

Informatics, M.S.

Information technology is transforming the world around us, from electronic medical records, to games for learning and social change, from information systems that help us live together more sustainably to devices and applications that allow us to track the body in unprecedented ways. The M.S. program in informatics at UC Irvine helps position students to understand the relationship between people and computing: How do existing technologies shape human behavior, society and culture, and how can we design future technologies to better serve humanity?

The M.S. in Informatics is a heavily research oriented program aimed at students with bachelor's degrees in a variety of disciplines (e.g. computer science, social science, the arts) who may or may not have been part of the full time workforce already. In particular, this program is aimed toward students who seek to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between people and technology. While not all M.S. students will choose to do a Ph.D. following their Master's, the research focus of this program makes it ideal for those considering a Ph.D. (such as our Ph.D. Informatics (<https://www.informatics.uci.edu/grad/phd-informatics/>) program).

For students interested in pursuing a professionally-oriented degree, looking to find a position or advance their careers within a corporate context, and working directly with industry mentors and clients around questions of user experience and design, we encourage you to consider our MHCID program (<https://www.informatics.uci.edu/grad/mhcid/>).

The research oriented M.S. in Informatics is organized around a set of core courses that introduces the fundamentals of informatics, followed by a broader range of potential elective courses through which students can choose to focus their learning. Throughout, students are exposed to the theory, tools, methods, approaches and practicalities of informatics research, including topics such as social computing, human-computer interaction and collaborative work. Many of the courses include project work, typically performed in teams, and frequently leading to concrete outcomes in the form of papers that may be developed into scholarly publications.

Most students in this program write a Master's thesis to explore a particular research topic in depth. For two (or more if you wish) quarters, students writing theses will join a research group, contribute to a research project, and write a thesis summarizing your efforts. There is an alternate pathway in which students take a comprehensive examination instead of completing a thesis. With one of the largest and most diverse faculty in the world dedicated to the topic of informatics, UCI offers a broad range of projects from which to choose.

For additional information about this degree program, please see: <https://www.informatics.uci.edu/grad/ms-informatics/>

Requirements

Students must complete courses, including a research methods core, and research experience courses related to their final thesis. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress according to the requirements of the program as maintained by the faculty and posted publicly.

A. Complete the following:

Core Courses

IN4MATX 261	Social Analysis of Computing
IN4MATX 232	Research in Human-Centered Computing
IN4MATX 209S	Seminar in Informatics (twice, usually in the first year)

B. Complete the following:

Research Methods Core

IN4MATX 201	Research Methodology for Informatics
IN4MATX 203	Qualitative Research Methods in Information Systems
IN4MATX 205	Quantitative Research Methods in Information Systems

C. Complete two quarters of IN4MATX 298. ¹

D. Select six graduate-level electives. ²

¹ To coincide with the completion of the M.S. thesis.

² The selection of courses should form a coherent educational plan to be approved by the student's faculty advisor. Although the courses may be chosen from any graduate-level courses on campus, it is recommended that at least three be chosen from within the School of Information and Computer Sciences. At most, 12 units of IN4MATX 298 and IN4MATX 299 may be used as electives.

Final Examination

Plan One

The M.S. thesis defense committee is formed in accordance to UCI Senate regulations. This committee must approve the following for the student to pass the final examination:

Thesis document: The student must prepare the written dissertation in accordance with Academic Senate regulations and present this document to the committee with enough advance notice for appropriate review and critique prior to an oral defense. Following an oral defense of this document, any changes required must be approved by the entire committee.

Oral defense: The student must pass an oral dissertation defense that consists of a public presentation of the student's research followed by an oral examination by the student's doctoral committee. To ensure the public has an opportunity to participate in this examination, the student must announce the defense title, date, and time at least two weeks prior to the event to all faculty and doctoral students in the department.

Plan Two

In the final quarter of study, the student must take a comprehensive examination given by Informatics faculty. The examination covers the core requirements.

Students transferring from the Ph.D. program in Informatics to the M.S. program in Informatics who pass the Ph.D. Advancement exam at a Master's level may substitute that exam for the comprehensive exam.