision or reject the petition with a request for resubmission if insufficient information is provided. If appropriate, the faculty may stipulate conditions on the waiver, such as preparing a supplementary project that exposes the student to Societal Computing research in the area of the course, and is roughly equivalent in scope to a final project in a typical PhD.-level course.

In addition Carnegie Mellon University offers students the opportunity to take courses for credit through a cross-registration program (see Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE) and Cross Registration below) and through the receipt of transfer credit from other accredited institutions. The Carnegie Mellon University transcript will include information on such courses as follows: Carnegie Mellon courses and courses taken through the university's cross-registration program will have grades recorded on the transcript and be factored into the QPA. All other courses will be recorded on this transcript indicating where the course was taken but without a grade. Such courses will not be taken into account for academic actions, honors or QPA calculations.

We do not offer transfer credit for courses taken at other universities outside of the PCHE. See above for information regarding waiving of two courses.

9. Residency Policy
PhD students must register as full-time students for a minimum of 2 years. Full-time students must be a resident of Pittsburgh, or with the approval of their advisor and program head, at a collaborative site.

10. The Thesis Process
The thesis must describe a piece of original research work and must describe it well. It is on this basis that the Department certifies the qualifications of the new PhD. Furthermore, it is the most important basis on which the scientific community judges the initial achievement and potential of that individual.
A more extensive checklist with specific information on the thesis proposal and thesis defense is available at http://www.cmu.edu/scs/cos-phd/current-students.html. Every student must read and adhere to these more detailed process rules.

10.1 Thesis Proposal
The student submits a written proposal to the faculty. The student also orally presents the thesis proposal to interested faculty and students in a public colloquium. A thesis proposal should:

- Explain the basic idea of the thesis topic (e.g., the problem, and the approach to solving it)
- Argue why that topic is interesting (e.g., what contributions to the field would be made in carrying out the proposed work)
- State what kind of results are expected
- Argue that these results are obtainable within a reasonable amount of time
- Demonstrate the student's personal qualifications for doing the proposed work

The main purpose of the thesis proposal is to convince the faculty that the chosen thesis topic is significant and that the student's approach has a reasonable chance of success. A thesis proposal gives the faculty the opportunity to pass such judgment at the start of the work and not at the end. We want to minimize the chance that a thesis will be turned down when almost completed. We expect students to present their thesis proposals as early as possible, not halfway through writing the thesis. A thesis proposal should be short, about 15–20 pages. A thesis proposal should not be:

- A dry run for the thesis
- A summary or abstract of the thesis
- The first chapter or part of the thesis
- A technical report
- A survey of the field
- An annotated bibliography

Any included list of references or bibliography should serve the purpose of supporting the assessment of the state of the art and the student's personal qualifications.

To provide ample notice to the public, at least one week in advance of the oral presentation, students should provide the Graduate Program Administrator with one hard copy of the thesis proposal, an online copy of the proposal’s abstract, and a list of the thesis committee members, including the external member. The Graduate Programs Administrator posts the public announcement of the thesis proposal presentation.

Please remember that at least three thesis committee members (including the Chair) must be physically present for the thesis proposal.

Upon completion of the thesis proposal, the student must complete a Doctoral Candidate Contractual Agreement Form provided by the Graduate Programs Administrator.

10.2 Thesis Committee
The student's advisor chairs the thesis committee. All other committee members, including the external member, should be agreed upon before the thesis proposal presentation. Members of the student's committee must accept the responsibility of meeting with the student regularly to ensure that the research is progressing in the right direction. The Thesis Committee must consist of at least one faculty member
from Societal Computing, two members of SCS and/or other approved faculty, and one External Committee member. All thesis committees are subject to departmental approval.

**Approved faculty are faculty that are affiliated with the Societal Computing program. These faculty are currently collaborating with Societal Computing faculty members.**

Please remember that at least three thesis committee members (including the Chair) must be physically present for the thesis proposal and defense.

Any changes to your Thesis Committee after your proposal must be approved by the Committee Chair and the Program Director. A Written request as to why and what circumstances this request is being made is required.

**10.3 Time to Degree Policy/Statute of Limitations**

Students will complete all requirements for the PhD degree within a maximum of ten years from original matriculation as a doctoral student, or less if required by a more restrictive department or college policy. Once this time-to-degree limit has lapsed, the person may resume work towards a doctoral degree only if newly admitted to a currently offered doctoral degree program under criteria determined by that program.

Under extraordinary circumstances, such as leave of absence, military or public service, family or parental leave, or temporary disability, a school or college may, upon the relevant department's recommendation and with the written approval of the dean, defer the lapse of All But Dissertation status for a period commensurate with the duration of that interruption. Students who are pursuing the PhD degree as part-time students for all semesters of their program, as approved by their program, may also appeal to their program or department for extension of the time to degree limit.

**10.4 All But Dissertation (ABD) Policy**

This policy sets forth a definition of All But Dissertation (ABD) status, time limits on doctoral candidacy status, a definition of being In Residence and In Absentia for candidates and the tuition and fees charged for candidates in each status. The ABD Status Agreement Form can be found at: [https://www.cmu.edu/hub/docs/abd-status-agree.pdf](https://www.cmu.edu/hub/docs/abd-status-agree.pdf)

After the presentation of an acceptable thesis proposal, and after satisfying all other requirements except for the dissertation and its oral defense, students are regarded as in “All But Dissertation” status.

An ABD candidate may choose to continue as a regular student In Residence or In Absentia (ABS).

An ABD Candidate **On Campus**: Students who are self-supporting and are in ABD status may remain on campus to complete the thesis. They must register and pay for a minimum of five units each semester. However, students who receive a stipend predicated on their status as a graduate student and paid by or administered by the university will be required to register for a minimum of 36 research units. Nearly every ABD student in SC falls into this category.
An ABS candidate Off-Campus: Students who leave CMU but plan to continue working on the thesis will be classified as ABS. These students should not require substantial use of university resources but are permitted the use of the libraries and consultation with faculty or students as necessary. While a candidate is ABS is required to pay the university technical fee each semester. No formal enrollment or payment of tuition is required, with the exception of the academic semester in which the degree requirements are completed. A candidate who is ABS is required to enroll for a minimum of five units during the academic semester in which the degree requirements are completed. Charges for these units are the responsibility of the candidate.

Since an ABS candidate will not be certified by the University as a “student” for immigration purposes, non-resident alien students who become ABD should not choose to become ABS.

10.5 Thesis Defense

The student’s thesis committee decides whether to accept the thesis based on its content and the outcome of the thesis defense, which is a public presentation describing the contributions of the thesis. At least one week in advance of the oral presentation, students must provide the Graduate Programs Administrator with one hard copy of the thesis abstract, an online copy of the abstract, and a list of all thesis committee members. The Graduate Programs Administrator posts the public announcement of the thesis defense.

Before the thesis defense, the entire thesis committee is expected to have read the entire thesis, to have given comments to the candidate, and to have given approval for scheduling the public defense. This means that a copy of the complete thesis document should be provided to the whole thesis committee a minimum of six weeks in advance of any proposed date for the defense. Significant deviations from this rule must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs. Committee members should meet briefly before the thesis presentation to discuss any issues.

The presentation by the candidate is normally about 45 minutes, followed by a question-and-answer period which may be as long as needed. Please remember that at least three thesis committee members (including the Chair) must be physically present for the thesis defense. The thesis committee chair (advisor) determines who may ask questions and in what order and brings the discussion to a close at the appropriate time. The question-and-answer period is followed by a closed-door session attended only by members of the thesis committee and interested faculty members. The options of the committee are:

- To approve without corrections
- To approve subject to minor changes, to be approved later by the thesis chair only
- To require a resubmission after major changes and re-approval of the entire committee
- Not to approve the thesis

All members of the committee are required to sign a Final Oral Examination Card indicating the student has passed the thesis oral examination. Additionally, the thesis committee Chair, the Department Head, and the Dean sign a final certification sheet when the student submits the final version of the thesis.

10.6 Graduation Certification Process and Degree Title

The Graduate Programs Administrator maintains a procedural checklist for scheduling the thesis oral presentation and completing the other requirements for graduation. The Graduate Programs Administrator certifies fulfillment of requirements for graduation only when the final version of the thesis has been
approved by the thesis committee, the Department Head, and the Dean. Students are not allowed to participate in commencement exercises unless final certification has been made.

Your PhD degree title will read “Doctoral Philosophy in Societal Computing”

If the final copy of the thesis is not submitted within one year of the thesis defense, the faculty may require a second defense before making a final certification.

10.7 Master’s Degrees Process enroute to a PhD
We will grant a current Societal Computing student a Masters Degree on their way to a PhD. Students must request the degree and have completed the following: Star courses (48 Units), Elective Courses (36 Units), Practicum (18 Units) and any one (1) skill requirement of Speaking, Writing or Computational. Your Master’s Degree title will read “Masters of Science in Societal Computing”. Students must request the degree prior to the semi-annual Student Doctoral Review on their student submission form.

11. Student Support and Outside Employment

11.1 Academic Year Support
The Department aims to allow students as much freedom as is possible in choosing research directions, subject to the interests and expertise of the faculty who are available to oversee the work. Thus, the PhD program generally decides which funding source to use to support a student after the student has chosen an advisor or research area. On occasion, the PhD program is able to obtain an individual fellowship for a student through external sources. We also encourage students to seek their own external funding as often the award is prestigious (e.g., NSF or Hertz) and/or the source provides an opportunity to make professional connections (e.g., an industrial fellowship).

Should a student receive an external fellowship or scholarship, they must notify the Graduate Programs Administrator. The Department supplements the stipends of students with an outside fellowship to meet (and usually exceed) stipends of students with internal funding. Any student whose spouse or qualifying domestic partner earns less than $200 per month, the Department will pay a dependency allowance that is 10% of the student's SC monthly stipend per dependent.

Emergency Funding
Graduate students who find themselves in need of immediate funds for emergency situations should contact the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs (see Appendix A) to inquire about an Emergency Student Loan: www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/index.html

Research Funding
GuSH Research Funding is a source of small research grant funds provided by GSA and the Provost's Office, and managed by the Graduate Education Office. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at: https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/research-funding/index.html

Student Health Insurance Support
If you enroll in CMU’s health plan for the year, eligible students will be reimbursed 50% of the individual health insurance premium.

11.2 Summer Support and Internships
Advisors provide summer support for many students, particularly for those working on their dissertation. However, many students benefit from gaining experience in either a development or research position in industry for one or two summers during their career here at Carnegie Mellon. Practice-oriented summer internships are particularly important for students who have had little or no full-time experience. Faculty can provide help in finding suitable summer employment.

International students should consult with the Graduate Program Administrator and Office Of International Education before accepting an internship. All internships must match the CMU Academic Schedule.

11.3 Vacations & Time-Off Example

Students with graduate assistantships are expected to continue with their research during academic breaks (including Summer months) with the exception of official University holidays.*

Paid time off (PTO) for personal business or vacations generally is not included as part of a graduate's financial support. A supported graduate student who wants to take a short break (up to ten days) must get approval for that break from their advisor and, if required by the terms of the student's support package, must make up the work. Supported graduate students wishing to take longer periods of personal time off must do so without financial support and must receive approval from their advisor at least five weeks prior to the requested time off. The student’s advisor will notify the Department's Business Office of any such arrangements so that an appropriate adjustment in the student's support package can be processed.

Please note ** University Holidays are student holidays as well and students need to consult with their advisor about coverage during University Holidays if they have challenges with taking time off during that time, i.e. if experiments are running that need to be monitored continuously. Arrangements can be made for students to take an equal number of days off at another time.

University Holidays:
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Day Before Christmas
- Christmas Day
- Day Before New Year's Day

11.4 Consulting and Outside Employment

No outside work is permitted. However, under exceptional circumstances, and with the written Approval of the student's advisor (or with the written approval of all advisors, in case of multiple advisors) and of the Societal Computing program director, the following is permissible:
- Outside consulting should be limited in time, and should consist of at most 8 (eight) Hours of consulting per week.
- The purpose of the consulting must be closely related to the research area of the student and be clearly aligned with the student’s thesis goals.
● The consulting project must be self-contained. In particular, it cannot use any Carnegie Mellon University intellectual property.
● Likewise, the project cannot make any use of university facilities (e.g., buildings), or equipment (e.g., laptops, or computing resources, including networking and email).
● Approval from the advisor(s) and the program director must be renewed every semester.

Students are responsible for understanding the tax implications and are encouraged to consult with a tax advisor if needed. International students should consult with OIE, as outside employment is usually forbidden. Finally, students who are not on a leave of absence must abide by all Carnegie Mellon rules and policies while performing these activities, including, but not limited to, rules governing potential conflicts of interest and ownership of intellectual property.

12. Leave of Absence
The University process for taking & returning from a Leave of Absence (LoA) may be found here: https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/leaves-and-withdrawals/

Students who wish to leave the program temporarily may request a Leave of Absence by submitting a request to the SC PhD Program Director, with a cc to the Graduate Program Administrator. Leaves are initially granted for a period of no more than one year, but an extension of up to one additional year may be granted under exceptional circumstances. When an extension is granted, the conditions for return must be negotiated with the advisor and the SC PhD Program Director prior to returning to the program. Students on a leave of absence should contact the SC PhD Program Administrator two months prior to the end of the leave to indicate their plans. While a leave can in principle start at any time, University regulations allow students to return only at the beginning of a semester (usually late August or January).

13. Problems & Withdrawal
Students and advisors enjoy a close working relationship in our program. If students have problems, whether related to their research or not, they should feel free to speak to their advisors. If doing so is awkward or if students simply want a second opinion, they should feel free to discuss their problems with either SC PhD Program Director Nicolas Christin, or SE PhD Program Administrator Connie Herold.

13.1 The Ombudsperson
If a student feels that none of the above avenues are appropriate for addressing their concerns, the student can turn to the PhD program’s ombudsperson. That person is Jonathan Aldrich from Software Engineering his email is: jonathan.aldrich@cs.cmu.edu

The ombudsperson’s role and responsibilities are:

● To meet with students and listen to their problems and concerns
● To give advice, especially as pertains to involving appropriate third parties, and to possible next steps towards a resolution
● To keep conversations confidential

The office of the University ombudsperson may be contacted as follows: 412-268-1018, ombudsperson@andrew.cmu.edu

13.2 Withdraw from Program
Students who will not complete the program or who do not intend to return from a Leave of Absence are required to follow the University process, completing a withdrawal form and submitting it to the University Registrar’s Office:

https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/leaves-and-withdrawals/

14. Community Spirit
Our sense of community is well-known as a distinguishing aspect of doing computer science at Carnegie Mellon University. It is one of the reasons many students choose to come here. The Computer Science Department is proud of our strong community spirit, which we foster through close working relationships between students and advisors, among faculty, and among students. Many working relationships turn into friendships for life.

Luckily, our community works. People volunteer their time, energy, intellect, talent, and other skills to do many of the things that keep our environment running smoothly. These efforts include organizing seminars, maintaining software packages, serving on departmental committees, grading for a graduate course, planning and running social activities, giving tours, and hosting visitors.

15. Academic Integrity
Please review the University Policy on Academic Integrity:

https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html

The policy includes the University expectations around academic integrity and provides definitions of cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized assistance.

A review of the University’s Academic Disciplinary Actions procedures is also recommended:

https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/academic-discipline/index.html

These procedures outline the process for investigating, reporting, and adjudicating violations of the University Policy on Academic Integrity. The procedures also outline the appeal process.

16. Time Estimates
The SC curriculum ensures all students have a solid foundation in Societal Computing, Computational Thinking, Statistics, and Management/Policy. At the same time, it retains enough flexibility to enable students to further specialize in areas that are more closely relevant to their research interest. The following is an illustration of the courses three different sets of students could take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Schedule 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC Practicum 17-994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SC Practicum 17-994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Spring 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<td><strong>Fall 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
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<td>TA-ing</td>
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<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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### Sample Schedule 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 1</th>
<th>Spring 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC Practicum 17-994</td>
<td>SC Practicum 17-994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
<td>TA-ship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Course</td>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fall 2</th>
<th>Spring 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<td>Elective Course</td>
<td>TA-ship</td>
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<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<table>
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<th>Fall 3</th>
<th>Spring 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Star Course (any category)</td>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Course</td>
<td>TA-ship</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC Reading &amp; Research</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

17. **University Policies & Expectations**

It is the responsibility of each member of the Carnegie Mellon community to be familiar with university policies and guidelines. In addition to this departmental graduate student handbook, the following resources are available to assist you in understanding community expectations:

Please see Appendix A for additional information about The Word and University resources.

17.1 Carnegie Mellon University Statement of Assurance
Carnegie Mellon University does not discriminate in admission, employment or administration of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, ancestry, belief, veteran status or genetic information. Furthermore, Carnegie Mellon University does not discriminate and is required not to discriminate in violation of federal, state or local laws or executive orders.

Inquiries concerning the application of and compliance with this statement should be directed to the university ombudsman, Carnegie Mellon University, 5000 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, telephone 412-268-1018. Obtain general information about Carnegie Mellon University by calling 412-268-2000.

Carnegie Mellon University publishes an annual campus security and fire safety report describing the university’s security, alcohol and drug, sexual assault and fire safety policies, and containing statistics about the number and type of crimes committed on the campus, and the number and cause of fires in campus residence facilities during the preceding three years. You can obtain a copy by contacting the Carnegie Mellon Police Department at 412-268-2323. The annual security and fire safety report also is available online at www.cmu.edu/police/annualreports.

Information regarding the application of Title IX, including to admission and employment decisions, the sexual misconduct grievance procedures and process, including how to file a report or a complaint of sex discrimination, how to file a report of sexual harassment, and how the university responds to such reports is available at www.cmu.edu/title-ix. The Title IX coordinator may be reached at 5000 Forbes Ave., 140 Cyert Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15213; 412-268-7125; or tix@cmu.edu.

17.2 The Carnegie Mellon Code
Students at Carnegie Mellon, because they are members of an academic community dedicated to the achievement of excellence, are expected to meet the highest standards of personal, ethical and moral conduct possible.

These standards require personal integrity, a commitment to honesty without compromise, as well as truth without equivocation and a willingness to place the good of the community above the good of the self. Obligations once undertaken must be met, commitments kept.

As members of the Carnegie Mellon community, individuals are expected to uphold the standards of the community in addition to holding others accountable for said standards. It is rare that the life of a student in an academic community can be so private that it will not affect the community as a whole or that the above standards do not apply.

The discovery, advancement and communication of knowledge are not possible without a commitment to these standards. Creativity cannot exist without acknowledgment of the creativity of others. New knowledge cannot be developed without credit for prior knowledge. Without the ability to trust that these principles will be observed, an academic community cannot exist.
The commitment of its faculty, staff and students to these standards contributes to the high respect in which the Carnegie Mellon degree is held. Students must not destroy that respect by their failure to meet these standards. Students who cannot meet them should voluntarily withdraw from the university.

The Carnegie Mellon Code can also be found on-line at https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/

17.3 Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities
The Office of Disability Resources at Carnegie Mellon University has a continued mission to provide physical, digital, and programmatic access to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to their educational experience. We work to ensure that qualified individuals receive reasonable accommodations as guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any students who would like to receive accommodations can begin the process through Disability Resources’ secure online portal or email access@andrew.cmu.edu to begin the interactive accommodation process.

Students with physical, sensory, cognitive, or emotional disabilities are encouraged to self-identify with the Office of Disability Resources and request needed accommodations. Any questions about the process can be directed to access@andrew.cmu.edu, or call (412) 268-6121.

http://www.cmu.edu/education-office/disability-resources/

17.4 Safeguarding Educational Equity:
Policy Against Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
The University prohibits sex-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence and stalking. The University also prohibits retaliation against individuals who bring forward such concerns or allegations in good faith. The University’s Sexual Misconduct Policy is available at https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/sexual-misconduct/index.html. The University’s Policy Against Retaliation is available at https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/whistleblower.html. If you have been impacted by any of these issues, you are encouraged to make contact with any of the following resources:

- Office of Title IX Initiatives, https://www.cmu.edu/title-ix/ 412-268-7125, tix@cmu.edu
- University Police, 412-268-2323

Additional resources and information can be found at: https://www.cmu.edu/title-ix/resources-and-information/resources.html.

17.5 Employment Eligibility Verification
If you are receiving a stipend, are a TA or are planning to have a position with CMU, Employment Eligibility Verification is Required. Form I-9 must be completed within 3 business days of beginning work for any type of compensation (stipend or employment). Additional details are highlighted below.

To ensure compliance with federal law, Carnegie Mellon University maintains the Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) Policy [pdf] covering the university’s I-9 and E-Verify requirements:

- Every individual receiving a stipend from CMU or employed by CMU must comply with the I-9 Policy by completing the Form I-9 within three business days following the first day of stipend start date/employment.
- Individuals who expect to work on a federally funded project are further responsible for submitting an E-Verify Processing Request Form to the Office of Human Resources if required.

For more information, please see CMU's Guidance for Completing the Form I-9 and E-Verify Requirements at CMU [pdf], or visit the Human Resources Service website to learn more about Form I-9 and E-Verify and to schedule an appointment to complete the Form I-9."

17.6 Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures
Graduate students will find the Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures on the Graduate Education Resource webpage. This document summarizes processes available to graduate students who seek review of academic and non-academic issues. Generally, graduate students are expected to seek informal resolution of all concerns within the applicable department, unit or program before invoking formal processes. When an informal resolution cannot be reached, however, a graduate student who seeks further review of the matter is to follow the formal procedures outlined at the website: https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html. These appeal and grievance procedures shall apply to students in all graduate programs of the University. Students should refer to the department specific information in this handbook for department and college information about the administration and academic policies of the program.

17.7 Consensual Intimate Relationship Policy Regarding Undergraduate Students
This policy addresses the circumstances in which romantic, sexual or amorous relationships/interactions with undergraduate students, even if consensual, are inappropriate and prohibited. The purpose of this policy is to assure healthy professional relationships. This policy is not intended to discourage consensual intimate relationships unless there is a conflicting professional relationship in which one party has authority over the other as in the policy.

18.0 Change of Address
Students are to keep their current local address up-to-date in SIO. This supports a university initiative to have accurate living information for students for official program/department/college/university notices, the ability to facilitate wellness checks, ensure international students are in compliance with visa requirements, etc.

19.0 Academic Calendar
The Academic Calendar can be found at https://www.cmu.edu/hub/calendar/index.html and provides information on all deadlines including registration dates, class start dates, add/drop deadlines, exam dates and more.
APPENDIX A: Key Offices for Graduate Student Support

Graduate Education Office
www.cmu.edu/graduate; grad-ed@cmu.edu

The Graduate Education Office provides central support for all Master's and Doctoral students with a focus on their academic experience at Carnegie Mellon. The Graduate Education Office serves as a hub for connecting graduate students to relevant campus experts and resources to support their academic success, understanding of university level policies and practices and to assist them in advancing their personal and professional development.

Examples of resources offered through the Graduate Education Office include- but are not limited to:
- Website with university resources, contact information for CMU programs and services, calendar of events related to graduate students
- Bi-monthly email to all graduate students with information on activities, resources and opportunities
- Professional Development Seminars and Workshops
- GSA/Provost Conference Funding Grants
- GSA/Provost Small Research Grants (GuSH)
- Consultations on issues related to the graduate student experience

The Graduate Education Office also works with the colleges and departments by informing and assisting in developing policy and procedures relevant to graduate students and working with departments on issues related to graduate students. Additionally we partner with many other offices and organizations, such as the Graduate Student Assembly, to support the holistic graduate student educational experience.

Office of the Dean of Students
https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/dean

The Office of the Dean of Students provides central leadership of the metacurricular experience at Carnegie Mellon including the coordination of student support. Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Gina Casalegno leads the Division of Student Affairs which includes the offices and departments listed below (not an exhaustive list).

Graduate students will find the enrollment information for Domestic Partner Registration and Maternity Accommodations in the Office of the Dean of Students or on their website. This Office also manages the Emergency Student Loan (ESLs) process. Emergency Student Loans are made available through generous gifts of alumni and friends of the university. The Emergency Student Loan is an interest-free, emergency-based loan repayable to the university within 30 days. Loans are available to enrolled students for academic supplies, medication, food or other expenses not able to be met due to unforeseeable circumstances.

Additional resources for graduate students include College Liaisons and the Student Support Resources team. College Liaisons are senior members of the Division of Student Affairs who work with departments and colleges addressing student concerns across a wide range of issues. College Liaisons are identified on the student SIO page in the Important Contacts list. The Student Support Resources team offers an additional level of support for students who are navigating any of a wide range of life events. Student Support Resources staff members work in partnership with campus and community resources to provide coordination of care and support appropriate to each student's situation.

The Division of Student Affairs includes (not an exhaustive list):

- Athletics, Physical Education and Recreation
- Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC)
- Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion
- Cohon University Center
- Counseling & Psychological Services (CaPS)
- Dining Services
- Office of Community Standards and Integrity (OCSI)
- Office of Student Leadership, Involvement, and Civic Engagement (SLICE)
- University Health Services (UHS)
- Wellness Initiatives

Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion
https://www.cmu.edu/student-diversity/
Diversity and inclusion have a singular place among the values of Carnegie Mellon University. The Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion actively cultivates a strong, diverse and inclusive community capable of living out these values and advancing research, creativity, learning and development that changes the world.

The Center offers resources to enhance an inclusive and transformative student experience in dimensions such as access, success, campus climate and intergroup dialogue. Additionally, the Center supports and connects historically underrepresented students and those who are first in their family to attend college in a setting where students' differences and talents are appreciated and reinforced, both at the graduate and undergraduate level. Initiatives coordinated by the Center include, but are not limited to:

- First generation/first in family to attend college programs
- LGBTQ+ Initiatives
- Race and ethnically-focused programs, including Inter-University Graduate Students of Color Series (SOC) and PhD SOC Network
- Women’s empowerment programs, including Graduate Women’s Gatherings (GWGs)
- Transgender and non-binary student programs

Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities

The Office of Disability Resources at Carnegie Mellon University has a continued mission to provide physical, digital, and programmatic access to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to their educational experience. We work to ensure that qualified individuals receive reasonable accommodations as guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who would like to receive accommodations can begin the process through Disability Resources’ secure online portal or email access@andrew.cmu.edu to begin the interactive accommodation process.

Students with physical, sensory, cognitive, or emotional disabilities are encouraged to self-identify with the Office of Disability Resources and request needed accommodations. Any questions about the process can be directed to access@andrew.cmu.edu, or call (412) 268-6121.

http://www.cmu.edu/disability-resources/

Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation

www.cmu.edu/teaching

We offer a wide variety of confidential, consultation services and professional development programs to support graduate students as teaching assistants or instructors of record during their time at Carnegie Mellon University and as future faculty members at other institutions. Regardless of one's current or future teaching context and duties, our goal is to disseminate evidence-based teaching strategies in ways that are accessible and actionable. Programs and services include campus-wide Graduate Student Instructor Orientation events and our Future Faculty Program, both of which are designed to help participants be effective and efficient in their teaching roles. The Eberly Center also assists departments in creating and conducting customized programs to meet the specific needs of their graduate student instructors. Specific information about Eberly Center support for graduate students is found at:

www.cmu.edu/teaching/graduatestudentsupport/index.html.

Graduate Student Assembly

www.cmu.edu/stugov/gsa/index.html

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) is the branch of Carnegie Mellon Student Government that represents, and advocates for the diverse interests of all graduate students at CMU. GSA is composed of representatives from the different graduate programs and departments who want to improve the graduate student experience at the different levels of the university. GSA is funded by the Student Activities Fee from all graduate students. GSA passes legislation, allocates student activities funding, advocates for legislative action locally and in Washington D.C. on behalf of graduate student issues and needs, and otherwise acts on behalf of all graduate student interests. Our recent accomplishments are a testament to GSA making a difference, and steps to implementing the vision laid out by the strategic plan.

https://www.cmu.edu/stugov/gsa/About-the-GSA/Strategic-Plan.html.

GSA offers an expanding suite of social programming on and off-campus to bring graduate students from different departments together and build a sense of community. GSA is the host of the Graduate Student Lounge on the 3rd floor of the Cohon University Center- a great place to study or meet up with friends. GSA also maintains a website of graduate student resources on and off-campus. Through GSA’s continued
funding for professional development and research conferences, the GSA/Provost Conference Funding Program and GSA/Provost GuSH Research Grants are able to run, as managed by the Graduate Education Office. As we move forward, GSA will continue to rely on your feedback to improve the graduate student experience at CMU. Feel free to contact us at <gsa@cmu.edu> to get involved, stop by our office in the Cohon University Center Room 304 or become a representative for your department.

Office of International Education (OIE)
http://www.cmu.edu/oie/
Carnegie Mellon hosts international graduate and undergraduate students who come from more than 90 countries. The Office of International Education (OIE) is the liaison to the University for all non-immigrant students and scholars, as well the repository for study abroad opportunities and advisement. OIE provides many services including: advising on personal, immigration, study abroad, academic, and social and acculturation issues; presenting programs of interest such as international career workshops, tax workshops, and cross-cultural and immigration workshops; international education and statistics on international students in the United States; posting pertinent information to students through email and the OIE website, and conducting orientation and pre-departure programs.

Veterans and Military Community
http://www.cmu.edu/veterans/
Military veterans are a vital part of the Carnegie Mellon University community. Graduate students can find information on applying for veteran education benefits, campus services, veteran’s groups at CMU, and non-educational resources through the Veterans and Military Community website. There are also links and connections to veteran resource in the Pittsburgh community. The ROTC and Veteran Affairs Coordinator can be reached at uro-vaedbenefits@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-8747.

Carnegie Mellon Ethics Hotline
https://www.cmu.edu/hr/resources/ethics-hotline.html
The health, safety and well-being of the university community are top priorities at Carnegie Mellon University. CMU provides a hotline that all members of the university community should use to confidentially report suspected unethical activity relating to areas below:

- Academic and Student Life
- Bias Reporting
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Financial Matters
- High-Risk Incident
- Human Resource Related
- Information Systems
- Research
- Threat of Business Interruption
- Threat of Violence or Physical Harm
- Title IX

Students, faculty and staff can anonymously file a report by calling 877-700-7050 or visiting www.reportit.net (user name: tartans; password: plaid). All submissions are reported to appropriate university personnel. The hotline is NOT an emergency service. For emergencies, call University Police at 412-268-2323.
**Policy Against Retaliation**

It is the policy of Carnegie Mellon University to protect from retaliation any individual who makes a good faith report of a suspected violation of any applicable law or regulation, university Policy or procedure, any contractual obligation of the university, and any report made pursuant to the Carnegie Mellon University Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.

Additional details regarding the Policy Against Retaliation are available at:
https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/whistleblower.html

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**Key Offices for Academic & Research Support**

**Computing and Information Resources**

[www.cmu.edu/computing](http://www.cmu.edu/computing)

Computing Services maintains and supports computing resources for the campus community, including the campus wired and wireless networks, printing, computer labs, file storage, email and software catalog. As members of this community, we are all responsible for the security of these shared resources. Be sure to review the Safe Computing ([https://www.cmu.edu/computing/safe/](https://www.cmu.edu/computing/safe/)) section and the University Computing Policy ([https://www.cmu.edu/policies/information-technology/computing.html](https://www.cmu.edu/policies/information-technology/computing.html)).

Visit the Computing Services website ([https://www.cmu.edu/computing/](https://www.cmu.edu/computing/)) to learn more. For assistance the Computing Services Help Center is available at 412-268-4357 (HELP) or it-help@cmu.edu.

**Student Academic Success Center**

[https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/](https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/)

Student Academic Support Programs

**Tartan Scholars**

The Tartan Scholars program was created to provide support for limited resourced students through an intentional first year undergraduate experience with the goals of enhancing the cohort’s skill and community building through a lens of self -authorship, growth mindset, and a sense of belonging. As part of the Student Academic Success Center, Tartan Scholars are invited to join the University and participate in summer initiatives and pre-orientation activities prior to their first year at the University.

There are opportunities for graduate students to serve as accountability, learning, or development partners, workshop facilitators, and presenters. Contact Diane Hightower at ddhighto@andrew.cmu.edu for more details.

**Learning Support**

- Supplemental Instruction: Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic support model that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions. The SI program provides regularly scheduled review sessions on course materials outside the classroom. SI is a non-remedial approach to learning as the program targets high-risk courses and is available in select courses based on data related to past student performance and feasibility.
Peer Tutoring: Weekly Tutoring Appointments are offered in a one-on-one and small group format to students from any discipline who need assistance with a course that may not be supported by our other services. Weekly appointments give students the opportunity to interact regularly with the same tutor to facilitate deeper understanding of concepts. Students can register online through the Student Academic Success website.

Academic Coaching: Academic Coaching provides holistic one-on-one peer support and group workshops to help students find and implement their conditions for success. We assist students in improving time management, productive habits, organization, stress management, and study skills. Students will request support through the Academic Success Center website and attend in-person meetings or meet using video and audio conferencing technology to provide all students with support.

“Just in Time” Workshops: The Student Academic Success team is available to partner with instructors and departments to identify skills or concepts that would benefit from supplemental offerings (workshops, boot camps) to support students’ academic success and learning. We are eager to help convene and coordinate outside of the classroom skill-building opportunities that can be open to any student interested in building skill or reinforcing course concept mastery.

Study Partners: Support for students to create and benefit from their own study groups: The Student Academic Success team assists students in forming and benefiting from peer study groups, whereby all students can reap the benefits of peer-to-peer learning, student agency, and collaboration skill development. Staff from the Student Academic Success Center will be made available to instructors and students to assist with the formation of peer-led study groups. This level of support is open to any course where the instructor requests or agrees such support is appropriate and students are interested in both leading and participating.

Language and Cross-cultural Support

More than 60% of graduate students at Carnegie Mellon are international students, and others are nonnative speakers of English who have attended high school or undergraduate programs in the US. Many of these students want to hone their language and cross-cultural skills for academic and professional success. Students can choose from sessions on:

- how to give a strong presentation,
- writing academic emails,
- expectations and strategies for clear academic writing,
- how to talk about yourself as a professional in the U.S.,
- developing clearer pronunciation,
- using accurate grammar,
- building fluency, and more.

Students can make an appointment with a Language Development Specialist to get individualized coaching on language or cross-cultural issues.

The Student Academic Success Center is also charged with certifying the language of International Teaching Assistants (ITAs), ensuring that nonnative English speakers have the language proficiency needed to succeed as teaching assistants in the Carnegie Mellon classroom. Students preparing to do an ITA Certification should plan to take classes offered by the language support team at the SASC from the beginning of their first semester. Start by contacting the language support team at the SASC website or attend a Language Support Orientation at the SASC or in your department.
University Libraries
www.library.cmu.edu
The University Libraries offers a wide range of information resources and services supporting graduate students in course-work, research, teaching, and publishing. The library licenses and purchases books, journals, media and other needed materials in various formats. Library liaisons, consultants and information specialists provide in-depth and professional assistance and advice in all-things information - including locating and obtaining specific resources, providing specialized research support, advanced training in the use and management of data. Sign up for workshops and hands-on topic-specific sessions such as data visualization with Tableau, cleaning data with OpenRefine, and getting started with Zotero. Weekly drop-in hours for Digital Humanities and for Research Data Research Management are scheduled during the academic year. Start at the library home page to find the books, journals and databases you need; to identify and reach out to the library liaison in your field; to sign up for scheduled workshops; and to connect with consultants in scholarly publishing, research data management, and digital humanities.

Research at CMU
www.cmu.edu/research/index.shtml
The primary purpose of research at the university is the advancement of knowledge in all fields in which the university is active. Research is regarded as one of the university’s major contributions to society and as an essential element in education, particularly at the graduate level and in faculty development. Research activities are governed by several university policies. Guidance and more general information is found by visiting the Research at Carnegie Mellon website.

Office of Research Integrity & Compliance
www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/index.html
The Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) is designed to support research at Carnegie Mellon University. The staff work with researchers to ensure research is conducted with integrity and in accordance with federal and Pennsylvania regulation. ORIC assists researchers with human subject research, conflicts of interest, responsible conduct of research, export controls, and institutional animal care & use. ORIC also provides consultation, advice, and review of allegations of research misconduct.

Key Offices for Health, Wellness & Safety

Counseling & Psychological Services
https://www.cmu.edu/counseling/
Counseling & Psychological Services (CaPS) affords the opportunity for students to talk privately about academic and personal concerns in a safe, confidential setting. An initial consultation at CaPS can help clarify the nature of the concern, provide immediate support, and explore further options if needed. These may include a referral for counseling within CaPS, to another resource at Carnegie Mellon, or to another resource within the larger Pittsburgh community. CaPS also provides workshops and group sessions on mental health related topics specifically for graduate students on campus. CaPS services are provided at no cost. Appointments can be made in person, or by telephone at 412-268-2922.

Health Services
www.cmu.edu/HealthServices/
University Health Services (UHS) is staffed by physicians, advanced practice clinicians and registered nurses who provide general medical care, allergy injections, first aid, gynecological care and contraception as well as on-site pharmaceuticals. The CMU Student Insurance Plan covers most visit fees to see the physicians and advanced practice clinicians & nurse visits. Fees for prescription medications, laboratory
tests, diagnostic procedures and referral to the emergency room or specialists are the student’s responsibility and students should review the UHS website and their insurance plan for detailed information about the university health insurance requirement and fees.

UHS also has a registered dietician and health promotion specialists on staff to assist students in addressing nutrition, drug and alcohol and other healthy lifestyle issues. In addition to providing direct health care, UHS administers the Student Health Insurance Program. The Student Health Insurance plan offers a high level of coverage in a wide network of health care providers and hospitals. Appointments can be made by visiting UHS’s website, walk-in, or by telephone, 412-268-2157.

Campus Wellness
https://www.cmu.edu/wellness/
At Carnegie Mellon, we believe our individual and collective well-being is rooted in healthy connections to each other and to campus resources. The university provides a wide variety of wellness, mindfulness and connectedness initiatives and resources designed to help students thrive inside and outside the classroom. The BeWell@CMU e-newsletter seeks to be a comprehensive resource for CMU regarding all wellness-inspired events, announcements and professional and personal development opportunities. Sign up for the Be Well monthly newsletter via https://bit.ly/BeWellNewsletter or by contacting the Program Director for Student Affairs Wellness Initiatives, at alusk@andrew.cmu.edu.

Religious and Spiritual Life Initiatives (RSLI)
www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/spirituality
Carnegie Mellon is committed to the holistic growth of our students, including creating opportunities for spiritual and religious practice and exploration. We have relationships with local houses of worship from various traditions and many of these groups are members of CMU’s Council of Religious Advisors. We also offer programs and initiatives that cross traditional religious boundaries in order to increase knowledge of and appreciation for the full diversity of the worldview traditions. Our RSLI staff are here to support students across the spectrum of religious and spiritual practice and would be more than happy to help you make a connection into a community of faith during your time at CMU.

University Police
http://www.cmu.edu/police/
412-268-2323 (emergency only), 412-268-6232 (non-emergency)
The University Police Department is located at 300 South Craig Street (entrance is on Filmore Street). The department’s services include police patrols and call response, criminal investigations, fixed officer and foot officer patrols, event security, and crime prevention and education programming as well as bicycle and laptop registration. Visit the department’s website for additional information about the staff, emergency phone locations, crime prevention, lost and found, finger print services, and annual statistic reports.

Carnegie Mellon University publishes an annual campus security and fire safety report describing the university’s security, alcohol and drug, sexual assault, and fire safety policies and containing statistics about the number and type of crimes committed on the campus and the number and cause of fires in campus residence facilities during the preceding three years. Graduate students can obtain a copy by contacting the University Police Department at 412-268-6232. The annual security and fire safety report is also available online at https://www.cmu.edu/police/annualreports/.

Shuttle and Escort Services
Parking and Transportation coordinates the Shuttle Service and Escort Service provided for CMU students, faculty, and community. The Shuttle & Escort website has full information about these services, stops, routes, tracking and schedules.

The WORD
http://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/

The WORD is Carnegie Mellon University’s student on-line handbook and is considered a supplement to the department (and sometimes college) handbook. The WORD contains campus resources and opportunities, academic policy information and resources, community standards information and resources. It is designed to provide all students with the tools, guidance, and insights to help you achieve your full potential as a member of the Carnegie Mellon community. Information about the following is included in The WORD (not an exhaustive list) and graduate students are encouraged to bookmark this site and refer to it often.

The following University policies can also be found in full text at: http://www.cmu.edu/policies/.

- Carnegie Mellon Vision, Mission
- Statement of Assurance
- Carnegie Code

- Academic Standards, Policies and Procedures
- Educational Goals
- Academic and Individual Freedom
- Statement on Academic Integrity Standards for Academic & Creative Life
- Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities
- Master’s Student Statute of Limitations
- Conduct of Classes
- Copyright Policy
- Cross-college & University Registration
- Doctoral Student Status Policy
- Evaluation & Certification of English Fluency for Instructors
- Final Exams for Graduate Courses
- Grading Policies
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Privacy Rights of Students
- Student’s Rights

- Research
- Human Subjects in Research
- Office of Research Integrity & Compliance
- Office of Sponsored Programs
- Policy for Handling Alleged Misconduct of Research
- Policy on Restricted Research

- Tax Status of Graduate Student Awards

- Campus Resources & Opportunities
- Alumni Relations
- Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities
- Athletics, Physical Fitness & Recreation
- Carnegie Mellon ID Cards and Services
- Cohon University Center
- Copying, Printing & Mailing
- Division of Student Affairs
- Domestic Partner Registration
- Emergency Student Loan Program
- Gender Programs & Resources
- Health Services
- Dining Services
- The HUB Student Services Center
- ID Card Services
- Leonard Gelfand Center
- LGBTQ Resources
- Multicultural and Diversity Initiatives
- Opportunities for Involvement
- Parking and Transportation Services
- Shuttle and Escort Services
- Spiritual Development
- University Police
- Student Activities
- University Stores

- Community Standards, Policies and Procedures
- Alcohol and Drugs Policy
- AIDS Policy
- Bicycle/Wheeled Transportation Policy
- Damage to Carnegie Mellon Property
- Deadly Weapons
- Discriminatory Harassment
- Disorderly Conduct
- Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy
- Freedom of Expression Policy
- Health Insurance Policy Immunization Policy
- Missing Student Protocol
- Non-Discrimination Policy
- On-Campus Emergencies
- Pets
- Political Activities
- Recycling Policy
- Riotous and Disorderly Behavior
- Safety Hazards
- Scheduling and Use of University Facilities
- Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy
- Smoking Policy
- Student Accounts Receivable and Collection Policy and Procedures
- Student Activities Fee
- Student Enterprises
• Workplace Threats and Violence Policy