# Academic Calendar

## FALL 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST 4</td>
<td>WAIVER EXAM DEADLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST 17</td>
<td>REGISTRATION FOR THE FALL 2015 SEMESTER/TUITION DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST 22</td>
<td>FALL 2015 SEMESTER CLASSES BEGIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER 7</td>
<td>LABOR DAY – SCHOOL CLOSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER 4</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO ADD OR DROP COURSES / LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES WITH 100% TUITION REFUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER 17</td>
<td>TUITION DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 3</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM SIGN-UP DEADLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER 26</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING DAY – CLASSES CANCELLED - SCHOOL CLOSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER 28-29</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – CLASSES CANCELLED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 2</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM DATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 10</td>
<td>FALL 2015 SEMESTER ENDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 21</td>
<td>SPRING 2016 APPLICATION DEADLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 25</td>
<td>HOLIDAY – SCHOOL CLOSED</td>
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## SPRING 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANUARY 1</td>
<td>NEW YEARS DAY – SCHOOL CLOSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANUARY 4</td>
<td>REGISTRATION DAY FOR THE SPRING 2016 SEMESTER/TUITION DUE</td>
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<td>JANUARY 09</td>
<td>SPRING 2016 SEMESTER CLASSES BEGIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>JANUARY 22</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO ADD OR DROP COURSES / LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES WITH 100% TUITION REFUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY 4</td>
<td>TUITION DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY 25</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM SIGN-UP DEADLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARCH 5-10</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 25</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM DATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY 2</td>
<td>SUMMER 2016 APPLICATION DEADLINE</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY 5</td>
<td>SPRING 2016 SEMESTER ENDS</td>
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## SUMMER 2016

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAY 16</td>
<td>REGISTRATION FOR THE SUMMER 2016 SEMESTER/TUITION DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY 21</td>
<td>SUMMER 2016 SEMESTER CLASSES BEGIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY 25</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM SIGN-UP DEADLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNE 3</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO ADD OR DROP COURSES / LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES WITH 100% TUITION REFUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNE 16</td>
<td>TUITION DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>JULY 25</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAM DATE</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUGUST 8</td>
<td>FALL 2016 APPLICATION DEADLINE</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUGUST 11</td>
<td>SUMMER 2016 SEMESTER ENDS</td>
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Welcome

We are pleased to give you a copy of the 2015–2016 Student Handbook, which we hope will help both new and continuing students navigate graduate student life at Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School. If you are a new student, we are delighted that you chose KSI and we hope that your graduate study will meet all of your expectations. If you are a continuing student, we hope that the coming year will be rewarding and productive.

The handbook describes the important “rules and regulations” for graduate study. Students are encouraged to use this handbook as an enhancement to the personal feedback and guidance of faculty and staff in their departments. KSI attempts to keep all graduate students informed of essential resources, policies, procedures, and regulations related to their enrollment, progression, and graduation. When in doubt, consult with the Administrative Office regarding any problems or concerns. The information provided here is current to the best of our knowledge, but is not in-depth. However, KSI reserves the right to change policies or revise the information contained in this handbook. All such changes will be effective at the time deemed appropriate by the Administrative Office and may apply to enrolled as well as prospective students.

We always look forward to hearing from our graduate students. We wish you all the best in the coming year.

Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School
of Computer and Information Sciences
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Mission Statement

Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School (KSI) is a private degree granting not-for-profit institution of higher learning governed by an independent Board of Directors. Our mission is to provide instruction in graduate level academic programs emphasizing computer and information sciences with a faculty of recognized experts using state-of-the-art research facilities and advanced computer systems; to assist and facilitate student learning through the assessment of student academic achievement; to offer such services and facilities to professionals in the Chicago metropolitan area; and to serve the domestic as well as international student populations.

KSI grants the Master of Science (MS) Degree in Computer and Information Sciences. The MS degree program in Computer and Information Sciences also offers various areas of concentration. These areas of concentration are: Computer Networks, Health Informatics, Information Security, Knowledge Management, Management Information Systems, and Software Engineering.

History & Objectives

KSI originally established in 1978 for research and professional education, has grown in its scope, purpose and design. Originally founded in response to the needs of the business and engineering communities, KSI has developed into a graduate school, dedicated to training professionals in solving complex problems in science, business and engineering by employing advanced computer and information sciences methodologies.
## School Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Directors</th>
<th>University of California, Berkeley</th>
<th>University of Liverpool</th>
<th>Indiana University</th>
<th>University of Illinois</th>
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<td>David Sitrick, Ph.D</td>
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<td>Yu (Maria) Tai, M.S</td>
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<th>Officers</th>
<th>Illinois Institute of Technology</th>
<th>Chief Academic Officer</th>
<th>Executive Director</th>
<th>Chief Financial Officer</th>
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<td>Cheng-Yuan Hsieh, Ph.D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Pan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabriel Smith, B.A.</td>
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<th>Dean of Academic Affairs</th>
<th>Director of Research</th>
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<td>Hector J. Hernandez, Ph.D</td>
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<td>Paosheng Chang, Ph.D</td>
<td>Northwestern University</td>
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<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Northwestern University</th>
<th>Illinois Institute of Technology</th>
<th>Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School</th>
<th>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</th>
<th>University of Alberta, Canada</th>
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<th>University of Illinois</th>
<th>Case Western Reserve University</th>
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<td>Paosheng Chang, Ph.D</td>
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<td>Shih-Chang Chao, Ph.D</td>
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<td>Yao-Teng Chi, M.S.</td>
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<td>Phoebe Grant, M.S.</td>
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<td>Hubert Kordylewski, Ph.D</td>
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<td>George Schmoll, Ph.D</td>
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<td>Edward Wang, Ph.D</td>
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</table>
Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School (KSI) is located on the corner of Main Street and Trumbull Avenue. We are located north of Chicago in Skokie, Illinois, in a neighborhood that boasts cultural diversity and is economically progressive with influences of American, Indian, French and other European cultures. The neighborhood includes a unique two mile sculpture park with over 70 unique sculptures and a variety of restaurants, many locally owned stores and shops and, by car, is only ten minutes away from Skokie's Westfield Old Orchard Mall. KSI is easily accessible by car. Using public transportation, KSI can be reached via the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), or via the suburban transit provider, PACE.
| Campus Safety |

**Safety Prevention Tips**

Being a small and respectable graduate school, KSI rarely has safety issues on site. However, in the event that there is one, please be mindful of the following prevention tips:

**Theft Prevention:**

- Don’t leave personal property (purses, book bags, laptops, etc.) unattended in classrooms, study area, or library.

**Parking Safety Tips:**

- Always lock your car and take your keys
- Close windows and lock storage compartments
- Do not leave packages and valuables visible

**Violent crime Comparison (Skokie v. Illinois):**

My chances of becoming a victim:

- in Skokie: 1 in 405
- in Illinois: 1 in 263

Please keep in mind of the Village of Skokie’s Rules and Regulations on Public Safety:

**Village of Skokie - Outdoor Emergency Sirens:**

The Village’s warning siren system is used to advise residents to take specific actions. These actions include preparation for dangerous conditions and the announcement of snow removal phases. There are three distinguishable tones which follow the Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines.

**Siren Testing**

Sirens are tested in Skokie on the first Tuesday of each month for one minute at 10 a.m. A steady tone is used for testing.

**Attention or Alert**

This signals weather and other emergencies. Example conditions include tornado warnings for winds over 70 miles per hour or in the event of a hazardous materials incident. The siren tone is steady, lasting approximately three minutes. In the event of a warning signal siren, please seek shelter and tune in to 1660AM Skokie, www.skokie.org or local radio or television stations.
Alternate-Side Parking Notice

This signal alerts residents of Alternate-Side parking snow removal, and will sound after two inches or more of snow accumulation. The siren tone is a slow high-to-low wail tone for approximately one and a half minutes. In the event of Alternate-Side Parking, all residents must park on the even side of the street on even-numbered days and the odd side of the street on odd-numbered dates. Alternate-Side Parking procedures run from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Attack Warning

An attack warning is for a national emergency and will only sound when a serious national emergency is detected. The siren tone is rapid, high to low wail for approximately three minutes. In the instance of an attack warning, residents should seek shelter and tune in to 1660AM Skokie, www.skokie.org or local radio or television stations.

In the event of an emergency, immediate notification to the Skokie Police Department (Dial 911) is essential to ensure the timely response of emergency personnel.

Sensitive Crimes – Sexual Misconduct

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault refers to sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the use of drugs or alcohol. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

Rape

As defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Summary Reporting System, Rape is: “Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”

Sexual Harassment

There are a range of behaviors and behavior patterns that fall into the category of sexual harassment. Typically, we use the term to describe unwanted sexualization of a professional relationship: inappropriate jokes and remarks, sexual advances, sexual questioning, etc.

Some of these behaviors may feel harmless on their own, but add up to create a hostile environment; other behaviors are clearly hostile and intimidating even as singular occurrences. Not all sexual harassment is directed at a specific victim; some of it can affect many people who are within range.

KSI’s policy on Sexual Harassment is further discussed in Academic Integrity.
**Intimate Partner Violence**

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the actual or threatened physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse of an individual by someone with whom they have or have had an intimate relationship. Often, that relationship is sexual, but not always—IPV can take place between roommates. Most commonly IPV is referred to as domestic violence or relationship violence.

**Stalking**

Stalking is defined legally as repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

**Consent**

Consent means to give assent or approval. In relation to sexual behavior, consent is a mutual, unambiguous, unimpaired agreement for sexual activity. Consent requires words or actions indicating voluntary agreement and is required at every stage of a sexual encounter.

**Violence Against Women Act**

In March 2013, President Obama signed a bill that strengthened the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Included in the bill was the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE) that amends the Clery Act.

**Helpful Contacts – all safe and confidential.**

Sexual Assault Response Consultative Team – 202-994-7222

National Sexual Assault Online Hotmail - [https://ohl.rainn.org/online/](https://ohl.rainn.org/online/)

National Dating Abuse Hotline – 877-331-9474
Admissions Eligibility
Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School (KSI) accepts applications year-round on a rolling basis. Whether submission of an application is processed online or by standard post, it is important to meet our application deadline. Admission into the graduate program requires completion of a four-year bachelor’s degree and an accumulated GPA of 2.75. However, KSI offers undergraduate-level, prerequisite courses for students who may be coming from a background other than computer and information sciences. For students who are interested in taking courses, but are not interested in applying to the graduate program, they may take selected courses as a Student-at-Large. International Students within the U.S. are not eligible to apply as a Student-at-Large. A student may be required to take prerequisite courses to make up for deficiency in previous education.

Application Deadline
Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School (KSI) is a semester-based institution. It has 16-week fall and spring terms and a 12-week summer term. KSI accepts applicants year-round on a rolling admission. Whether you apply online or submit your application by mail (Administrative Office, Knowledge Systems Institute, 3420 Main Street, Skokie, IL 60076), it is important to meet our application deadline. The application process and admission requirements at KSI vary depending on applicant type. Please take note of the following application deadlines:

- Fall 2015 Deadline: August 10th, 2015
- Spring 2016 Deadline: December 21st, 2015
- Summer 2016 Deadline: May 2nd, 2015
- Fall 2016 Deadline: August 8th, 2015

Credit Transfer Policy
At point of admissions, a student may request to have KSI transfer credits from their previous academic background. KSI can transfer a maximum of six (6) credit units. The transferred credit(s) can only waive area (elective) courses at KSI. Core courses are not waived/transferrable. Below are the guidelines of transfer credit eligibility:

- The student’s academic transcript must be submitted to KSI’s Administrative Office directly from the school’s registrar.
- The student’s academic transcript must be from a regionally accredited college/school in the U.S.
- The student’s grade of the transferring course must be a B or higher.
  - Graduate credits may only transfer towards area (elective) courses.
- The student’s transferring course must be related to Computer and Information Sciences

The transferred credit(s) will be addressed in the student’s acceptance letter along with the updated total number of credits the student must complete for their degree completion at KSI.
# Tuition & Fees

Students must pay his or her tuition on or by registration day (one week prior to the semester start date [refer to the Academic Calendar]). Tuition totals includes material fees and laboratory fees.

The full-time tuition charges listed below are in effect for the 2015–2016 academic year.

## Tuition Rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students (per credit hour rate)</td>
<td>$480</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Students (per credit hour rate)</td>
<td>$576</td>
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## Fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance Learning Fee (per course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory Fee (per semester)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Material Fee (per course)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student ID Card</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expedited Transcript Request (per transcript) – <em>one day processing</em></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Transcript Request (per transcript) – <em>three day processing</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of Special Letters (per page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bounced Check Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returned Credit Card Transaction Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diploma Reissue Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>International Students</em>: Reinstatement Package Fee</td>
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<td><em>International Students</em>: Conversion Package Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>International Students</em>: OPT/OPT Extension Package Fee</td>
<td>55</td>
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</table>

*Tuition, fees, and charges are subject to change by administrative action and changes become effective on the date enacted. The tuition information should be used only as a guideline for estimating charges.*

*Shipping and handling will be charged accordingly.*
Cost of Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MS Degree</th>
<th>Domestic Student</th>
<th>International Students</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><em>Without prerequisites courses</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>MS.CIS Degree</td>
<td>17,280</td>
<td>20,736</td>
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<td>MS.CIS Degree (with a concentration)</td>
<td>18,720</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>With prerequisites courses</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>MS.CIS Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS.CIS Degree (with a concentration)</td>
<td>24,480</td>
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</table>

*Total cost does not include lab and material fees per semester.*

Financial responsibilities

Students must be financially responsible in clearing off their tuition in a timely manner. Tuition deadlines are placed every semester to ensure that a student has cleared off his or her tuition balance. Students who abandon their degree program and have a delinquent account will not have access to their student records, including, but not limited to: special letters ensuring enrollment, transcripts, tuition receipts, 1098 tax forms, etc.

Students with two or more returned checks must make payment on their account by cash, cashier’s check, money order, or credit card. No checks-personal or otherwise-will be accepted.

Late Penalty Policy

Tuition is due on the Registration Day of each semester. Payment options are available for qualifying students. Students who fail to abide by the deadline will be subject to penalty. Late penalty rates will vary from 10-30%. 10% late penalty will be charged if tuition is 1-30 days late. 20% late penalty will be charged if tuition is 31-60 days late. 30% late penalty will be charged if tuition is 61+ days late. Having an outstanding delinquent balance over 61+ days will lead to expulsion.

Payment Options

Installment plans are available for qualifying students. Students are given the option to clear off their tuition with two installment tuition payments. The first installment will be due on Registration Day of the semester. The second and final installment will be due exactly one month from Registration Day.

Tuition Refund Policy

Students can obtain a full refund of their tuition within six (6) class hours from the beginning of the course. However, a completed “Add/Drop Form” must be completed and turned into the Administrative Office in order to be eligible for refund. Tuition will not be refunded after six (6) class hours have surpassed.
VA Refund Policy

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<tr>
<th>Percentage of Days in Class Completed by Student at Notice of Cancellation</th>
<th>Percentage of Tuition &amp; Instructional Charges The School May Retain</th>
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Veterans Administration tuition is subject to the following pro-rata refund policy.

Federal Loans

KSI is certified by the Department of Education to participate in the Title IV Student Financial Assistance Program. The school offers College Work Study (CWA) and offers loans through the William D. Ford Federal Direct (Stafford) Loan program, in which borrowers obtain loan funds directly from the US Department of Education. Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen. Application materials are available from the Administrative Office.

Federal District Loan Program

The Federal Direct (Stafford) Loan Program offers low-interest, long-term education loans to qualified students. These loans are made available through a cooperative effort of ISAC, private lending institutions, and the Federal Government. Lenders lend their own funds; and ISAC and the Federal Government back the loans. In order to qualify, the student must: (a) be a U.S. Citizen (including a U.S. National or a permanent resident of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Island, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands), or (b) an eligible non-citizen. *(A U.S. permanent resident who has an Alien Registration Receipt Card (I-151 or I-551), or a non-citizen with a Departure Record (I-94) from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service showing any one of the following designations: (1) “Refugee,” (2) “Asylum Granted,”(3) “Indefinite Parole” and/or “Humanitarian Parole,” or(4) “Cuban-Haitian Entrant.”)
The maximum award depends on length of enrollment and year in school. Please see the “Loan Amounts” section below for exact determinations on loan limits. Students must sign a promissory note, agreeing to repay the loan. Under certain conditions, repayment may be deferred (postponed) or canceled. Should your enrollment at KSI end before the completion of your studies due to the discontinuation of your studies or failure, all loan dispersal will be sent back to the lender and will not be handed to the student. Loans given for educational purposes, through KSI, shall only be used towards your studies here at KSI. For more information, see “Return of Title IV Funds” section below.

**Subsidized & Unsubsidized Direct Loans**

Direct Stafford Loans include the following types of loans:

- **Direct Subsidized Loans** — Direct Subsidized Loans are for students with financial need. Your school will review the results of your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and determine the amount you can borrow. You are not charged interest while you’re in school at least half-time and during grace periods and deferment periods.

- **Direct Unsubsidized Loans** — You are not required to demonstrate financial need to receive a Direct Unsubsidized Loan. Like subsidized loans, your school will determine the amount you can borrow. Interest accrues (accumulates) on an unsubsidized loan from the time it’s first paid out. You can pay the interest while you are in school and during grace periods and deferment or forbearance periods, or you can allow it to accrue and be capitalized (that is, added to the principal amount of your loan). If you choose not to pay the interest as it accrues, this will increase the total amount you have to repay because you will be charged interest on a higher principal amount.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**

Students must meet the following minimum criteria to be eligible for most federal, state and institutional funding:

- ✓ Must meet eligibility requirements set by the U.S. Dept. of Education.
- ✓ Must:
  - (a) be a U.S. Citizen (including a U.S. National or a permanent resident of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Island, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands), or
  - (b) an eligible non-citizen. * (*A U.S. permanent resident who has an Alien Registration Receipt Card (I-151 or I-551), or a non-citizen with a Departure Record (I-94) from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service showing any one of the following designations: (1) “Refugee,” (2) “Asylum Granted,” (3) “Indefinite Parole” and/or “Humanitarian Parole,” or (4) “Cuban-Haitian Entrant.”*
- ✓ Must file a FAFSA for the current academic year.
- ✓ Must be admitted as a degree-seeking student to the MS Degree Program.
- ✓ Must be registered with the Selective Service Administration, if required by law.
Must not be in default on any prior student loan.
Must not owe a repayment on any Title IV financial aid.
Must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress.
Must submit all requested documents and those documents must not be found to limit your eligibility.
Must enroll in KSI classes such that it allows for disbursement of your offered financial aid.

Process for Application, Award, and Disbursement

Students interested in borrowing under the Federal Stafford Student Loan Program must:

1. Complete the basic financial aid application process (file the FAFSA and provide all requested documents to the Financial Aid Office. The first step is to obtain a student aid PIN by visiting http://www.pin.ed.gov/PINWebApp/pinindex.jsp. The next step is to login to the website http://studentloan.gov where you will sign the MPN and complete entrance counseling. (see steps below)

2. Complete FAFSA entrance counseling. Students must complete entrance counseling before loan disbursement on the website: https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/index.action

3. Complete an Entrance Interview provided by the Financial Aid Office. Entrance and Exit Interviews are conducted with all borrowers and prospective borrowers to help them to understand their rights and responsibilities to the college, lenders, services, future students, and to themselves. The goals of the entrance interview are:
   ✓ Assist students in the completion of forms.
   ✓ Assist students with preparing educational, personal and household budgets (on request).
   ✓ Review requirements for satisfactory academic progress
   ✓ Explore all sources of aid (scholarships, gifts, veteran benefits, agency assistance, etc.).
   ✓ Review college refund policy.
   ✓ Stress constraints of aid.
   ✓ Urge students to read and save all loan documents.
   ✓ Describe consequences of multiple borrowing.
   ✓ Explain sale and servicing of loans.
   ✓ Review loan repayment obligations.
   ✓ Provide data on average anticipated monthly payments.
   ✓ Provide name, address and phone number of lender.
   ✓ Verify school record of borrower’s name, SSN, references, and driver’s license number.
   ✓ Stress the importance of keeping the lender and school informed of any changes of name, address, marital status, financial status, etc.

4. Submit a completed Master Promissory Note for Federal Stafford Loans (MPN) to the Financial Aid Office and/or the Department of Education. This can be completed online at studentloan.gov. Once
students have completed these steps, the financial aid office will be able to create a Federal Direct Loan and schedule loan disbursements to the student’s KSI account.
| Graduation Requirements |

Students admitted to KSI must satisfy the requirements below:

**Coursework Completion**
- Minimum of 27 graduate level hours of coursework for the MS Degree in Computer and Information Sciences
- Minimum of 30 graduate level hours of coursework for the MS Degree in Computer and Information Sciences with an Area of Concentration
- Minimum of 9 graduate level credit hour or individual research project
- Academic Performance is mentioned in next section

**Comprehensive Exam**
- Students are eligible to take the Comprehensive Exam when he or she has completed all core coursework in a designated program. The Comprehensive Exam will test students on all core courses and one area course of their choosing. The examination must be scheduled in conformance with deadlines shown in the academic calendar.

**Thesis**
- Thesis is a degree requirement.
- Each MS degree program student will have an assigned Project Advisor. Project Advisor will guide students on the preparation, writing and defending of his or her thesis. An oral thesis defense is required.
- Three hard copies must be submitted prior to graduation date (May 20, Aug 20, or Dec 20).

**English Proficiency (International Students)**
- Non-native speakers of English must submit current, official test scores from IELTS or TOEFL in order to fulfill degree requirements. An IELTS band of 6.5+ or a TOEFL score of 80+ iBT or higher is sufficient enough to prove a student is proficient in English. Students with a degree completed in the United States are waived of this requirement.
| Academic Policies |

**Audit Policy**
A student may elect to take a course on a listen-in basis. However, his or her decision must be made when he or she registers for the course. Students taking an audited course are to finish all coursework as required and will not receive a grade for the course or credit for the completed course. Tuition fees must always be paid in full for an audited course. No student will be allowed to audit the same course twice.

**Academic Performance**
In order to remain eligible to continue in the master's degree program and/or to receive various types of financial assistance, including federal aid, a graduate student must maintain good academic standing and be making sufficient progress toward the degree. The following are the minimum requirements; departments have the right to impose additional criteria for good academic standing:

- It is expected that a student will complete all **core** courses taken for credit with the grade of B- (2.75 GPA) or better. Courses for which a student receives a grade lower than B- (2.75 GPA) may be retaken. School protocols should be consulted with regard to policy concerning make-up credit for a failed course.
- It is expected that a student will complete all **area** courses taken for credit with the grade of C+ (2.25 GPA) or better, maintaining a B (3.0 GPA) average. Courses for which a student receives a grade lower than C- may be retaken. School protocols should be consulted with regard to policy concerning make-up credit for a failed course.
- It is expected that a student will complete all **prerequisite** courses taken for credit with a C average. Courses for which a student receives a grade lower than D may be retaken.
- All comprehensive and language examinations for graduate students must be passed within the time limits established by KSI. A second opportunity is given for students who do not pass qualifying or other examinations on the first try, but school regulations should be consulted.
- Deadlines established by KSI for submission and completion of thesis outlines and proposals and for regular evaluations of thesis research progress must be met.
- The completion of all degree requirements must take place within the time limits established.

**Abandoning/Hiatus Policy**
Students who have abandoned their studies during an active semester and who wish to join KSI in the future must pay off their delinquent balance with the appropriate late penalties. Students will not have any access to their academic records (diploma copies, transcripts, 1098 tax forms, etc.) until the delinquent balance is cleared.
International Students: F-1 Student visa holders who are approved for H1-B visa must maintain their F-1 until September 30th of that year. Failure to do so will lead to F-1 termination, which could have a negative impact on future change of status conversions.

Prolonged Absences
Domestic Students who have not registered for ten (10) consecutive years will have to start their program over.

International Students who have not registered for one (1) consecutive year or under, will have to start their thesis courses over. Previously earned credits will be recognized. Student who have not registered for over one (1) year must prove proficiency by taking and passing (75% or higher) for any 500 level or 300 level courses taken.

Add/Drop Policy
Students who wish to change their class registration must first meet with their advisor for approval. Once the changes have been approved, the student must come to the Administrative Office and complete an Add/Drop Form. The Form must be signed by the instructor of the course that he or she drops and also by the instructor of course that he or she adds. Students who complete this process within the first six (6) class hours from the start date of the semester will be eligible for a complete refund of tuition. Any student who fails to follow these procedures or does not make his or her changes until the seventh class hour shall receive no refund of tuition. Students dropping an online course will receive no refund once a personal log-in to the online course-ware is rendered to the student.

Class Attendance
Attendance is heavily monitored by Professors and the Administrative Office. Students cannot miss more than 75% of the entire semester per course. Failure to abide by this attendance policy will lead to an automatic “F”. Full details regarding attendance is mentioned below:

- For the fall and spring semester, students cannot miss four (4) or more classes throughout the entire semester.
- For the fall and spring semester, students cannot miss three (3) consecutive classes.
- For the summer semester, students cannot miss three (3) or more classes throughout the entire semester.
- For the summer semester, students cannot miss two (2) consecutive classes.

- All semesters: arriving late, leaving early, attending to phone calls will be marked negatively. Three marks of the prior mentioned will count as one (1) full absence.
- All semesters: undocumented absences will be held against students final absences count during the duration of the semester.
• **Excused Absence:** should the student request for an excused absence, he or she must provide their instructor with proof of an illness or emergency, which will cause them to miss classes. Upon returning to class, the student shall provide the Administrative Office with said proof verifying the reason for that absence, after such submission the absence will be recognized as 'E' excused.

Excessive absences may cause a student to be dropped from a course at the discretion of the instructor and the department chair. International Students who have excessive absences will lose their student status.

International students holding student visa status (F-1) may only take classes *onsite*. Online courses are not provided to international students, unless authorized due to an unforeseen medical circumstance. In such an event, authorization and proof of medical circumstance must be provided to an appropriate Designated School Official and copied to the Administrative Office.

**Extension of Degree Time**
KSI students are expected to complete their degree within four (4) years from their commencement of 500-level courses. A student should consider applying for an extension when he or she is actively working on program requirements and needs more time to complete them, but is confident that the work will be completed within the additional year. Students should not request an extension of time if considerable progress cannot be made. If an extension is granted it is expected that students keep on schedule to complete degree requirements. Extension requests are approved by the Administrative Office.

**Incomplete Grade Policy**
Any student who has failed to fulfill all of the requirements of the class when the grades are turned in may request an *I* (incomplete) grade from the professor. The student will have 30 calendar days after the end of the semester to submit the required incomplete course work to their professor. Should the student fail to submit the required incomplete coursework within this 30 days’ period, the *I* grade will automatically convert into an *F*. Any student who receives the grade of *F* on a required course will have to retake the course and pay the full tuition fee associated with that course. Faculty members must approve an *I* grade request by signing a student’s *Incomplete Grade Request Form*; this form is provided by the Administrative Office to the student.

Students may request an *I* grade for the following reasons: missed an exam, project, paper or other final coursework. Students with attendance lower than 75% may not request for an *I* grade. This form also addresses that when a student is issued an *I* grade, the highest grade they may achieve is a *B+*. The grade of *A* shall generally be reserved for those students who have completed all of the required coursework on or before the last day of class. This precaution is taken as many students are unfamiliar with the Incomplete Grade Policy and may blame their professors for receiving a lower grade. Hence, to keep transparency, this form is implemented towards students seeking an *I* grade.
Grading Policy
Letter grades will be given for all courses, except those courses that are unrelated to a student’s thesis project. MS project courses will be graded as either “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.”

Grade points are assigned as follows: four for each semester hour of A, three for B, two for C, one for D, and zero for F. Plus or minus grades may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor with corresponding grade points as follows:

- A 4.00
- A- 3.75
- B+ 3.25
- B 3.00
- B- 2.75
- C+ 2.25
- C 2.00
- C- 1.75
- D+ 1.25
- D 1.00
- D- 0.75
- F 0.00

.25 quality point is added by each plus, except grade A. .25 quality point is subtracted by each minus.

Leave of Absence Policy
Students must inform the Administrative Office regarding leaves (including Medical, Maternity). Students who have not successfully completed one semester of graduate study are not eligible to take a leave of absence. Leaves of absence will not be granted for periods of time of more than one year.

International students may not take a leave of absence and remain in the United States. Prior approval from the Principal Designated School Official is needed in order to have leave. Please visit the Administrative Office for further information.

Medical Leave
A medical leave is an option available to students who, for physical or psychological reasons, are unable to continue at KSI. An appropriate medical leave evaluation is a required part of this process. Medical leave is administered by the Administrative Office and the Executive Director/PDSO.

International Students must be maintaining their full time status in order to be granted leave. Medical leave is on a case-by-case basis.

Maternity/Paternity Leave
Graduate students may apply for a parental leave for one semester (fall or spring) for the birth of a child. The parent must be the primary caregiver of the child during the time of the leave. If granted, parental leave is only granted for one semester.

International Students must be maintaining their full time status in order to be granted leave.

Advisers
Students are assigned academic advisers and thesis advisers by the Administrative Office, dependent on their major selection. There are occasions when it is acceptable for students to switch to a new adviser. These changes are considered to be a standard practice so long as they conform to the policies and procedures of KSI. Students may consult with the dean and the Administrative Office if questions arise about adviser assignments.

During the registration period before each semester, students are required to meet with their adviser to discuss course registration to ensure students are matriculating in the allotted time frame.

**Nondiscrimination Policy**
Knowledge Systems Institute admits students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity or expression, height, weight, physical limitation, veteran or military status to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. KSI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or school administrative programs.
Enrollment Status
The academic year at KSI consists of the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. The Fall and Spring are 16 weeks in duration with the Summer semester being 12 weeks in duration with 48 hours per semester per course. Graduate students are responsible for maintaining proper enrollment status at KSI. Federal regulations require students to be enrolled (registered) full-time or part-time in order to receive and/or defer student loans. Enrollment status is either full-time or part-time as defined below:

Full time:
- Domestic students: six (6) or more course credits per semester
- International students: six (6) or more credits each semester (tri-semester [fall, spring and summer]) earning 18 credits per year. In order for International students to have a semester break, nine (9) or more credits must be completed for the fall and spring semesters in order to receive an authorized break in the summer semester. International students must maintain 18 credits per academic year in order to maintain full time status.

Part time:
- Domestic students: three (3) or more course credits or registration as a part-time continuing student.
- International students: International students are not allowed to enroll part-time, unless for a medical reason. Part-time status is defined as being under six (6) credits

KSI offers tri-semester sessions per academic year. For international students, registration in the Summer is optional when completing nine (9) credits in both the Spring and Fall semesters. Students taking tri-semesters must take courses in the Summer semester. To maintain full-time status, students must register for 9 credits in both the Fall and Spring semesters per academic year or 6 credits in the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters per academic year, unless authorized otherwise due to granted leave of absence. International students who have newly arrived to the U.S. on student visa (F-1) status must complete 24 credit hours in their first academic year and 18 credit hours each subsequent year.

Registration procedures
The Registrar’s Office, handled by the administrative office staff, is the appropriate office to contact for registration fulfillment and procedures. The Schedule of Classes is available before registration each semester. It is recommended that students register as early as possible using online registration to save time and avoid inconvenience. Open registration for all students continues the week prior to the start of the semester.
Prerequisites
Prerequisites are courses that must be passed and/or specific background that must be demonstrated prior to advancing to the next course in a set sequence of courses. Students can take KSI’s waiver exams and upon passage of appropriate examinations will waive prerequisites.

Unit Value – Credit Hour
The unit value of courses is indicated for each term of the course by a numeral in parentheses after the course title. All courses are on the semester unit basis. All courses at KSI are three (3) units, with CIS600 – Applied CIS Practicum being the exception of just one (1) unit. A credit hour is defined as one hour of course lecture time per week. In the fall and spring semesters, this means 3-hours of class time per week for 16 weeks. In the summer semester, this means 4-hours of class time per week for 12 weeks.

Dropping a Course
A course for which a student has registered remains on the record unless a formal petition to remove it has been submitted within the first two (2) weeks of the term. Courses that are dropped after the third week but prior to the last day of classes will carry the grade of W/F and remain on the transcript.

International Students: International students must maintain full time enrollment each semester, in order to maintain lawful F-1 student status, based on the rules and regulations placed by the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) and what KSI does to confirm to the federal government that you are officially registered and enrolled at KSI. Failure to do so will lead to loss of F-1 status. Specific policies related to International Students will be addressed in the following section.

Withdrawal
The phrase ‘withdrawal’ applies to the dropping of all courses for which students are registered at KSI. Withdrawal may be initiated by a student after consultation with the Administrative Office.

In addition to following the procedure for dropping a course, students must return all library books and any laboratory equipment and have their KSI record clear in every respect.

Students are responsible for initiating action to drop or withdraw from classes on or before the sixth credit hour mark (two weeks after the semester has begun but no later than the third session has started). International Students must maintain their full time status each academic year they are enrolled at KSI. Failure to do so will lead to loss of F-1 status. Full course loads for International Students are defined in the previous section, ‘Enrollment Status.’

Financial Withdrawal
Students who make payment on their account with checks which are returned to KSI for insufficient funds or who fail to pay by appropriate deadlines may be withdrawn from graduate studies without refund. Students who are financially withdrawn after the last day to drop or withdraw without a grade will receive, “W”, or “F” grades only for the semester.
Student Services

Administrative Office
The Administrative Office is the primary advocate for students on campus. It is the students’ central contact on campus for any and all ideas or suggestions; students are invited to drop by or make an appointment at any time. The office is also available to students for consultation on any matter affecting a student’s life where support is needed, and for counseling and advice during a crisis or emergency. To reach the office, call 847.679.3135 or e-mail at office@ksi.edu.

Library
KSI’s library contains books on all aspects of computer science, as well as computer industry journals. A full-text article database is available for in-depth research in computer science and general subjects. Students have remote access to the database, while the campus library offers comfortable seating and research consultation with the librarian. The library is located across from the classrooms on the second floor of the 3420 Main Street campus in Skokie, Illinois. Research assistance is available during library hours or by appointment. For more information about the library visit: www.ksi.edu/library.

Classrooms/Computer Labs
KSI’s classrooms and computer labs provide students with the latest level of processing and systems hardware and instructional software. The Instructional Computer Network supports both instructional computing and project-related research in computer networking, distributed systems, and microcomputer applications. Workstations, IBM PCs are interconnected with UNIX Servers, Windows Advanced Servers, Linux servers and Sun Solaris servers to form an Ethernet LAN. A communication server provides students with remote access capability to the LAN. Both Client/Server and peer-to-peer architectures are supported. Windows 2000, Windows NT, UNIX, Linux, are supported. Workstations, servers, and a CISCO Router connected to the Internet support the UNIX system environment. The current Internet connection is a T1 link. Wi-Fi access point supports wireless access to the LAN and Internet.

Digital Art & Studio Gallery
KSI maintains a space for digital art which is used as a gallery and performance space for KSI students, faculty and community members. The space is also used as a digital art laboratory in conjunction with campus classrooms and the private studios of KSI faculty. The dynamic quality of the digital arts and media equipment allows for an adaptable approach to the format and quality of the instructional and exhibition spaces on campus.
**Student’s Responsibilities**
Prior to connecting to any of KSI’s networking equipment, students who bring their own computers to school should check with any of KSI’s System Network Administrators/IT staff. If at any time KSI’s computer equipment becomes damaged, and it is determined the damage is the result of an improper connection being made, the student shall be responsible for any and all charges in connection with repairing KSI’s damaged equipment.

- **Property Abuse** – If any laboratory equipment is damaged/abused by food or drinks or reckless behavior, the student will be held responsible for the cost of repairs. If the student that created the damage does not come forward, the full class student body will be held accountable for the cost of repairs.

**IT Technical Support**
KSI’s IT staff provides technical support to students using KSI equipment and courseware. Online students may contact technical support by phone or email. Contact information for technical support is available on KSI’s website.

**Google Classroom**
Google Classroom is the online learning management system used by KSI instructors to provide students with digital copies of syllabi, course notes, handouts, media files, and Website links and host discussion forums. Google Classroom also allows students to upload assignments, take quizzes, communicate with classmates and track progress in their classes.

**Email**
KSI students receive a special Gmail account that allows them to use their @my.ksi.edu email address. This account provides 30 gigabytes of online storage space and access to Google’s online word processing and spreadsheet programs, sharable calendars and more.

**Antivirus and Other Software**
For free antivirus and other software, please visit the IT Department, in Room 208.

**Online Courseware**
KSI’s faculty and staff maintains online courseware containing web-based materials for the delivery of courses through online learning. Courseware is also available to on-campus students at the discretion of course faculty instructors.

**Health Service Requirements**
Prior to initial registration, all students must complete an online medical history and provide proof of required immunizations. Those with missing or incomplete health reports will not be allowed to register.
International Students are required to carry health insurance as part of the requirements for maintaining their F-1 status. Students can contact ISO Health Insurance Plan, Visitors Insurance, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and PSI Health Insurance Plan via the World Wide Web.

| Online Learning Policy |

**Online Learning Policy**

Online students are expected to receive the same content and instruction quality as on-campus students. Online students will participate in the Google classroom also used by on-campus students. Videos of lectures may be provided to students and professors will maintain office hours available by chat or skype for online students. In some cases, based on professor’s preference and IT department ability, students can attend lectures through skype or teleconferencing. For group projects, professors arrange for students to participate either with other online students or with on campus students. Professors monitor students taking tests and quizzes or administer the test through a proctor service (see Online Student Identity Verification Policy below).

**Online Student Identity Verification Policy**

The academic integrity of online courses is to be maintained by professors and instructors of online students. For assignment submission, professors speak directly with the student over Skype or other platforms verifying that each student is completing assignments on his or her own. In addition, for student group projects, reasonable certainty that the student is completing his or her assigned role are verified by this policy. For quiz and test taking, professors or assistants monitor students via Skype or other platforms with a live video to ensure the student is completing the test his or herself and without any materials not allowed. Tests may be given online or paper, as long as they are monitored. Students have been issued a KSI ID card with photo and or a driver’s license should be presented to the professor on live video at the time of the test. In some cases, students have taken tests in the presence of a monitor available at local libraries. There are also online tools, such as proctorU, which can be employed if the professor needs it. If professors have questions or need help completing the proctoring of exams, they should contact the IT department for assistance.

**Online Exams**

Instructors teaching online courses ensure the identity of students taking exams and quizzes. In addition, faculty must have a high degree of certainty regarding the integrity of assignment submissions. Instructors of online courses must be completely familiar with the requirements and procedures of online testing policy available in a separate document pertaining to the assurance of integrity of online testing.

**Online Chat**

Online chat sessions remain the most effective means that allow online students to interact with instructors on a real-time basis. Instructor should utilize the Virtual Classroom (VC) tool or other
suitable messenger services to conduct online class chat on a weekly 30-minute basis for an online class. Although the online class chat is not mandatory to students, instructor should accommodate students’ needs in terms of chat session scheduling.

| International Student – F-1 |

**Helpful Contacts**

*Principal Designated School Official (PDSO)*
- Ms. Judy Pan

*Designated School Officials (DSO)*
- Mr. Chen-Cheng Huang
- Mrs. Farida Jakupovic
- Mr. Gabriel Smith

*SEVP Response Center (SRC)*
- Contact number: 1 (703) 603-3400

**Maintaining Full Time Status**

For complete information regarding enrollment status for International students, please regard the Enrollment Status in the Registration Section in prior sections.

International students must maintain full time enrollment each semester, in order to maintain lawful F-1 student status, based on the rules and regulations placed by the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) and what KSI does to confirm to the federal government that you are officially registered and enrolled at KSI. Failure to do so will jeopardize visa status and is grounds for expulsion from the school.

**Reporting Deadline**

*New Students*: SEVIS must receive your registration and enrollment report from the KSI no later than 30 days from the "reporting date” in Item 5 on your Form I-20.

*Continuing Students*: SEVIS must receive your registration and enrollment report from KSI no later than 30 days from the first day of classes each fall and each spring semester, and if applicable, each summer semester.

**English Proficiency**

All International Students (F and H visa holders) students are required to attain a certain level of proficiency in the English language in order to complete their studies. International students who have not already received a degree from a US institution or attained a TOEFL score of 80
IBT or higher and/or an IELTS band of 6.5 will not be eligible to graduate without submission of passing TOEFL scores. International students failing to meet this requirement will not be allowed to graduate from the Master of Science Degree Program.

**Address Updates**
Your current, local, living address, as defined by SEVIS, is the physical address of the place where you live. A postal box (e.g., PO Box 1234) is not a living address and will not be accepted by SEVIS. The federal government requires that you inform them of your U.S. address and any changes in it.

**Failure to Comply with Registration and Reporting Requirements**
If SEVIS does not receive a timely report each semester confirming that you are enrolled, your SEVIS record will be automatically terminated by the SEVIS department, you will be ineligible for any F-1 benefits, and you will be expected to either apply for reinstatement to lawful F-1 status or leave the U.S. as soon as possible. KSI would like to work with you to avoid this situation.

**Travel Policy**
F-1 students who wish to travel *during the semester* are allowed a maximum of nine (9) days to travel overseas. Students cannot miss more than two courses’ sessions in a row. F-1 students who wish to travel *before a semester has started or after a semester is completed* must return two (2) days prior to the start of the following semester. Students who wish to travel must not have a delinquent balance and must preregister for the following semester.

Students must submit a Travel Request Form to the Administrative Office a minimum of two weeks prior to traveling. The DSO will inform students what documents they need in order to travel and return back to the United States successfully.

**Break Policy**
Students can have a semester break after completing 18 credits consecutively (two-three semesters in a row) or by completing 9 credits in a spring semester granting the summer semester off – the student must return in the fall semester to complete 9 credits again. Failure to return to the fall semester and complete 9 credits will result in the student being expelled & terminated from KSI under failure to enroll. Students cannot accumulate credits from the year prior. If a student has met the credit requirements successfully, meaning they have passing grades and have cleared off their tuition balance, students may request for a semester break.

Students who have not completed 18 credits consecutively, but are requesting for a break, would need approval from the PDSO/DSO.

If a student's request has been granted, the student must preregister and prepay the tuition of the following semester. If a student decides not to return to KSI within the first two weeks of the following semester, tuition will be refunded for the student.
Work Authorization
US Immigration regulation states that F-1 student visa holders are permitted to engage in employment only in situations which are authorized for their visa type. The F-1 visa is work-restrictive. In order to maintain valid F-1 status, a student must not work in the United States, unless the employment is specifically authorized under the regulations.

Five categories of employment are available to F-1 students, three of which are described below:

- **On-campus employment**: Refers to on-campus employment
- **Curricular practical training (CPT)** is permission to engage in off-campus employment or internship related to your degree program. It is an integral part of a degree program for which work authorization is provided to allow students to gain practical experience in their field of work while they are still taking classes in their degree program.
  - CPT work must be an integral part of your curriculum. You will be required to enroll in a corresponding course during the period of time that you will work, or in the term immediately following the work. International Student applying for CPT must register for Applied CIS Practicum (Course Title CIS600). Students must register for at least one (1) Applied CIS Practicum course as a degree completion requirement and a maximum of nine (9) Applied CIS Practicum courses over the course of the full degree completion. In order for students to apply for CPT, their job must be directly related to Computer Science.
  - CPT authorization is granted on a semester-by-semester basis only. If you wish to continue your employment beyond the semester for which you've been authorized, you must follow the entire application process again, including the appropriate course registration for the option that you choose. It's best to do this as soon as you register for the next semester so that our office will have the time to process your application.
- **Optional practical training (OPT)** is temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student's major area of study. Most KSI students engage in one form of OPT called post-degree completion OPT, which starts after a student completes degree requirements. For information on when and how often an F-1 student visa holder can engage in OPT, contact the Administrative Office.

For information on any of the following topics, please inform the administrative office. These are types of employment which are rarely granted, are specific to the student’s situation and involve complex immigration matters:

- Employment with a qualifying International Organization.
- Employment authorized due to severe economic hardship.
- Employment authorized by the Special Student Relief Program.

More Information
If you would like more information on SEVIS registration and enrollment confirmation reports, or on any other topic that relates to your immigration status, please contact the Administrative Office. The staff of this office is always pleased to provide you with information, counseling, and assistance to help you achieve your educational goals at KSI while maintaining a lawful immigration status.

| Master’s Thesis Preparation |

Once a currently registered student of KSI has completed four to five core courses, the student is ready to embark on the Master’s Thesis Project, the independently conducted research project. The applicant may only register and begin his or her Thesis Project with authorization from their respective academic advisor on a given semester's Registration Day.

Each MS degree program student will have an assigned Project Advisor. The Administrative office will assign a Project Advisor to the student. However, another faculty member may be selected as a co-advisor depending on the nature of the research project proposed. Once the Project Advisor is selected, the Project Advisor will provide the project guidebook and supervise the progress of the student’s research activities. The MS Project Report must be signed by the Chairman of the Thesis Committee and by the Project Advisor for final approval.

**Thesis Format**

Theses submitted as a graduation requirement must be formatted according to KSI guidelines. To ensure that theses are formatted correctly, each thesis must undergo proofreading. Students are encouraged to look at formal theses for further clarification, in particular, current KSI theses in KSI's library.

**Thesis Presentation (defense)**

Once the proofreading process has successfully concluded, the student’s Project Advisor will set a thesis presentation rehearsal date wherein the student will present their thesis project to the CIS599A instructor and fellow students. Once the presentation rehearsal date is completed, a formal presentation will be held wherein the student will present their thesis project to all thesis advisors and an audience of at least nine peers. All students must have a public, oral defense of their work. The defense should be scheduled several weeks prior to the thesis submission deadline. This presentation will be assessed and, if necessary, the student may be required to include updates in their final thesis drafts.

A thesis defense consists of two parts: 1) the student presents his or her research in a public forum, and 2) the student responds to questions posed by members of the committee and the audience. The student and the committee members must be physically present at the defense. In exceptional circumstances, one committee member may be allowed to participate electronically. At the conclusion of a successful defense, all committee members will sign the Graduation Application Form; an electronic signature will only be accepted from a committee member who was not physically present at the defense.

**Thesis Submission**
Once the presentation has been conducted and all written thesis work has successfully concluded, students will be given information regarding binding. Correctly formatted final copies of theses must be submitted no later than the semester’s graduation date (May 20, August 20 or December 20). Additional materials must also be prepared for submission with the final copies of the thesis/dissertation. Please reach out to the Administrative Office to confirm what documents are needed.

| Academic Integrity |

**Student Obligations**
Academic integrity is one of the primary expectations all academic institutions require of their members. At Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School, a student violates academic integrity when he/she participates in one of the following: cheating, plagiarism, deceitful practice and/or unauthorized collaboration – such actions may lead to failing a course/project and expulsion.

**Plagiarism**
Students are expected to originate all coursework, including essays, projects, and research papers. Use of expert opinion, facts, statistics, and other evidence must be expressed as quotations and proper citations must be included.

Students must not use another student’s work either from student files or from online sources. Students must not submit work in one class originally prepared for another class without first obtaining permission from both instructors.

Students must assign appropriate credit for sources using MLA or APA standards. Detailed information of these two formats is available in the library and online.

**Active Test Periods**
All students are restricted from having cell phones (smart phones) during an exam, quiz, mid-term or final. Any student seen with a smart phone -or other miscellaneous electronic device other than the devices provided by the professor or classroom- will be considered cheating and will automatically be given an ‘F’ for said exam, quiz, mid-term or final.

**Cheating, copying, plagiarizing on homework and projects**
All students are restricted from gathering ideas or words from their classmates unless involved in a group project or group homework assignment. A student is only determined as a suspect of cheating if evidence of word for word matches between both individual assignments are spotted. In this respect, the original and the copier will both receive an ‘F’ on said assignment or project. If the situation arises three (3) times during the semester in the same course, the professor is warranted to give the offender(s) an ‘F’ in either the course or in the homework portion of the final grade. The result will vary from professor's stand point as stated in course syllabi.
Integrity of Data

Fabrication and falsification of research results are serious forms of misconduct. It is a primary responsibility of a researcher to avoid either a false statement or an omission that distorts the research record. The ownership, use, misuse and correction of data are the responsibility of the school and author (student). Namely in the case of research projects (thesis), thesis advisors must validate the data through comprehensive testing and technique of appropriate questioning for student defense.

Procedure of Adjudication

When a faculty member becomes aware of a possible academic integrity violation either on or off campus, the faculty member should first discuss the matter with the suspected violator. If the discussion leaves the faculty member convinced that a violation has occurred, then he/she will prepare an “Academic Integrity Violation Report” specifying the sanction recommended ranging from grade reduction on an assignment to receiving a failing grade for that course and lastly, recommendation for expulsion. The student will have an opportunity to review the violation report prior to both the faculty member and student signing the report. The completed report will then be forwarded to the Administrative Office of Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School.

Appeal Procedures

A student who wishes to appeal a sanction should contact the department chair. The department chair will evaluate the request and, if valid, will conduct either a formal or informal hearing(s), and communicate the determination in writing to both the student and the reporting faculty member.

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members are also expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, including the following: conduct their classes when scheduled, be available for appointments, keep appointments, make appropriate preparations for classes, grade and return tests and assignments promptly, grade fairly and give appropriate recognition to contributions made by students in research, publication, service or other activities.

Grievance Procedures

A student (or group of students) who wishes to voice a grievance should contact the Dean of Academic Affairs. In the event that the grievance involves the dean, the student may submit the grievance to the Executive Director. The Dean, Department Chair, or Executive Director will conduct formal or informal hearings, and communicate the determination in writing to either the student (or group of students) and the faculty member.

Following are the formal Grievance Policy:

- Students have the right to voice their grievance in written format and submit it to the Dean of Academic Affairs, CIS Department Chair or Executive Director directly or by mail and stating Grievance next to the name of the student on the envelope addressed to the Administration Office.
- Grievances cannot and will not be accepted unless formally signed by the student.
The grievance will be discussed in a formal setting in the faculty committee, assessment committee, or otherwise appropriate meeting of responsible parties. When a conclusion regarding the grievance has been reached, the student will receive a formal grievance response letter signed by the Dean of Academic Affairs, CIS Department Chair or Executive Director regarding the outcome and resulting actions.

If a student finds the result of the grievance unsatisfactory or wishes to submit new evidence, he/she can request an appeal by submitting a signed letter of request for appeal and attaching a copy of the grievance response letter.

**Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School that no member of the KSI community - students, faculty, administrators, staff, vendors, contractors, or third parties - may sexually harass any other member of the community. Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made or threatened to be made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used or threatened to be used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating what a reasonable person would perceive is an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment, educational, or living environment.

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Education and the Illinois Board of Education, sexual harassment guidance are addressed in the provided link:
http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/sexhar00.html
Student Feedback & Assessment

Course Evaluations
Students are expected to participate in, complete and submit the formal Student Course Evaluation (SCE) survey for each course he/she is enrolled in. During the week of midterms, each professor will designate class time for the students to complete the online survey. The information obtained from the survey is both confidential and anonymous, which are only available to the Administrative Staff & selected members of the Assessment Committee. Such data will be summarized and used as an input into the ongoing assessment process with a view to continuously evaluate and improve student learning as well as teaching effectiveness.

KSI is committed to maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of information submitted in the SCE survey. The Administration Office compiles the surveys before the Dean's Office produces a summary report for classes that is forwarded, along with a highlight of students’ anonymous comments, to the course instructor.

The SCE Survey results will be useful for gauging studens’ perceptions of teaching effectiveness over time. The Assessment Committee will use these summary data to compare results in their classes with others of the same level, size and discipline for future improvement.

Student Experience Surveys
Once per semester, students will be asked to complete a Student Experience Survey (SES) relating to non-curriculum matters of learning environment assessment. The completion of the survey will take place during class time. The SES covers topics including student services, facilities and administrative staff. Results are confidential and anonymous and used for assessment purposes in order to improve the KSI learning environment.

Student Complaint and Grievance Policy
Students are encouraged and often solicited by the Administrative Staff regarding the quality of student experience and services. Complaints and suggestions are handled delicately and confidentially by the Dean of Academic Affairs, academic advisors or the Executive Director.