



Master's Student Handbook

Academic Year 2026 - 2027

School of Computer Science
Language Technologies Institute

Master's Student Handbook

Degree Programs Covered by This Handbook:

Master of Science in Intelligent Information
Systems

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SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to the Language Technologies Institute, a graduate department in the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University. You have joined a Masters' program that focuses on excellence, creativity, and training the next generation of industry leaders. While the next year will be a time of hard work and intense concentration, we hope that your time at the LTI will also be rewarding professionally and personally.

There are significant differences between CMU's various departments and degree programs in philosophical approaches, procedures, policies, and regulations. Each department issues a handbook that informs graduate students of their program requirements and procedures, and ensures that students have written access to standard information. This handbook describes the policies, procedures, and requirements for the Masters' in Intelligent Information Systems. All policies not explicitly described in this document conform to School of Computer Science (SCS) policies and university policies.

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

- Your Program Handbook
- [University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook](#) (Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs)
- [The Carnegie Mellon Student Handbook](#)

SECTION 2: Program Vision, Mission, and Values

2.1: Vision

The LTI advances the science and engineering of language in all its forms within real-world, contextual environments. Our mission is to cultivate world-class talent who conduct pioneering research to innovate trustworthy, inclusive, and ethically aligned AI systems that enable, enhance, and empower effective human communication across cultures, modalities, and domains. Through bold innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration, we aim to revolutionize how people connect, learn, and make decisions—shaping a future where language technologies are a force for equity, understanding, and global impact.

2.2: Mission Pillars

- Talent Development
Nurture and empower the next generation of scientists, engineers, and

changemakers in language technologies through interdisciplinary education, mentorship, and a culture of scientific excellence.

- **Trustworthy and Ethical AI**
Lead the development of trustworthy language technologies that are fair, transparent, robust, ethical, and aligned with human values, emphasizing explainability, safety, cultural sensitivity, and governance.
- **Language in All Its Forms**
Advance the science and engineering of language in its full richness—including text, speech, sign language, gesture, and embodied communication—grounded in context and interaction with real-world environments across modalities.
- **Disruptive Innovation**
Pioneer breakthrough models and systems that challenge traditional paradigms and expand what is possible in human-AI communication, while embedding trust, accountability, and societal alignment into every innovation.
- **Global and Multilingual Inclusion**
Champion language equity by developing inclusive, multilingual, and culturally adaptive AI that respects and represents the full diversity of human expression and experience.
- **Societal Impact**
Apply transformative language technologies to critical sectors—healthcare, education, policy, media, and beyond—while engaging stakeholders to ensure their ethical, sustainable, and context-aware deployment.

2.3: Values

- **Integrity**
We uphold transparency, accountability, and rigorous ethics in all aspects of our work.
- **Equity**
We ensure our models, data, and tools reflect and support all languages, communities, and identities respectfully and responsibly.
- **Curiosity**
We embrace bold inquiry and open exploration as drivers of progress.
- **Collaboration**
We build bridges across disciplines, sectors, and geographies to magnify impact.

- **Responsibility**
We take proactive steps to align innovation with the public good– ensuring AI is trustworthy, safe, and inclusive.
- **Bold Innovation**
We lead the charge in disruptive language technologies, designed for a world of multimodal, contextual, and human-centric communication.

SECTION 3: Degrees Offered

The Language Technologies Institute offers one Ph.D. program and five Masters' degree programs.

- Ph.D. in Language and Information Technologies (LTI Ph.D.)
- Masters in Language Technologies (MLT)
- Master of Science in Intelligent Information Systems (MIIS)
- Master of Computational Data Science (MCDS)
- Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence and Innovation (MSAI)
- Master of Science in Language Technologies – Integrated Study (5th Year Masters)

This handbook applies to the LTI MIIS.

The Master of Science in Intelligent Information Systems (MIIS) is a professional degree offered by the Language Technologies Institute (LTI), a graduate department in the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University. The MIIS degree provides advanced study and practical experience in areas of Computer Science focused on the processing and analysis of unstructured and semi-structured information, for example, text, image, video, speech, and audio information. It is a practice-oriented professional degree designed for students who want to rapidly master advanced content-analysis, mining, and intelligent information technologies prior to beginning or resuming leadership careers in industry and government.

All policies not explicitly described in this document conform to School of Computer Science (SCS) policies and university policies described in The Word, Carnegie Mellon University Student Handbook and at the University Policies website.

- Note: Immigration changes may impact an F-1 or J-1 student's ability to change their academic program, even if allowed to by the program. Students on F-1 or J-1 documents should proactively consult with OIE when considering a program change.

SECTION 4: Departmental Personnel

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412-268-7517

In addition, students may confer with the Graduate Education Office (graded@andrew.cmu.edu) regarding issues of process or other concerns as they navigate conflicts.

SECTION 5: Departmental Resources

Pittsburgh Campus Location

The Language Technologies Institute is located primarily on the 5th and 6th floors of the Gates Hillman Complex (GHC) on Carnegie Mellon's Pittsburgh campus. The address and contact information of the LTI are shown below.

Language Technologies Institute
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Gates Hillman Complex
Pittsburgh, PA 15241-3891
412-268-6298 (fax)
<http://www.lti.cs.cmu.edu/>

Office locations for faculty, staff, and MIIS students can be found on the LTI website.

Office Space

To help them create a sense of community, full-time students in the MIIS program have access to shared office space. Your dedicated space is room GHC 6408/6708 and the door code is shared on Piazza. Please be considerate of your fellow students when sharing the space and do not share the code outside of your program. Note that these spaces are both a resource and a responsibility. Since these are shared spaces, students are asked to be courteous to their fellow students by making sure the space is as clean when they leave as it was when they came in. Please make sure to clean up your trash and periodically clean off whiteboards after use. Also, out of respect for fellow students, please do not remove your shoes or put your feet up on the furniture.

Offices are assigned by the LTI's Office Manager (see Section 3, Department Personnel, for contact information).

Mailboxes and Office Supplies

Mailboxes and office supplies are in GHC 5404.

Photocopies and Printers

Printers and photocopies are available to LTI students. The use of a photocopier or printer requires you to log in with your CMU ID card. LTI students may use printers/photocopiers scattered throughout the School of Computer Science buildings, but the machines in GHC 5404 and GHC 6604 are the most convenient. [SCS Computing Facilities](https://computing.cs.cmu.edu/desktop/printer-list) publishes a list of printers at <https://computing.cs.cmu.edu/desktop/printer-list>.

Computers for LTI MIIS Students

MS students are responsible for having their own laptop computers to support their education and research. Students are free to choose their own operating system (e.g., Linux, MacOS, Windows).

Many MS advisors also provide access to computer clusters, cloud computing, or other resources to support computationally-intense research.

MS students are given access to the LTI's computer cluster on an as-needed basis, to be used for course assignments, directed study projects, and/or capstone projects. The LTI cluster provides storage and computation for projects involving large datasets and/or lengthy computation.

MS students receive two types of user IDs: An Andrew ID and a CS ID. All CMU students have an Andrew ID. Computer Science students also have a CS ID that provides access to SCS-specific resources (e.g., computer clusters). CS IDs are being phased out very slowly, so it is likely that you will need both types of user ID.

The School of Computer Science has a Help Center in GHC 4201. It can be contacted at help@cs.cmu.edu, extension 8-4231 from a campus phone, or 412-268-4231 from an outside line (M-F, 9am-5pm).

SECTION 6: Advising

6.1: Role of an Advisor and Advisor Assignments

Each student has a faculty advisor charged with guiding the education and monitoring the progress of the student through the program. The advisor also supervises the student's directed study projects. This personal student-advisor relationship ensures that every

student receives the necessary faculty mentoring. The advisor also provides the student with career advice.

The Matching Process: Advisors are selected during the first month of the program. Students are expected to attend the LTI's Orientation lectures, in which faculty describe their interests and areas of expertise, and to be proactive about meeting individually with potential advisors. After meeting with several potential advisors, each student will indicate a first, second and third choice for advisor. Meanwhile, the potential advisors determine how many new students they can take and indicate their preferences.

- Faculty members that have expressed interest in advising MIIS directed study will be the students' advisor for your program.
- When a faculty and a student both agree on a project, both need to send the MIIS Director email separately for confirmation.

Until a student finds a specific advisor, the Program Director of the LTI graduate programs serves as the advisor. Before the course registration period each semester, students must meet with their advisor to discuss their course selection. New students will be given instructions to register for their classes during the summer prior to entrance.

The MIIS students are expected to meet their advisor (or advisor's PhD student) once a week to show their progress. The students get some advice during the meeting for the next meeting.

6.2: Advisor/Advisee Collaboration

Before the course registration period each semester, students must meet with their advisor to discuss their course selection. New students will be given instructions to register for their classes during the summer prior to entrance.

How to Change Advisors: The initial advisor and a Directed Study selection should be made carefully. However, it is possible to change advisors and the project for the second semester. To do so, the student should find another faculty member willing to serve as an advisor and then make a request to the MIIS Program Director to switch advisors. Both the new and old advisors need to agree to the change; typically, this is not a problem (assuming the new advisor has agreed in advance, as described here). However, it is to the student's advantage to avoid switching advisors and a project for the second semester, because it is better to have a Directed Study on the same subject for two semesters.

6.3: Review/Redress of Academic Issues

Students who believe that they have been inappropriately treated are encouraged to raise their concern(s) with the Program Director, department head, or other designated person in their department, college, or central administration according to university policies.

Graduate students will find the Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures on the [Graduate Education Resource web page](#). This document summarizes processes available to graduate students who seek review of academic and non-academic issues. No effort will be made to prevent or discourage anyone from availing themselves of such procedures. 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, a graduate student who seeks further review of the matter is to follow the formal procedures outlined here. 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. Additionally, students may confer with the Graduate Education Office (grad.ed@cmu.edu) on issues of process or other concerns as they navigate conflicts.

SECTION 7: Master's Degree Requirements

7.1: Residency Requirements

U.S. government regulations require F-1 and J-1 international students to be enrolled in an in-person degree program, with in-person expectation coursework. Even though this immigration requirement is specifically for international students, residency requirements in a degree program must be consistent for both international and domestic students.

7.2: Registration Process

Students are responsible for registering for their courses. Use the Stellic Degree Audit Application to monitor your progress and plan your degree. Students can search for relevant courses in a number of ways and share their plan with their advisor directly through the application.

Navigate to the SIO Academic Info tab and select Enrollment Status and the upcoming semester to confirm the following:

- Enrollment Status is 'Eligible to Enroll' (if not, email thehub@andrew.cmu.edu)
- Maximum units for which you can plan to register for (overloads are reviewed and permitted only after registration week)
- Class Level, College and Department are correct (if incorrect, please contact your home academic department)

The registration process can be completed within SIO (Student Information Online) by following 4 easy steps: <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/docs/4-easy-steps.pdf>

If students have any questions about course selection, they may reach out to the MIIS Program Director.

7.3: Required Units for Degree Attainment

To complete the Master of Science in Intelligent Information Systems, a student must satisfy three types of requirements. Curricular requirements ensure that MIIS students receive instruction in core intelligent information systems technologies while also allowing an opportunity to specialize in areas of personal interest. Practice requirements are opportunities to apply and hone new skills while building state-of-the-art systems. Grade requirements ensure that students have demonstrated a certain level of skill while completing degree requirements. All three types of requirements are described below.

MIIS-16 students must take at least 84 units (typically 7 12-unit courses) of qualifying and elective courses that satisfy human language, machine learning, and language technology applications breadth requirements and 66 practice units for a total of 150 units to attain the Standard MIIS degree.

MIIS-21 students must take at least 108 units (typically 9 12-unit courses) of qualifying and elective courses and 66 practice units to satisfy their degree requirements, making it a total of 174 units to attain the MIIS: Advanced Study degree.

7.4: Core Courses

An MIIS student must complete the following curricular requirements:

1. **Qualifying courses:**

MIIS-16 students must pass 72 units (typically 6 12-unit courses) and MIIS-21 students must complete 96 units (typically 8 12-unit courses) in qualifying master's courses.

A qualifying master's course is defined as:

- a. Any graduate course (600-level or higher) offered by the Language Technologies Institute; and
- b. Any graduate course (600-level or higher) from the list of approved qualifying courses (Section 6.11).

2. **Free elective:** Students must pass 12 units (typically 1 course) in elective master's course(s). A free elective is defined as:

- a. A graduate course (600-level or higher) with content relevant to the MIIS program objectives offered by the School of Computer Science; and
- b. A course approved by the student's advisor and the degree Program Director.
- c. A student may not use the same course to satisfy both a qualifying course requirement and an elective course requirement.

3. **Breadth requirements:** Students must demonstrate breadth by passing one course in each of the following areas. In addition, MIIS-21 students must take two more LTI courses (24 units total) in one of the following areas of concentration:

- Human language;
- Machine learning; and
- Language technology applications.

The department maintains and publishes a list of courses that satisfy each of these requirements. Some courses used to satisfy a breadth requirement can also satisfy qualifying course requirements. A student should get approval from the director for the breadth courses, if not listed.

7.5: Program Learning Outcomes

The MIIS degree provides advanced study and practical experience in areas of Computer Science focused on the processing and analysis of unstructured and semi-structured information, for example, text, image, video, speech, and audio information. It is a practice-oriented professional degree designed for students who want to rapidly master advanced content-analysis, mining, and intelligent information technologies prior to beginning or resuming leadership careers in industry and government. Therefore, after getting the MIIS degree, they are able to work in industry and government to analyze unstructured and semi-structured information and to show the leadership in this area.

7.6: Approved Qualifying Courses

Any graduate course (600-level or higher) **offered by the Language Technologies Institute is a qualifying course.**

Any two graduate courses (600-level or higher) **relevant to the MIIS degree other than LTI, offered by departments within the SCS** may be counted as approved qualifying courses. These courses include the courses offered by the Machine Learning Department listed below (10-xxx).

The following courses are ***approved qualifying courses***.

- 02-712 Computational Methods for Biological Modeling and Simulation
- 05-631 Software Structures for User interfaces
- 05-813 Human Factors
- 10-708 Probabilistic Graphical Models
- 10-623 Generative AI
- 10-703 Deep Reinforcement Learning & Control
- 16-720 Computer Vision
- 16-824 Visual Learning and Recognition
- 17-631 Information Security, Privacy & Policy
- 17-781 Mobile and IoT Computing Services
- 17-630 Prompt Engineering

Breadth Courses: Human Language

- 11-611, Natural Language Processing
- 11-624, Human Language for Artificial Intelligence
- 11-724, Human Language for Artificial Intelligence
- 11-711, Advanced NLP
- 11-722, Grammar Formalisms
- 11-727, Computational Semantics for NLP
- 11-737, Multilingual NLP

Breadth Courses: Language Technology Applications

- 10-615, Arts and Machine Learning
- 11-642, Search Engines
- 11-663, Applied Machine Learning
- 11-667, Large Language Models Methods and Application
- 11-688, Concepts in Digital Multimedia and Cyber Forensics
- 11-692, Speech Processing
- 11-697, Introduction to Question Answering
- 11-751, Speech Recognition and Understanding
- 11-752, Speech Generation
- 11-767, On-Service Machine Learning
- 11-797, Question Answering

- 11-830, Ethics, Social Biases, and Positive Impact in Language Technologies

Breadth Courses: Machine Learning

- 10-601, Introduction to Machine Learning (Master's)
- 10-605, Machine Learning with Large Datasets
- 10-701, Introduction to Machine Learning (PhD)
- 10-707, Advanced Deep Learning
- 10-708, Probabilistic Graphical Models
- 10-714, Deep Learning Systems
- 10-715, Advanced Introduction to Machine Learning
- 11-641, Machine Learning for Text and Graph-Based Mining
- 11-661, Language and Statistics
- 11-667, Large Language Models Methods and Application
- 11-747, Neural Networks for NLP
- 11-755, Machine Learning for Signal Processing
- 11-761, Language and Statistics
- 11-777, Multimodal Machine Learning
- 11-785, Introduction to Deep Learning

7.7: Department Policy on Double Counting Courses

A Masters student who uses courses taken as part of another degree program (at Carnegie Mellon or elsewhere) toward their program requirements cannot use those same courses toward any other M.S. degree offered by the School of Computer Science without prior approval.

7.8: Department Policy for Courses Outside the Department/College

A Master's student who uses courses taken as part of another degree program (at Carnegie Mellon or elsewhere) toward their program requirements cannot use those same courses toward any other M.S. degree offered by the School of Computer Science without prior approval. No course may be used to complete two M.I.S. degree requirements, nor may a course satisfy requirements in two degree programs.

7.9: Course Exemptions

The LTI may grant transfer *credit* or issue an *exemption* for equivalent graduate courses previously completed at another institution. This decision rests with the director of the program. If a student is *exempt* from a required course due to prior courses or experience, the student can replace that course with an open elective. The student does not receive credit for the external course but can take any course that could normally count toward the degree in its place. If a student receives *credit* for prior coursework completed at CMU or

elsewhere, the student receives that many units of credit, and the total amount of required coursework is reduced by that amount.

7.10: Protocol for Evaluation of Transfer Credit

An equivalent graduate course previously completed at Carnegie Mellon or another institution may be permitted to satisfy one of the MIIS breadth requirements. The decision on whether a course may be used to satisfy a breadth requirement is made by the MIIS Program Director. Typically, the student will provide the Program Director with the syllabus of the external course, and the Program Director will use that and the student's transcript to make the decision.

Satisfying a breadth requirement with a course from another institution does not reduce the number of CMU course units that must be taken to attain the MIIS degree.

7.11: Teaching Requirements/Opportunities

Teaching assistantships are awarded to faculty members who then award these positions to selected students. Teaching assistant duties include, but are not limited to, holding office hours, conducting recitation classes, and grading. There are minimum English proficiency requirements that must be met for a student to accept a teaching assistantship.

Pennsylvania state law requires that all students who are not native speakers of English take and pass a state administered proficiency test. Support for teaching activities can be found through the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, located in Warner Hall 425. Students who will be T.A.s for the department are encouraged to visit the Teaching Center and to take advantage of the information and services located there.

Students in the professional master's programs are not prohibited from seeking support as Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants. However, typically, full-time master's students do not have time for these activities. Research Assistantships are most likely to be awarded to students in CMU's research-oriented degree programs.

MIIS students can apply for TA positions only with the permission of the program director. Teaching Assistantships are especially discouraged for first semester students.

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 all instructional personnel, including teaching assistants (TAs) 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 serve as a 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: www.cmu.edu/student-success

7.12: Practice Requirements/Opportunities

A student must complete at least 66 practice-oriented course units and satisfy the following practice-oriented requirements for both MIIS-16 and MIIS-21 programs. 1. Directed study requirement: Students must pass 24 units (typically 12 units x 2 semesters) in directed study under the supervision of their advisor. Directed study is a structured, task-oriented form of independent study that provides deep, hands-on experience in a particular technology area and an opportunity to work closely with a member of the faculty.

7.13: Internship/Co-op Requirements and Opportunities

Students must complete a one-semester summer internship at an organization (typically a company or government agency) approved by the MIIS Program Director. Internships are an opportunity to apply new skills in a professional setting and to learn about software development in a 'real world' organization. Students with prior professional experience may petition the MIIS Program Director to waive this requirement.

MIIS students that do an internship during the summer semester are required to present their internship at a poster session at the beginning of the following Fall semester. The poster and the student's participation in the poster session are part of the internship requirement. Participation is required unless waived in writing by the MIIS Program Director.

International students are required to consult with the Office of International Education for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship/co-op or consulting opportunity. International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus work authorization. Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and international students will benefit

from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible.

Resources to Explore Potential Internships:

- Faculty Recommendations
- [Career and Professional Development Center](#)

SECTION 8: Department Policies & Protocols

8.1: Department Policy for Withdrawing from a Course

Dropping courses is not recommended except for reasons of health or family emergency. Many SCS courses have long waitlists, and dropping a course means that some other student who might have had the opportunity to take the course had been denied that ability.

Sometimes, however, a student's workload can become unexpectedly heavy because of course requirements. No one is expected to suffer from such pressure and dropping a course may become a necessity. To avoid this unfortunate circumstance, you should inform yourself in advance of the curriculum and workload in each course you plan to take and ensure that you are capable of handling the load. Note that CMU SCS courses are typically very difficult and demanding, and students who may easily have handled taking five courses simultaneously at another institution may not be able to do so at CMU.

Exact add, drop and withdrawal dates may be found on the official Academic Calendar. Up until the deadlines, students can initiate course adds and drops through Student Information Online (SIO). Courses dropped by the deadline will not appear on the student's record, and courses withdrawn from by the deadline will receive a 'W' grade.

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.

8.2: Requirements for Those Without a Bachelor's Degree in Discipline

Incoming students are expected to have a bachelor's degree and must have a strong

background in Computer Science, including a solid understanding of complexity theory and good programming skills, as well as a good background in mathematics.

8.3: New Policies / “Grandfather” Policy

A student can graduate under the policies in effect at the time that the student entered the program; or, at the student's choice, the student can graduate under policies that are adopted after the student entered the program. If it is not realistic to follow a particular policy exactly, the department may approximate the policy as closely as possible; this situation is rare and typically arises only when a student is enrolled in the program for an extended period.

8.4: Time Away from Academic Responsibilities

Graduate students should not assume that their time off follows the academic calendar of courses. Many are coming from an undergraduate environment where their university employment followed their course schedule. For many graduate degree programs, there is an expectation that graduate students continue research during academic breaks and time away from campus, which may or may not be negotiated with the students. If there are requirements for student time beyond a typical weekday, this should be specified.

Clarify that University Holidays are also student holidays, and students need to consult their faculty about coverage if they have challenges with taking time off during University Holidays. For example, if experiments are running that need to be monitored continuously, students should speak with their faculty about arrangements to take an equal number of days off at another time.

SECTION 9: Grading & Evaluation

9.1: Grading Scale/System

Students must demonstrate their mastery of material taught in courses and their success in applying their skills in directed study and capstone projects by satisfying the following grade requirements:

1. Minimum grade: A student must obtain a B- or better grade in all courses, which count towards core requirements. If a student receives a C or better, that course may count as an elective towards the degree requirements.

2. Minimum QPA: A student must maintain an average QPA of at least 3.0 in courses and projects used to satisfy degree requirements.

9.2: Department Policy on Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Pass/fail grades are not permitted for courses and projects used to satisfy a degree requirement, with the exception of the 11-696 (A) Capstone Planning Seminar and 11-935 (R) LTI Practicum that are a Pass/Fail.

Graduate students who are required to take additional undergraduate courses to build up the core foundations of computer science may not elect the pass/fail option for these courses.

9.3: Department Policy for Incompletes

Carnegie Mellon University students are expected to complete a course during the academic semester in which the course was taken. However, if the instructor agrees, a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given when a student has been unable to complete the work of a course. However, the work completed up to that date must be of passing quality and the grade of incomplete provides no undue advantage to that student over other students.

By awarding an "I" grade, an instructor must specify the requirements for the completion of the work and designate a default letter grade in the event that the student fails to complete the remaining work.

Students must complete the required course work by no later than the end of the following academic semester or sooner if required by the instructor.

The instructor must record the permanent course grade by the last day of the examination period of the following semester, or the Registrar will automatically assign the default grade.

If further work has not been completed after one semester and a default grade is rendered, the default grade will become the grade of record.

9.4: Independent Study/Directed Reading

Independent study courses allow students to cover study of a particular area of interest, and are used when no formal course is available in a given subject area. An independent

study can be counted as an Elective course, but it cannot be counted as a Qualifying course.

Each independent study course must be advised and approved by at least one faculty member. Agreement to supervise an independent study course is purely voluntary on the part of the faculty member. It is the duty of the student, therefore, to negotiate the terms and conditions of the independent study with the pertinent faculty members of CMU who will be supervising the study. These individuals are referred to as “independent study supervisors.” Once the student finds someone who agrees to supervise such a course, they must:

1. Request approval from the MIIS Program Director and complete proposal before the first day of classes in a given semester;
2. Enter into an agreement with the independent study supervisor that includes course expectations, including deliverables;
3. Secure the “Independent Study Contract Form” from the MIIS program manager;
4. Complete the form, provide a brief description of the work to be done, including deliverables and how they will be graded;
5. Secure signatures of both the student and the supervisor;
6. Return the form to the MIIS program manager in order to obtain approval for the independent study from the MIIS Program Director. Independent study contracts must be submitted no later than on the last day of the first week of classes in a given semester.

9.5: Satisfactory Academic Standing

If a student does not make satisfactory progress each semester toward completing the degree, the LTI may remove the student from the program or strongly encourage the student to consider switching to the four-semester program (MIIS-21) to complete all the requirements.

Students may appeal any/all of these decisions; see the [Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures](#) for more information.

9.6: Regular Reviews and Evaluations by Department

Near the end of each semester, the student must prepare a statement that describes their

achievements in the current semester and plans for the next semester. At the end of the semester, the faculty evaluates each student's academic progress. The student's advisor serves as the student's advocate in this process. The result of the evaluation is a letter from the faculty to the student that indicates whether the student is making satisfactory progress towards completing the degree.

A good letter typically indicates that the student is making satisfactory progress. If the student is doing exceptionally good work, a stronger adjective such as excellent might be used, but this is unusual.

If a student seems to be having trouble, the faculty determines whether it believes that the student can finish the degree, and if so, what needs to be accomplished to get back on track. This type of letter should be considered a serious warning. It is not a permanent "black mark" on the student's record; if the student begins making satisfactory progress again, there is no official record of the letter in the student's transcript.

In the most serious cases, the faculty gives the student an N-1 letter that specifies a list of conditions that the student must satisfy by specific deadlines. Failure to meet all the specified conditions may result in the student's termination from the program.

SECTION 10: Funding & Financial Support

10.1: Statement of Department Financial Support

The LTI does not provide financial aid or support to students in the professional master's programs. Students are encouraged to seek financial aid and support from other sources. The HUB website (<https://www.cmu.edu/sfs/financial-aid/index.html>) provides the Graduate Financial Aid Guide, information about funding options and how to apply for financial aid and other helpful links. Additional information on financial issues for graduate students can be found on the web at <http://www.cmu.edu/hub/new-grad/>.

10.2: Travel/Conference and Research Funding

Students funded by a research project may receive travel funding according to policies set by the individual projects. Students who have no project funding may be provided with partial funding, if they present a refereed conference paper. There is an LTI form that must be filled out in advance.

An additional conference travel funding opportunity is provided by GSA and the Provost's Office for students, student work groups or groups to attend a conference, whether as a

participant or as a presenter. The process is 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/index.html>

Please Note: If a student misses classes because they are attending a conference, the individual student is FULLY responsible for completing missed assignments and communicating with the instructor of record. Attending a conference during exams, poster sessions, scheduled talks, etc. is not a valid excuse. The student will need to coordinate with the instructor to make sure all work is completed satisfactorily.

10.3: Additional Sources of Internal & External Financial Support

External Employment/Consulting

Since the MIIS program places heavy demands on student time, external employment and/or consulting are strongly discouraged. Exceptional students who wish to consult should discuss this with their Advisor. International students must also have approval in advance from the Office of International Education (OIE) for any outside employment.

SECTION 11: ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

11.1: LTI Orientation

The LTI Orientation Canvas course is a mandatory course designed to increase incoming LTI graduate students' awareness and understanding of CMU's community standards and the resources that CMU offers the students. The course includes several administrative tasks, training, and educational sessions. The students will be enrolled into the course by the program administrator in early August. All MIIS students are expected to complete all Last assignments by the end of their first semester in the program. Each assignment has its own due date.

The LTI Orientation Canvas course provides lectures and recorded faculty research talks to help students learn about the work done by CMU faculty and to provide an opportunity for

advisors to recruit new students. Students are expected to view them and to treat them seriously, because they provide a good introduction to the broad range of research done at the LTI.
