



**Graduate Executive Committee**  
**12/13/2024**  
**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

**Voting Members:** Adham Atyabi, Amanda Elder, Bob Camley, Cerian Gibbes, James Pearson, James Van Scotter, Jeremy Bono, Johanna Baez, Kara Holt, Lavonne Johnson, Lei Zhang, Leilani Feliciano, Patrick Brady, Patty Witkowsky, Robin Kempf, Steven Tragesser, Thottam Kalkur

**Non – Voting Members:** Amy Rodas, Andrew Lac, Assma Sawani, Chris Beiswanger, David DuBois, David Moon, Deanna Johnson, Deborah Pollard, Hillary Fouts, Janel Owens, Jessica Kirby, Jose Mora, Judith Scott, Jugal Kalita, Katie Anderson-Pence, Lauren Harriott, Mary Rupp, Megan Rogers, Sam Adams, Sarah Long, Sherry McCormick, Stephanie Trujillo, Susan Eldridge, Tylor Teel, Ying Shang

Agenda Items:

- Proposed revision to the Graduate School’s AMP Policy (Hillary Fouts)  
GEC voted to recommend the approval of the Proposal to revise the Graduate School’s AMP Policy (14 in favor, 0 Against, 0 abstain)
- Beth-El College Proposal for RN to MSN Track (Debbie Pollard and Sherry McCormick)  
GEC voted to recommend the approval of the Proposal in Beth- El College for RN to MSN Track (14 in favor, 0 against, 2 abstain)
- LAS Proposal for Geography and Environmental Studies (GES) Amp Program (Cerian Gibbs)  
GEC voted to recommend the approval of the Proposal in LAS for GES AMP Program (14 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstain)
- EAS Proposal for New Online Computer Science Program (Jugal Kalita)  
GEC voted to recommend approval of the Proposal in EAS for New Online Computer Science Program Option (17 in favor, 0 against, 1 abstain)
- Faculty Fellow for Graduate Student Success: Update on Graduate Student Mentoring (Janel Owens)
- Graduate Recruitment Efforts (Chris Beiswanger)
  - Please complete this survey on graduate recruitment efforts:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/gqwTFunftt>

Informational Items:

- Changes to College of Business MSA Program (see below)
  - Curriculum
    - Integrated ACCT 4210/6710 (Individual Income Tax) and ACCT 4600/6600 (Auditing) in the MSA curriculum as foundation courses.
  - Admissions
    - Updated required prerequisite courses
      - ACCT 3010 (Intermediate Accounting I), ACCT 3020 (Intermediate Accounting II) and ACCT 3110 (Cost Accounting) *or* FNCE 4000 (Corp Finance).

- Updated GMAT Waiver
  - Eliminated GMAT Waiver Fee
  - Updated GMAT Waiver options:
    - **Option A:** GPA 3.5 or higher with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: transcripts and resume.
    - **Option B:** GPA 3.0 or higher with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: 3 years of meaningful professional work experience in accounting/finance industry or advanced degree (i.e. earned masters or doctorate): transcripts, goal statement, resume and optional letter(s) of recommendation.
    - **Option C:** GPA less than 3.0\* with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: transcripts, goal statement, resume, optional letter(s) of recommendation, and one of the following:
      - 5+ years of meaningful professional work experience in accounting/finance industry
      - GMAT or GRE test scores

*\*Cumulative GPA or GPA for last 60 credit hours, whichever is higher. \*\*If undergraduate GPA\* is less than 2.75, applicants must submit GMAT or GRE test scores.*

#### Announcements:

- Commencement: December 20
- Graduate School Spring Welcome Event: Tuesday, January 14th 5:30-7:30pm in **Kettle Creek** will include free taco bar! Staff, faculty and students are welcome to attend. Register with the QR code on the attached flyer or by following this link: <https://mlc.uccs.edu/event/10688542>
- Mountain Lion Grad Slam (3-minute thesis competition)
  - Priority Registration Deadline December 20<sup>th</sup>
  - Final Registration January 17<sup>th</sup>
  - Preliminary Rounds January 28 and 29 in UC 302
  - Final Round February 4, 3pm in Berger Hall
  - Registration can be completed with QR code on attached flyer or by following this link: <https://forms.gle/ncMJfH9aYF45c44W9>

GEC Meetings for (Academic Year) all meetings are from 10:00-11:30

- Spring GEC Meetings
  - 2/14, 3/14, 4/12, 5/9

## **PROPOSED REVISED VERSION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL'S AMP POLICY:**

### UCCS Graduate School Policy for Accelerated Master's Pathways

The accelerated master's pathway (AMP) allows high achieving students to pursue existing bachelor's and master's degrees concurrently. It is expected that a student in an AMP will move from the undergraduate to the graduate program with no break. The AMP allows UCCS undergraduate students to take graduate level courses which will count towards graduation requirements for both their bachelor's and master's degrees. For currently enrolled full-time UCCS students, the AMP typically enables them to complete both degrees in a total of 5 to 6 years.

**Program Approval:** To apply for approval for an AMP, the department must develop a proposal which describes the following:

- the AMP requirements,
- the relevant pathway and program curriculum,
- number of credit hours that can account for both degrees (including restrictions on courses which may be taken as an undergraduate),
- which bachelor's degree programs are eligible,
- a justification for the AMP,
- any anticipated expected cost increases, and
- the process for how students will be tracked to ensure they are meeting program criteria.

The department must receive approval from the college, the graduate school, and the provost. The program approval process must be completed prior to the catalog close for the catalog year the program is expected to start. Programs may not admit students until all approvals are received.

**Courses Counting for both Degrees:** The number of credit hours to be counted for both degrees cannot exceed 12 credits. No more than 12 graduate level credits can be taken while an undergraduate and count towards the master's degree. If more graduate level credits are taken while an undergraduate student, those courses cannot be used towards the master's degree. Courses offered jointly as 4000/5000 level courses must be taken at the 5000 level. Programs may count undergraduate courses towards the graduate degree following the standard graduate school and program/college rules. All dual counting coursework must be a B or better grade.

**Standards for Admission:** Each program will develop admission standards. At a minimum, the following are required:

- A current UCCS student who has completed at least 30 credit hours at UCCS;

- Student must have junior class standing or higher for eligibility to be accepted into the program;
- A cumulative CU GPA of at least 3.00;
- Completion of at least 15 credits hours in the major;
- Student is a declared major in one of the specified bachelor's programs that correspond with their intended AMP;
- Any MAPS deficiencies must be completed prior to admission to the AMP;
- Meet all departmental standards and requirements (which may include higher standards than those listed above and/or additional criteria);
- The student must be continually enrolled (Fall and Spring semesters) from undergraduate to graduate degree for courses to double count towards both degrees.

**AMP Retention Criteria:** Each program must develop criteria for a student remaining in the AMP. The criteria at a minimum should include:

- Students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA throughout the pathway.
- If admission to another UCCS Master's or Doctoral program is sought, admission must follow completion of accelerated master's degree.

**Tuition and Financial Aid Determination:** Students in an accelerated master's pathway will be considered an undergraduate student until all requirements for the undergraduate degree have been met. During status as an undergraduate student, students will be eligible for financial aid following normal requirements and will pay undergraduate tuition rates (for graduate or undergraduate courses). When a student is changed from undergraduate to graduate status, then the student will be considered independent for determining financial aid eligibility and will pay graduate tuition rates (for graduate and undergraduate courses). Students moved to graduate student status are no longer eligible for COF. Students in the accelerated master's pathway may apply for scholarships following the standard processes and will be eligible for undergraduate or graduate scholarships and other aid depending on their classification as an undergraduate or graduate student.

**Departmental Authority:** The department is required to track students and to inform appropriate offices (e.g., admissions, records, academic advising, graduate school, financial aid) when a student is being admitted to the accelerated master's graduate status as well as when a student is removed from the program due to failing to meet program requirements or if student selects to voluntarily end enrollment in accelerated program. Failure to track students and inform the appropriate offices will disqualify programs from participating in the accelerated degree program.

**Student Appeals:** Students who are removed from an accelerated master's pathway may appeal the decision following the normal student appeals process for graduate students.

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**CURRENT VERSION:**

UCCS Graduate School  
Policy for  
Accelerated Master's  
Programs

The accelerated master's degree program allows high achieving students to pursue existing bachelor's and master's degrees concurrently; that is, it is expected that a student will move from the undergraduate to the graduate program with no break. The program is normally a 5 – 6-year program for currently enrolled full time UCCS students and allows students to take graduate level courses which will count towards graduation requirements for both their bachelor's and master's degrees.

**Program Approval:** To apply for approval for a program, the department must develop a proposal which describes the program requirements, the program curriculum, number of credit hours that can account for both degrees (including restrictions on courses which may be taken as an undergraduate), which bachelor degree programs are eligible, provides a justification for the program, describes any anticipated expected costs increases and describes the process for how students will be tracked to ensure they are meeting program criteria and how student success will be informed about changes in degree status. The department must receive approval from the college, the graduate school, and the provost. The program approval process must be completed prior to the catalog close for the catalog year the program is expected to start; programs may not admit students until all approvals are received.

**Courses Counting for both Degrees:** The number of credit hours to be counted for both degrees cannot exceed 30% of the total number of master's degree credit hours (e.g., for a 30-credit-hour degree program, no more than 9 credit hours can be counted towards both the undergraduate and graduate degrees). No more than 30% of graduate level credits can be taken while an undergraduate and count towards the master's degree. If more graduate level credits are taken while an undergraduate student, those courses cannot be used towards the master's degree. Courses offered jointly as 4000/5000 level courses must be taken at the 5000 level. Programs may count undergraduate courses towards the graduate degree following the standard graduate school and program/college rules. All dual counting coursework must be a B or better grade.

**Standards for Admission:** Each program will develop admission standards; at a minimum, the following are required:

- A current UCCS student who has completed at least 30 credit hours at UCCS;
- Student must have junior class standing or higher for eligibility to be accepted into the program;
- A cumulative CU GPA of at least 3.00;
- Completion of at least 15 credits hours in the major;

- Student is a declared major in one of the specified bachelor's programs that correspond with their intended Accelerated Master's Program
- Any MAPS deficiencies must be completed prior to admission to the accelerated master's degree program;
- Meet all departmental standards and requirements (which may include higher standards than those listed above and/or additional criteria).
- The student must continually enrolled (Fall and Spring semesters) from undergraduate to graduate degree for courses to double count towards both degrees.

**Program Retention Criteria:** Each program must develop criteria for a student remaining in the program. The criteria at a minimum should include:

- Students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA throughout the program.
- If admission to another UCCS Master's or Doctoral program is sought, admission must follow completion of accelerated master's degree.

**Tuition and Financial Aid Determination:** Students in an accelerated degree program will be considered an undergraduate student until all requirements for the undergraduate degree have been met. During status as an undergraduate student, students will be eligible for financial aid following normal requirements and will pay undergraduate tuition rates (for graduate or undergraduate courses). When a student is changed from undergraduate to graduate status, then the student will be considered independent for determining financial aid eligibility and will pay graduate tuition rates (for graduate and undergraduate courses). Students moved to graduate student status are no longer eligible for COF. Students in the accelerated master's program may apply for scholarships following the standard processes and will be eligible for undergraduate or graduate scholarships and other aid depending on their classification as an undergraduate or graduate student.

**Departmental Authority:** The department is required to track students and to inform appropriate offices (e.g., admissions, records, academic advising, graduate school, financial aid) when a student is being admitted to the accelerated master's graduate status as well as when a student is removed from the program due to failing to meet program requirements or if student selects to voluntarily end enrollment in accelerated program. Failure to track students and inform the appropriate offices will disqualify programs from participating in the accelerated degree program.

**Student Appeals:** Students who are removed from the accelerated program may appeal the decision following the normal student appeals process for graduate students.

**AMP Retention Criteria:** Each program must develop criteria for a student remaining in the AMP. The criteria at a minimum should include:

- Students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA throughout the pathway.
- If admission to another UCCS Master's or Doctoral program is sought, admission must follow completion of accelerated master's degree.

**Tuition and Financial Aid Determination:** Students in an accelerated master's pathway will be considered an undergraduate student until all requirements for the undergraduate degree have been met. During status as an undergraduate student, students will be eligible for financial aid following normal requirements and will pay undergraduate tuition rates (for

graduate or undergraduate courses). When a student is changed from undergraduate to graduate status, then the student will be considered independent for determining financial aid eligibility and will pay graduate tuition rates (for graduate and undergraduate courses). Students moved to graduate student status are no longer eligible for COF. Students in the accelerated master's pathway may apply for scholarships following the standard processes and will be eligible for undergraduate or graduate scholarships and other aid depending on their classification as an undergraduate or graduate student.

**Departmental Authority:** The department is required to track students and to inform appropriate offices (e.g., admissions, records, academic advising, graduate school, financial aid) when a student is being admitted to the accelerated master's graduate status as well as when a student is removed from the program due to failing to meet program requirements or if student selects to voluntarily end enrollment in accelerated program. Failure to track students and inform the appropriate offices will disqualify programs from participating in the accelerated degree program.

**Student Appeals:** Students who are removed from an accelerated master's pathway may appeal the decision following the normal student appeals process for graduate students.

## **Proposal**

**Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences**

**Department of Nursing**

**October 29, 2024**

**RN to MSN Track**

### **Introduction**

The Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences has been educating nurse practitioners since 1996. We currently have program options for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree for three specialty nurse practitioner roles: family nurse practitioner (FNP), adult/gerontology nurse practitioner (AGNP), and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the overall employment for advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, & nurse midwives) is projected to grow by 40% from 2023-2033 (bls.gov, 2024). The need for increased numbers of MSN professionals has been well documented in the literature. To address the rising workforce demands for nurse practitioners (NPs), Johnson Beth-El is proposing a program that will provide a seamless transition from the current RN (Registered Nurse) to BSN (Bachelor of Science) program. RNs in the current program are practicing nurses with professional RN experience, earning their BSN online at UCCS. Students have been inquiring how the RN to BSN can provide entry into our MSN program. There are few options for RNs who want to move through their BSN-level coursework to bridge into MSN programs. UCCS could lead the way in meeting the needs of our state of Colorado as well as nationally.

UCCS and Johnson Beth-El support programs that grow our rural nursing workforce. According to 2023 Colorado (CO) rural health data, 77% of Colorado's land mass is identified as frontier or rural counties which are home to 12.2% of Coloradans. Seven of these counties in CO have no healthcare resources. Twenty-five counties in CO are considered "maternal care deserts" where rural Coloradoan's have a 40% higher teen pregnancy rate than teenagers in urban areas.

### **Proposal**

The Department of Nursing would like to offer the RN to MSN option for practicing nurses who hold an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) who demonstrate interest and preparation for the MSN (NP) degree option. This is not a new degree, but rather a new pathway to completing a MSN degree. To demonstrate readiness for the degree work, a 6-credit course will be offered to students who prefer a direct pathway to a MSN program. This course will be delivered online over 16 weeks. Successful completion of this 6-credit course would be required for entry into the MSN program (along with the other admission requirements). Students would apply for undergraduate admission using a new subplan (RN-MSN) and would pay the tuition rate that is currently used for RN-BSN courses. Once a student has successfully completed the course with a grade of B or higher, they will apply to the MSN program option.



**Proposed Course Description:** The 6-credit readiness course provides essential foundations of professional nursing practice that are precursor concepts for the MSN degree program. Emphasis is placed on scholarship for evidence-based practice, communication and collaboration, and professionalism. The role of the nurse leader in applying theory to practice for quality improvement, information management, clinical prevention and population health is explored. The course discussion includes the impact of healthcare policy and finance on healthcare systems and patient outcomes.

**Proposed Course Objectives:**

1. Examine professional standards and values that are foundational to professional nursing practice.
2. Differentiate theories and scholarly evidence that ground nursing practice and promote optimal patient outcomes.
3. Delineate the role of the nurse leader in quality improvement, information management, and interprofessional communication and collaboration.
4. Discuss the influence of healthcare policy, regulation, and finance on nursing practice.
5. Explain the principles of clinical prevention and population health for diverse individuals, groups, and communities.

<b>Program Outcomes</b>	<b>Proposed Course Objectives</b>	<b>The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education Domains:</b>
Function in the beginning role of a baccalaureate generalist nurse in settings that cross all populations and environments	Explain the principles of clinical prevention and population health for diverse individuals, groups, and communities.	Domain 3: Population Health Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice
Demonstrate proficiency in the core nursing competencies of clinical/critical reasoning, patient safety, and quality improvement principles	Delineate the role of the nurse leader in quality improvement, information management, and interprofessional communication and collaboration.	Domain 2: Person Centered Care Domain 5: Quality and Safety
Integrate research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values to facilitate clinical practice decisions	Differentiate theories and scholarly evidence that ground nursing practice and promote optimal patient outcomes.	Domain 4: Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline Domain 5:1c: Implement standardized, evidence-based processes for care delivery
Implement the use of patient care technologies, information systems, and communication devices to support safe and effective patient care	Delineate the role of the nurse leader in quality improvement, information management, and interprofessional communication and collaboration.	Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies

Program Outcomes	Proposed Course Objectives	The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education Domains:
Demonstrate basic knowledge of healthcare policy, finance, and regulatory environments	Discuss the influence of healthcare policy, regulation, and finance on nursing practice.	Domain 3.4: Advance equitable population health policy Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice
Maintain inter-professional collaboration and communication to improve healthcare outcomes	Differentiate theories and scholarly evidence that ground nursing practice and promote optimal patient outcomes.  Delineate the role of the nurse leader in quality improvement, information management, and interprofessional communication and collaboration.	Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships Domain 9: Professionalism  Domain 1: Knowledge of Nursing Practice Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development
Demonstrate professionalism and its values (including altruism, autonomy, human dignity, social justice, and integrity) and a baccalaureate generalist nurse	Examine professional standards and values that are foundational to professional nursing	Domain 9: Professionalism Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development
Master the required core knowledge for baccalaureate generalist nursing practice	Examine professional standards and values that are foundational to professional nursing practice in a didactic classroom setting.  Differentiate theories and scholarly evidence that ground nursing practice and promote optimal patient outcomes.  Delineate the role of the nurse leader in quality improvement, information management, and interprofessional communication and collaboration. Discuss the influence of healthcare policy, regulation, and finance on nursing practice.	Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships Domain 9: Professionalism Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development  Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships Domain 9: Professionalism  Domain 1: Knowledge of Nursing Practice Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development Domain 3.4: Advance equitable population health policy Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice

Program Outcomes	Proposed Course Objectives	The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education Domains:
	Explain the principles of clinical prevention and population health for diverse individuals, groups, and communities.	Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development Domain 3: Population Health Domain 7: Systems-Based Practice

Approval of Graduate Nursing Faculty at the Graduate Nursing Curriculum Meeting: September 9, 2024

## ACCELERATED MASTER'S PROGRAM in APPLIED GEOGRAPHY

### Rationale

The proposed Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) in Geography & Environmental Studies (GES) will address demand for professionals with advanced spatial and analytical skills needed to tackle critical global challenges such as climate change, urbanization, and sustainable development. By integrating undergraduate and graduate studies, this program would allow motivated students to earn both degrees in a shortened time frame, typically within five+ years. Graduates will be prepared for careers in sectors such as environmental consulting, urban planning, and government.

This program would reduce the overall cost and duration of study and ensure a seamless transition from foundational to advanced coursework. By allowing students to take graduate-level courses during their undergraduate studies, the program would provide a cohesive and streamlined educational experience. The AMP provides a bridge, from the undergraduate to graduate, for students planning to complete a graduate degree.

### Resources

Existing faculty, courses, and facilities are sufficient to accommodate the expected academic demand, making this program a cost-effective way to enhance the department's offerings and attract high-achieving students.

### Program Description:

The AMP in GES provides high-achieving students with the opportunity to earn both a Bachelor of Arts (BA) and a Master of Arts (MA) in Applied Geography in an accelerated format. This program allows eligible UCCS GES majors to complete both degrees in a streamlined manner, within five+ years. A key advantage of the AMP is the ability to enroll in up to nine credit hours of 5000-level courses that count toward the credit requirements for both the BA and MA programs. The program is designed for students to begin taking graduate courses while completing their undergraduate studies, offering a seamless transition between the two.

Admission to the AMP involves a two-stage process. In their junior year, students submit an AMP Intent application to the Graduate School and a Department AMP Application. During their senior year, they submit a simplified application to the Graduate School. Students must be officially admitted to the AMP before enrolling in dual-counted 5000-level GES courses.

To qualify, current UCCS GES majors must meet the following criteria:

- A minimum 3.5 overall GPA and at least a 3.50 GPA in the major.
- Completed the UCCS general education requirements or submitted a plan for completion.
- Completed at least 72 semester credit hours at UCCS.
- Transfer students must have completed at least 20 credit hours of Geography & Environmental Studies courses at UCCS and be a declared Geography & Environmental Studies major before applying to the Accelerated Program.

Students interested in the Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) should schedule a meeting with the Graduate Director to discuss the program details and confirm their eligibility (refer to the criteria listed above). To be considered for admission, it is strongly recommended that students notify the Graduate Director during their junior year, though notifications will be accepted up until the first semester of their senior year. The deadlines for submission are November 1st for spring admission and April 15th for fall admission. The following materials must be submitted to the Graduate Director for consideration:

- Intent Application: This application states that you currently intend, and are eligible, to begin taking dual-counting courses during your Bachelor's degree. This does not admit you to the Graduate School.
- The AMP application form: This application is for Department records.
- A personal Statement of Intent (this is included in the AMP application form, above).
- Two letters of recommendation from UCCS Department of Geography & Environmental Studies & Environmental Studies faculty members.
- An unofficial transcript.

Admission to the AMP allows the student to take 5000-level classes that may be counted towards the undergraduate and Graduates, pending the approval of the Director. Students must have applied for and completed the process of being accepted as an accelerated student prior to the semester they plan to take their first 5000-level course.

Undergraduate AMP students in their senior year are required to file an official Graduate School application, with the \$60 application fee, to be admitted to the MA program. Admission to the AMP program is competitive. Applicants will be evaluated on the following:

- Grade point average (cumulative and major GPA).
- Grade trend (improving, consistent, or declining).
- Likelihood of success and persistence based on the Statement of Intent.
- Recommendation letters.

Students who are not initially admitted to the AMP can reapply after completing an additional twelve semester credit hours. The Graduate Director will be responsible for admissions procedures and decisions. The AMP allows students to count up to nine semester credits towards both the Bachelor of Arts in Geography & Environmental Studies and the Master of Arts programs. In order for credit to be double-counted, the following conditions must be met:

- Dual credit courses are approved by the Graduate Director of Geography & Environmental Studies.
- Dual credit courses must be completed with a B or better.
- Dual credit courses must be taken for graduate credit (5000-level).
- Dual credit courses must be taken in the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies at UCCS.

Once admitted into the AMP, students are required to complete at least one and up to three 5000-level graduate courses as undergraduates with a minimum grade of B in each course, while maintaining a minimum overall GPA of 3.50.

Students who drop out or are dismissed from the AMP will be eligible to complete their bachelor's degree, subject to the normal rules of that program. They will be eligible to apply to the master's program and transfer credits, subject to the normal limitations of the BA and MA degree. They will not be allowed to double count 5000-level courses that were taken at the undergraduate level.

Within two weeks of being accepted into the AMP, the student will complete a Plan of Study indicating how the student intends to complete the MA part of the program, based on projected MA courses offered in the upcoming three years, and identifying a tentative faculty advisor. This process will be completed with the guidance of the Graduate Director.

### 1. Program Description

UCCS offers an MS program in Computer Science (MS-CS). The program has been in place for 35+ years. The numbers of students in the program for the past several years on Census Date in the Fall semesters are given below.

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
65	55	60	52	40	44	38	35	61	63

The program's enrollment dropped substantially starting 2018 but has picked up lately and is back to 2017 level in Fall 2024. We believe that the MS program in Computer Science has potential to grow. However, considering its history of enrollment, it is unlikely to grow if it remains an in-person program that attracts only local students, most of who work and study part-time in the late afternoons or evenings.

This proposal seeks to create a fully online option in the existing MS-CS program (called the MS-CSO option), with the objective of attracting students from outside the Colorado Springs Metropolitan area, including the rest of Colorado, the United States and beyond.

#### *Distinction between Current MS-CS Program and MS-CS Online (MS-CSO) Programs:*

As mentioned, UCCS already has an MS program in Computer Science. We envision the MS-CS program as it exists now, to remain geared toward local students who can attend in-person, and who may be interested in pursuing a PhD program later. In addition, international students who are interested in coming to the US on visa and later looking for employment need to attend in-person programs. Any growth in the MS-CS program is envisioned to come from local and international students.

MS in Computer Science Online (MS-CSO) will be a new option within the existing MS-CS program. Although its admission and graduation requirements will be like those of the Course-only Option, MS-CSO is expected to be the growth option, and keeping this in mind, it will have separate admission and graduation processes along with specialized marketing efforts. This option is designed to attract students who cannot attend currently offered MS-CS classes since they are employed full-time locally or are from outside the Colorado Springs area. The MS-CSO option is likely to attract a few local students, with the expectation that most students in the MS-CSO option will be from outside of Colorado, with some even outside the US.

To justify the need for the MS-CSO option, we provide an analysis of workforce and student demand.

### 2. Workforce and Student Demand

*2.1 Availability of Jobs for MS-CS Graduates:* According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2022, there were 2,805,020 jobs in Computer and Information Technology in the US, with a median annual wage of \$95,000. Of those employed in the field, 29% or 813,5000 had advanced degrees. Of all those employed in Computer and Information Technology, 60% had a degree in

Computer Science<sup>1</sup>. With this assumption, we can surmise that  $813,500 \times .6 \times .29 = 141,520$  (approx.) individuals had an advanced degree in Computer Science. Since PhD degrees are rare, we can safely assume that in the USA, 100,000-120,000 individuals have a master's degree in Computer Science. Again, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, from 2023 to 2033, about 356,700 job openings are projected to be available each year, on average, in Computer and Information Technology professions due to employment growth and the need to replace workers who leave the occupations permanently<sup>2</sup>. If we consider 29% of these jobs will require an MS in Computer Science, 103,450 (approx.) jobs will require an advanced degree in CS nationwide. According to indeed.com, there were 2,077 Computer Science open jobs available in Colorado on 10/28/2024, and ziprecruiter.com had 4,357 jobs on the same day. If we assume 29% of these jobs require graduate degrees in CS, Colorado has 602-1,264 that require a master's degree in Computer Science. Based on the numbers of jobs available for MS-CS graduates in Colorado as well as nationwide, we believe that there is high growth potential for the MS-CSO option. Although the MS-CSO option is designed to be open to individuals from around the country and the world, the numbers of jobs given above provide informed baselines. The overall conclusion is that there are plentiful jobs in Colorado and nationwide for those with master's degrees in Computer Science.

## 2.2 Student Demand

*National Demand and Number of Online MS CS Students:* According the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2022, nationwide 121,730 students were enrolled in graduate Computer Science programs in the US<sup>3</sup>. Assuming 90% of these students (since PhDs are rarer in general) are in master's programs, we have 109,500 (approx.) students in master's programs. With an additional assumption that students take a minimum of two years to graduate with an MS in CS, a guess for the number of available job applicants every year is  $109,500/2 = 54,750$ . The total number of online Computer Science graduate students is difficult to find. According to NCES, nationwide, 53.5% graduate students take at least one course online and 39% are exclusively online<sup>4</sup>. Assuming these statistics,  $109,500 \times 0.39 = 47,700$  (approx.) graduate students are taking exclusively online classes nationwide. In Colorado, 27.8% of all graduate students are exclusively online (Google Generative AI summary to search term "percentage of graduate students who study online", 10/28/2024).

In preparation of this proposal, surveys of current Computer Science undergraduate and graduate students at UCCS were conducted. Of the 19 current UCCS MS-CS students who responded, 58% would have enrolled in the MS-CSO option, if it had been was available when they began their graduate careers. Of the 32 current CS undergraduates at UCCS who responded, 66% responded by saying that they would be interested in the MS-CSO program only. These results are shown in Figure 1. Note that these are currently students enrolled in in-person programs and do not reflect the opinions of students outside the Colorado Springs area.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/field-of-degree/computer-and-information/computer-and-information-technology-field-of-degree.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22\\_311.90.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_311.90.asp)

<sup>4</sup> <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=80>



As a master's student in Computer Science at UCCS, **if you could choose today**, would you choose the traditional MS-CS again (Thesis or Course-Only) or opt for the online version (MS-CSO, Course Only)?



Figure 1: Survey of Current UCCS MS-CS students. Almost 60% of the students would prefer to be enrolled in an online MS program at UCCS, if one was available today.

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If both MS-CSO (Course-Only) and MS-CS (In-person, either Course-Only or Thesis Option) were available, which would you prefer?



Figure 2: Survey of Current UCCS Bachelors in CS Students. Two-thirds of the respondents would prefer to enroll in an online MS in CS program, although the rest are interested in the current in-person MS programs.

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The projected numbers of students in the proposed MS-CSO option are given in Table 1. We believe these numbers are conservative and are achievable with moderate but sustained marketing efforts.

Table 1: Projected Enrollment for the Proposed MS-CSO Option in MS-CS at UCCS. We have assumed a graduation rate of 0.6 in the second year of enrollment.

Estimated New Enrollment and Degree Completions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Full Implementation
Resident Headcount	10	18	26	34	42	50
Nonresident Headcount	10	35	60	85	110	200
Total Headcount	20	53	86	119	152	250
Degrees Awarded			12	44	52	100

### 3. Role and Mission Criteria

The proposed MS-CSO Option in MS-CS at UCCS is in line with the role and mission of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs as given below:

*The Colorado Springs campus of the University of Colorado shall be a comprehensive baccalaureate and specialized graduate research university with selective admission standards. The Colorado Springs campus shall offer liberal arts and sciences, business, engineering, health sciences, and teacher preparation undergraduate degree programs, and a selected number of master's and doctoral degree programs.*

This MS-CSO Option will be offered by the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering and Applied Science as the third option in the existing MS-CS program. To set the background for discussions, the numbers of students in the various major plans offered by the department on fall census dates are given below for the past eleven years. The total enrollment has been growing steadily although there is a small 2.2% drop from 2023 to 2024. These numbers are given here to show that the Computer Science Department has the capacity to teach “large” programs at all levels and grow further.

Table 2: Abbreviations are as follows. BICS-BI, Bachelor of Innovation in CS; CSCS-BA, BA in CS; CSCI-BS, BS in CS; CSCS-MS, MS in CS; CSCI-PhD, PhD in CS; BISC-BI, BI in Security; BIGD-BI, BI in Game Design; SECR-PhD, PhD in Cybersecurity

Plan Code	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
BICS-BI	39	62	62	76	78	72	60	44	41	24	19
CSCI-BA							20	77	110	131	118
CSCI-BS	213	256	262	272	298	310	310	295	302	314	334
CSCI-MS	70	65	55	60	52	40	44	38	35	61	63
CSCI-PHD						6	13	20	30	32	28
BISC-BI	33	62	59	73	95	118	107	102	80	56	35
BIGD-BI	72	106	119	116	107	82	71	74	84	79	80
SECR-PHD						8	22	19	16	23	27
	421	547	552	593	630	633	645	666	694	718	703

The College of Engineering and Applied Science has a goal of increasing its overall enrollment from 1,700 to 3,000 by 2030 to address the technical workforce needs. To be in sync, the Department of Computer Science has a goal to increase its student population from 700 to 1200 by 2030. The MS-CSO program being proposed here is likely to play a significant role in this endeavor. One of the goals for proposing the MS-CSO Option is to keep delivering our bachelor’s and PhD programs traditionally and keep on growing moderately but put in efforts toward rapid enrollment growth in the MS-CSO option.

#### 4. Duplication

Within the University of Colorado system, CU Boulder has an online MS-CS through the Coursera platform. In contrast, our proposed MS-CSO option will give a more “regular” MS-CS experience to students. The classes will be taught mostly by full-time faculty in the department, like the two existing MS CS options taught on campus.

There are at least two non-CU competitors for the MS-CSO option in Computer Science in Colorado, although we do not believe that any of these programs to be direct competitors.

- CSU Global does not have an MS-CS Online program although it has a specialized program in AI-ML, whereas the UCCS program is going to be a general master's in Computer Science. If the proposed MS-CSO program grows, we will contemplate introducing specializations or tracks.
- Colorado Technical University has an online MS-CS program. CTU is a for-profit institution and competes in a space that is different from a rigorous "regular" faculty-taught state university-based MS program.

## 5. Statutory Requirements

The new MS-CSO degree option will satisfy all applicable statutory requirements.

## 6. Curriculum Description

In the current MS program in CS, all the classes are taught in-person. The proposed MS-CSO program option will be like the Course-Only plan of the current MS-CS program although all classes will be taught online.

In the MS-CSO program option, the student must complete 30 semester hours to graduate.

Students will take classes at their own pace. Two courses per semester are considered full time at the graduate level, but students can take more if they want. The classes will be offered online, but following the university semester schedule, and with milestones. Videos interspersed with written textual reading content will be available on Canvas. Homework assignments and exams will be given on schedule. Exams will be given via locked-down browsers or other similar means. All work toward the M.S. degree must be completed within a six-year time limit. If the degree program cannot be completed within this period, then the student must request an extension from the Graduate School and validate any course work more than six years old.

The student, in consultation with the Director of the MS-CSO program, must complete a Plan of Study consisting of at least 30 semester hours. The Plan of Study must be submitted prior to the completion of 12 semester hours of graduate classes. This document specifies the courses and options chosen by the student and must be approved by the Director of the MS-CSO program. This Plan of Study may be changed during the student's study period.

To ensure that the graduate of the M.S. program will have acquired a sufficient breadth of knowledge in computer science, the following three courses or their equivalents are required if they were not previously taken at the upper division as an undergraduate; this will be true for the MS-CSO option also.

- CSO 5500 Operating Systems I
- CSO 5700 Computability, Automata and Formal Languages
- CSO 5720 Design and Analysis of Algorithms

Note that the O suffix will be added to courses taught online, although the course numbers will remain the same.

The admission requirements coupled with these three courses ensure that the graduate of the MS-SCO program option will have acquired a sufficient breadth of knowledge in Computer Science. Students who have had advanced undergraduate courses in these exact areas will not be allowed to take these courses for graduate credit but instead are required to include other graduate level Computer Science courses in their Plan of Study. The remaining courses in the Plan of Study will be electives. The student must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 or be subject to being placed on probation or denied the privilege of continued enrollment as a graduate student in the University.

A graduate student who has hours to transfer should complete a Transfer of Credit form, which is available from the Computer Science Department office. This form must be approved by the Director of the MS-SCO program option. There are two types of courses eligible for transfer: 1) graduate courses in Computer Science, taken at another institution and not applied towards another degree and 2) graduate courses in Computer Science taken at UCCS in any modality while the student was in unclassified status. The total number of credits to be transferred cannot exceed nine hours. Only courses in which a grade of B or higher was earned can be transferred.

#### 7. Professional Requirements or Evaluations

All 18 tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Department of Computer Science teach and conduct research in Computer Science and will be well-qualified to teach classes in the CS-MSO program option. Several IRC faculty also have PhDs and are eligible to teach MS classes. Additional faculty will be required for the new program, however, both to deliver new courses in support of the proposed program and to build the department's research capacity in Computer Science, so that MS-SCO courses offered are of high quality, infused by the state of the art. Requirements of tenure track faculty in support of this new program will include that candidates must hold an earned doctorate in Computer Science or a closely related field.

The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredits the undergraduate engineering programs at institutions offering such degrees, and part of the accreditation is the evaluation of the qualifications of the faculty and adequacy of facilities. ABET will only accredit graduate engineering degrees at institutions that do not offer an undergraduate degree in that discipline., so while the new graduate degree will not be eligible for ABET accreditation, the existing accreditation of the BS in CS and BI in CS programs will lend credibility to the graduate degree. The new degree will, however, undergo regular assessment consistent with other degrees on the UCCS campus that do not have external accreditation reviews.

#### 8. Institutional Factors

Beyond the increase in numbers of faculty and students resulting from the implementation of the proposed program, impact on other campus instructional, research, or service programs will be minimal. Library resources in Computer Science are already in place as they were needed for the current faculty and their research. Online students are likely to access library resources only online.

## 9. Physical Capacity and Needs

The classes will be offered via Canvas, and the Canvas infrastructure will be able to handle all classes without any additional investment. If new faculty are hired because of growth in the program, additional office space may be necessary. The additional space needed is unlikely to be a problem with the renovation being planned for the Engineering Building to be completed in 2-2.5 years.


## 10. Cost Description and Source of Funds

~~Because it is a graduate program,~~ MS-CSO instructors will be required to be [appointed to the ex](#) Graduate Faculty [since it is a graduate program](#). Although this program establishes an additional modality to an existing program and is usually not eligible for a proforma, [the](#) Interim Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance have expressed willingness to consider a proforma for the MS-CSO program. A detailed proforma is being prepared with the support of the Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science (EAS). Based on online development funds received from the campus, the EAS Dean has provided funds for development of the initial set of online classes to be fully functional by August 2025. The proforma [being developed](#) will include three tenure-track faculty and two teaching professors with [PhD terminal degrees](#) to be added as the program grows, including start-up funds for the TTF. We are requesting a faculty member for each 30 ~~new~~[newly](#) enrolled students. The proforma will have funds for a GTA for each 30 students as well; the GTAs will assist in the delivery of the online classes, helping with any minor technical issues, grading assigned homework assignments and projects, holding office hours, etc. The program will also seek money for an Online Graduate Student Services Specialist once the enrollment ~~goes up to~~[reaches](#) 100. ~~Details are still being worked out and the requested numbers for various positions may change by the time the proforma is finalized for approval of~~ University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC).

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The background of the slide is a dark blue to light blue gradient with a network of white dots and lines, resembling a molecular or data network structure.

# UCCS #MentorUp

Update to GEC Members  
December 13, 2024

# GPDs are saying...



They would like to see more resources geared for students so that mentees drive the mentor-mentee relationship.



Resources shouldn't necessarily be handbook based...most students are **not** going to use them.



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# UCCS Graduate Student Survey Feedback

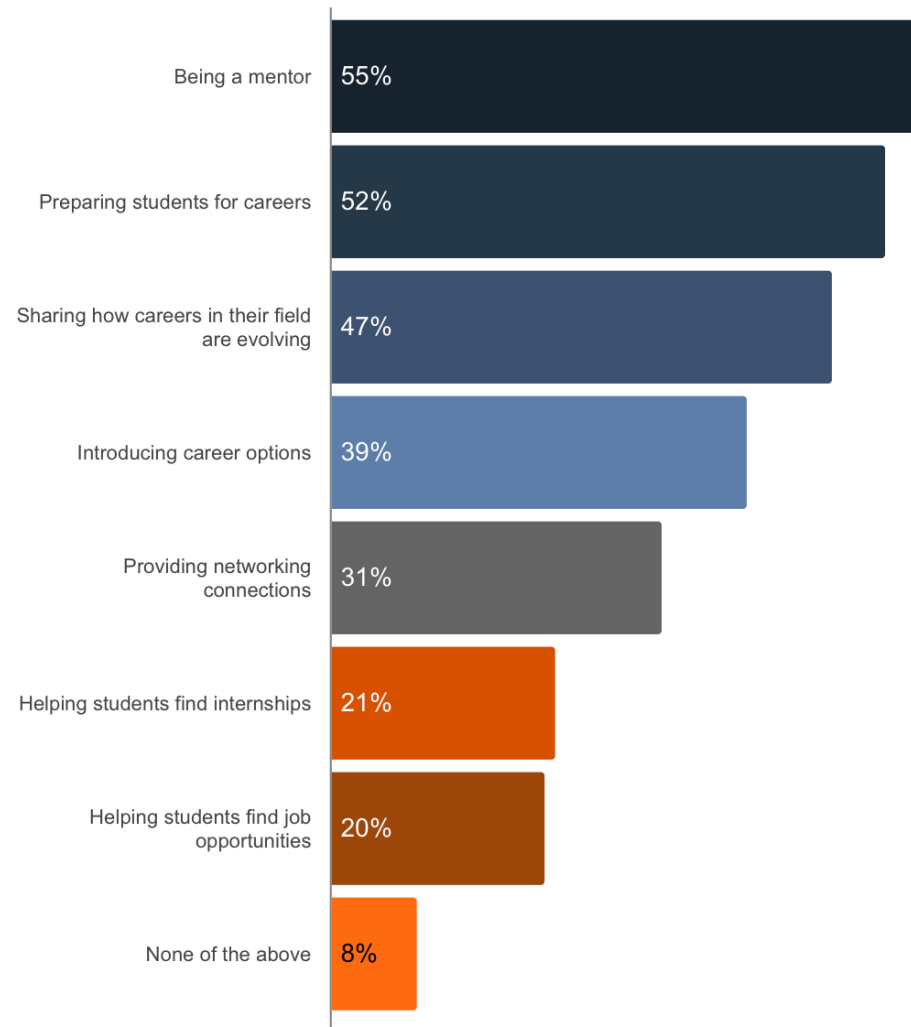
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- About 49% of graduate students reported considering from “moderate to great extent” leaving the program owing to inadequate advising.
- Most students do NOT feel mentored by more experienced students.
- Only 54% of students said “yes” to picking their graduate program again.



# Faculty Role in Career Development

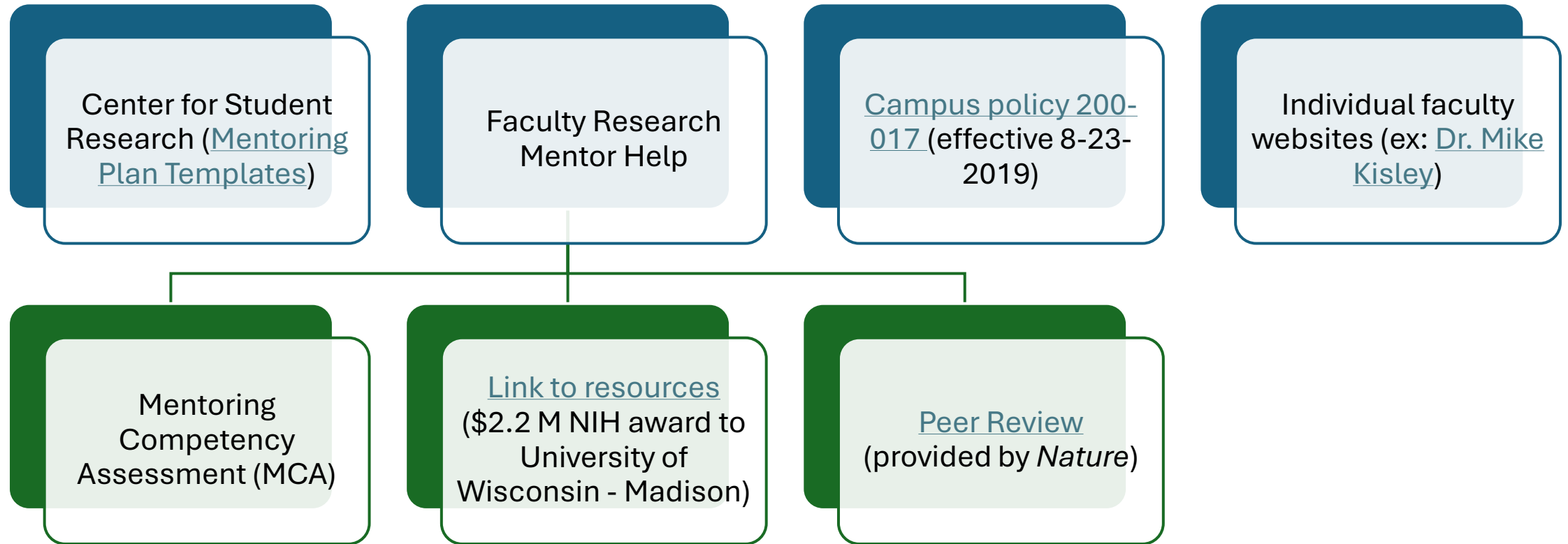
Share of total students who said professors were at least partially responsible for supporting students' post-graduation aspirations in the following ways.



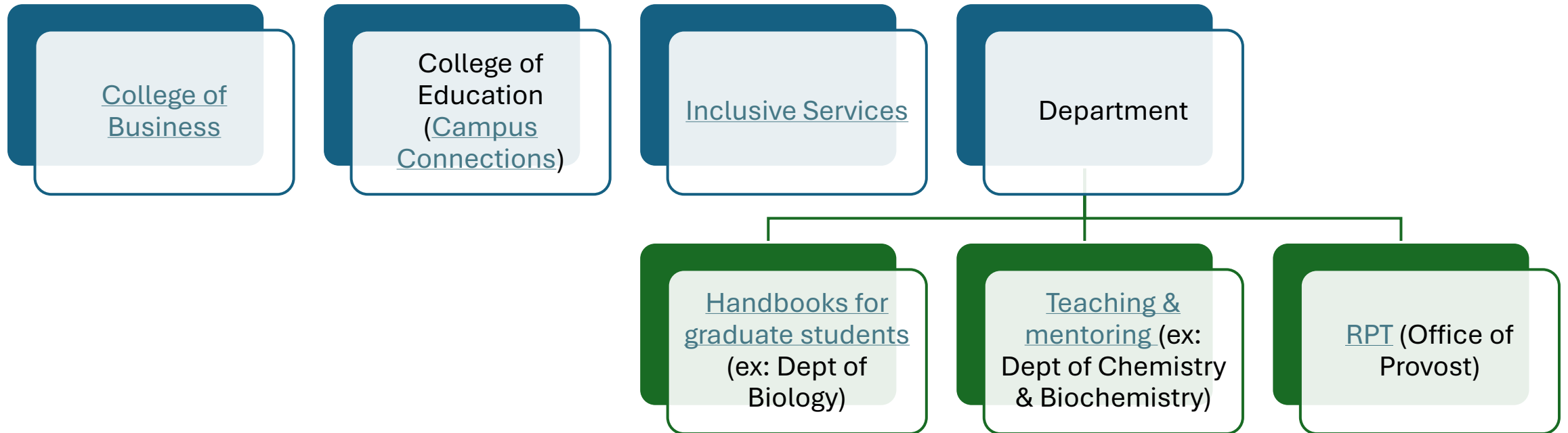
“If you talk about academic faculty, they mostly have a Ph.D. or a degree beyond their bachelor’s, and we tend to be imprinted by our own experience as a mentee, as a graduate student,” says Roel Snieder, W. M. Keck Distinguished Chair of Professional Development Education at Colorado School of Mines. “That can work out really well, and it can be a disaster.”

“Students are not very proactive to make mentorship a reality,” Snieder says. Students are willing to say mentorship is the responsibility of the faculty, but are students willing to take responsibility for their mentoring relationship with faculty?

# What do we currently do?



# At the College/Program Level



# What do other graduate programs offer?

Example of a few websites



[The Graduate College](#) » [Current Students](#) » [Student Resources Guide](#) » [Mentoring](#)

- [Events](#) >
- [CoLabEx](#)
- [New Students](#) >
- [Student Resources Guide](#) v
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Adjusting to Grad School](#)
- [Assistantship and Postdoc Resources](#)
- [Basic Needs and Essentials](#)
- [BIPOC Student Resources](#)
- [Career and Work](#)

# Mentoring

[RETURN TO RESOURCE GUIDE HOME PAGE](#)

[Expand All](#)

[Collapse All](#)

[Program-specific opportunities](#) >

[Graduate Student Mentoring Guide: A Guide for Students](#) >

[The National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity \(NCFDD\) Mentor Map](#) >

## Graduate School

## Mentoring for Graduate Students

Research shows that both students and faculty benefit when graduate students are involved in effective mentoring and advising relationships. At CU Boulder, there are a few ways to get involved and improve your mentorship experience.

### Get Involved



#### Graduate Peer Mentoring Program

The Graduate Peer Mentoring Program pairs established graduate students with peers who are new to graduate school.



#### Inclusive Research Mentoring Microcredential

The Inclusive Research Mentoring micro-credential provides training on how to enhance mentoring skills in research environments.

### Mentoring Resources



#### Graduate School Advising Agreement

Supplemental strategy guide created to support the graduate student advisees' short and long-term goals, while also giving advisors tools to clarify expectations.



#### Great Mentoring in Graduate School: A quick start guide for protégés

Includes helpful advice and tips on a range of topics such as identifying a mentor, engaging with mentors to develop a professional identity, cultivating networks, and serving as a mentor to others.



#### How to Get the Mentoring You Want: A Guide for Graduate Students

A detailed guide to developing effective mentoring relationships: how to find mentors, how to articulate your needs, general guidelines, advice on initial meetings, and much more.



#### A Brief Guide to Graduate Student Mentoring for Students and Their Mentors

Offers concise advice about how to choose a mentor, how to prepare for mentoring meetings, etc.



#### Specific Steps That You Can Take to Get the Mentoring You Need

# Before rolling out resources...

## Write

Write a values/mission statement centered around mentoring that provides a guiding “map” of what resources/items should be included on the Graduate School website.

## Create

Create a mentoring guide for incoming students: How do we introduce new students to a community of mentors?  
(Constellation map)

## Identify

Identify a list of student-centered resources for that constellation map:

- Communication plan with advisor/mentor
- Individual development plans
- “What we reward reveals what we value.” – Jen Heemstra

# Goal 1: Mission & Vision of #MentorUp

## Vision

The UCCS Graduate School will be recognized for its support and commitment to student and faculty mentoring to promote inclusive excellence in graduate and post-baccalaureate training in its many forms.

## Mission

The mission of the UCCS Graduate School MentorUp program is to provide innovative and inclusive resources, support, and guidance to support development of meaningful professional relationships between graduate students, faculty, and academic programs to foster professional development and student-faculty success.



# Goal 2: Give grad students tools to positively engage in mentorship – #MentorUp

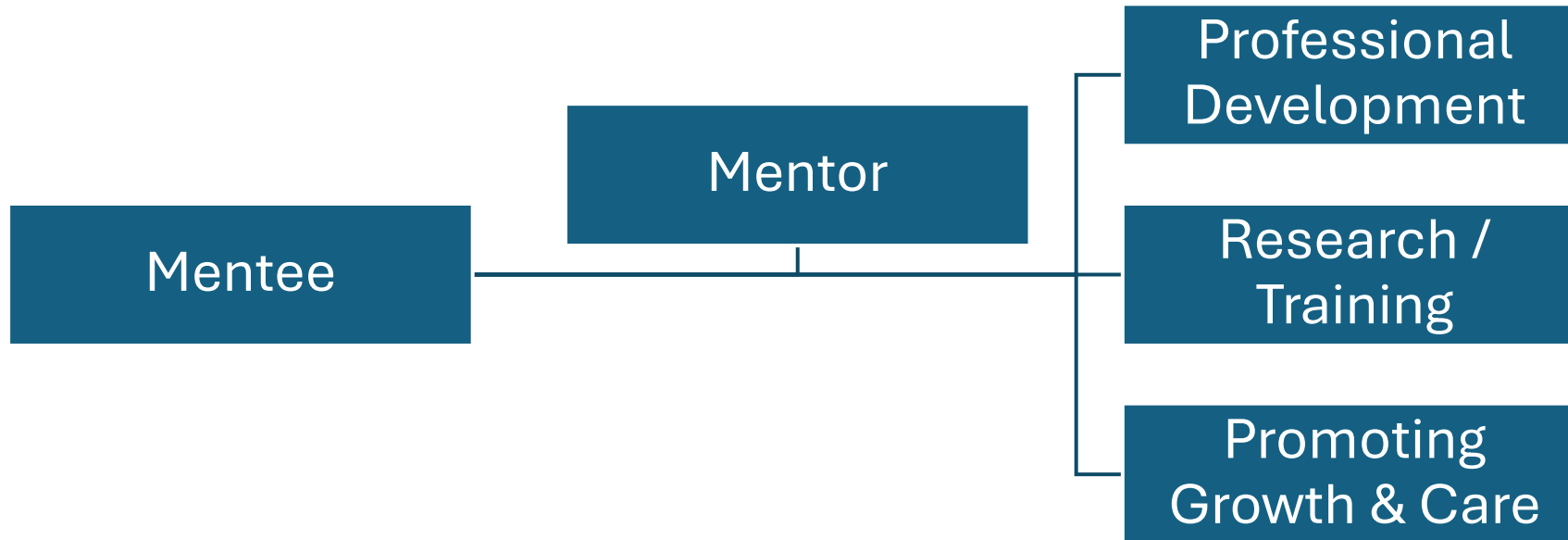
Many graduate students may not be self-aware enough to know what mentorship should look like or what mentorship style they need.

- [What does it mean to be mentored?](#)
- [Offering transparency in a handbook](#)
- [Tools for building a mentor network](#)
- [Develop an IDP](#)
- [Draft a statement of responsibilities as a mentee](#)

**ACTION:** Develop resources that allow our graduate students to MentorUp to create their own **constellation map** of mentors. Collaborate with UCCS units – Graduate School, Center for Student Research, Career Center, MOSAIC, to encourage students to utilize these resources.

# Goal 3: Centralize Mentoring Resources

It seems like we are doing mentoring well, but there is no centralized website with tools/resources for graduate student mentoring.



**ACTION:** Develop resources that allow our faculty & staff to MentorUp. Collaborate with UCCS units – Provost, Faculty Resource Center, Teaching & Learning Conference, Office of Research – to make these resources available and practicable.

## Being a Good Mentee and Mentor:

1. Cultivate empowered relationships with others.
2. Support growth and learning (including your own).
3. Develop and engage critical self-awareness.
4. Enhance your interpersonal skills.



## Building Success: Creating Your Own Mentor Constellation Map

### Mentoring Ground Rules:

1. Mentor-mentee relationships are reciprocal.
2. Be intentional about seeking a mentoring relationship.
3. Collectively set expectations for the relationship.
4. Be clear about professional goals. Find mentors who can support these goals.
5. Seek specific feedback.

# How do we help students advocate for themselves?

- Provide tools to **Mentor Match**

## Student Resources:

- Peer
- Advanced student
- Alumni

## Course Faculty:

- Student support hours
- Informal chats
- Facilitate introductions to program/dept faculty

## Research advisor faculty:

- Project mentorship
- Formal meetings / informal meetings
- Facilitate introductions to program/dept faculty in the discipline

## Campus resources:

- Career Center
- Graduate School
- MOSAIC
- Student clubs

- Work-life balance
- Program info (informal)
- Career development

- Program info (informal)
- Professional development
- Career development

- Professional development
- Career development
- Work-life balance

- Professional development
- Career development
- Work-life balance

## What Makes a Good Match? Predictors of Quality Mentorship Among Doctoral Students

- Mentees who shared attitudes, beliefs, and values with their mentor, or whose mentors displayed greater cultural awareness experienced more supportive, higher quality mentoring.
- **Mentees can work to identify potential advisors who share their outlook, perspectives, and values before selecting them as a mentor.** For instance, students could consider discussing their personal values, experiences, and viewpoints to determine compatibility and identify areas of alignment with a potential faculty advisor before selecting them as a research mentor. Students may also benefit from seeking out feedback from existing lab members who are familiar with the advisor and can provide additional perspectives on their advisor's values, personality, and attitudes.

# How do we enable **Mentor Match**?

Ask departments/programs to update faculty bios that includes information about who they are as **people** rather than **producers** of academic capital (courses, papers, grants)

- What do you value about your position?
- What encouraged you to go into (and stay) in higher education?
- What do you value about your research program?
- What do you value about training students?
- What do you value and care about **outside** of your professional duties?
- What are your own professional goals and aspirations?

# Other Recommendations

- Encourage faculty with research groups to create a [Welcome Letter](#)
- Research Syllabus

# How do we help students advocate for themselves?

- **Nested** (or scaffolded) model for asking for mentoring

Layer 1	Layer 2	Layer 3
Responsible: Student	Responsible: Student + New Faculty Mentor	Responsible: Student + Established Faculty Mentor
Communication plan	Mentoring Plan	IDP
Example 1 (slide 5)	Example 2 (slide 6)	Example 3 (slide 7)



# Example 1: Communication Plan (Dr. Vander Zanden – CHEM 6010)

Make an appointment to meet with your graduate advisor and discuss the following questions.

1. In your experience working with graduate students, what communication patterns have you found work well, and what isn't as effective?
2. How often do you prefer to meet with students you are mentoring? How are meetings initiated and who leads the agenda?
3. What are your expectations of graduate students you are mentoring?
4. What should I do if I need help?
5. Establish a communication plan with your mentor.

# Example 2: Mentoring Plans

## Mentoring Plan Options

### OPTION 1

This plan includes space for detailed descriptions of expectations.

[Click Here To Download](#)

### OPTION 2

This plan allows you and your mentee to map out career goals as well as program goals.

[Click Here To Download](#)

### OPTION 3

This plan is a simplified agreement with plenty of space to tailor it for your and your mentee's goals.

[Click Here To Download](#)

# Example 3: IDP

- Provide templates to students (and their faculty mentor) for individual development plans.
- Examples
  - [University of Missouri](#)
  - [Stonybrook University](#)
  - [chemIDP](#)
  - [Colorado State University IDP](#)
  - [CU Anschutz](#)

# (Loose) Timeline for Implementation

- Prioritize mentoring categories
- Tailor identified resources to UCCS students and faculty for inclusion on a website (by February)
- Work with the Graduate School to build the website with these resources (through Spring 2025 semester)
- Build an Internal Advisory Board with GPDs/Associate Deans (through May)
- Have this website ready for Fall 2025 incoming graduate students



Feedback for me?


Want to collaborate?

[jowens2@uccs.edu](mailto:jowens2@uccs.edu)

CENT 226

Chemistry & Biochemistry

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- Grant Westerfield, MSA  
Senior Tax Consultant at  
Stockman Kast Ryan + CO

# PROSPECTIVE STUDENT GUIDE

The Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) degree from the University of Colorado Colorado Springs is an excellent choice for those with an undergraduate degree in accounting (or business with an emphasis in accounting) who want to pursue an accounting career and/or licensure as a CPA.

The MSA helps graduates develop a deep knowledge of accounting. This 30-credit hour program, together with a student's undergraduate degree in business accounting, is designed to satisfy the 150 credit hour requirement for licensure in Colorado and most other states.

## MORE INFO AND HELP WITH THE PROCESS

### CONTACT US

Learn more about the program by contacting us at [gsba@uccs.edu](mailto:gsba@uccs.edu) or 719-255-3408

## CAN THIS WORK WITH MY SCHEDULE?

### COURSE INFORMATION

#### Campus Courses

- 16-week semester (HYFLEX offering)
- Fall and Spring semester courses meet once a week from 4:45 - 7:20 PM or 7:30 - 10:05 PM

#### Online Courses

- Asynchronous, online learning
- 8-week sessions
- Fall, Spring & Summer semesters

## FLEXIBLE HYBRID PROGRAM

### FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

The MSA program is a 10-course, HYFLEX graduate accounting program that combines in-person and online learning to provide students with optimal flexibility. Students who cannot meet in person for the on-campus meeting times may attend remotely. Non-accounting business electives may be taken fully online or on campus.

## WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

### COMPLETE THE MSA AT YOUR OWN PACE

Earn your MSA in as little as 12 months or at your own pace up to 6 years. Most MSA students graduate in 2 years while balancing a full-time job, CPA examinations, and other professional and personal commitments.

## ENHANCE YOUR MSA WITH A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

### FOCUSED ELECTIVE OPTIONS

Simultaneously fulfill the requirements of the MSA degree by taking specific courses toward one of our graduate certificate options to include Cybersecurity Management, Finance, or Management.

## THINKING OF USING VA/MILITARY BENEFITS?

Contact the McCord-Herbst Student Veteran Center at UCCS at **719-255-3253** or by email at [Military@uccs.edu](mailto:Military@uccs.edu)

## MAKE THE MOST OF STUDENT SERVICES

### STUDENT RESOURCES

- Individualized academic advising
- College of Business Career Development Center
- University Excel Centers that provide academic support in math, writing, & communication
- Designated College of Business Librarian
- UCCS Graduate School support

# MSA ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROGRAM OUTLINE

## »» ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ACCOUNTING

The Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) degree is designed for students with an undergraduate degree in accounting or an undergraduate business degree with an emphasis in accounting.

Admission to the program is based on the following:

- A four-year undergraduate degree in accounting or business from a regionally accredited institution.
- Successful applicants will generally have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, particularly in their upper-division classes and accounting.
- Successful completion of the following prerequisite courses or their equivalents\* as listed below.
  - A grade of C or higher must be earned in all prerequisite coursework.
  - All prior accounting coursework must have been taken within the last 10 years immediately preceding admission to the MSA program.

Prerequisite Course	UCCS Course Number
Intermediate Accounting I	ACCT 3010
Intermediate Accounting II	ACCT 3020
Cost Accounting <b>OR</b> Corporate Finance	ACCT 3110 FNCE 4000

\* Applicants who are missing one prerequisite course may be admitted on a provisional basis.

MSA Foundation Courses	UCCS Course Number
Individual Income Tax	ACCT 4210/6710
Auditing	ACCT 4600/6600

\*MSA Foundation courses can be waived based on prior academic coursework within age and grade policy.

## »» MSA Core Courses (30 Credit hours)

Course Title	UCCS Course Number
Required Accounting courses (15 credit hours):	
Seminar: Financial Accounting Theory	ACCT 6010
Accounting Ethics & Institutions	ACCT 6510
Advanced Auditing	ACCT 6620
Corporate and Partnership Taxation	ACCT 6720
Advanced Financial Accounting	ACCT 6750
Plus one (1) of the following Accounting electives (3 credit hours):	
Advanced Managerial Accounting	ACCT 6110
Introduction to Accounting Systems	ACCT 6730
Accounting for Governments & Not-For-Profit Organizations	ACCT 6740
Topics in Accounting	ACCT 6950
Additionally, students take elective courses (12 credit hours):	
Graduate Business Courses 6000 and above (Excluding STRT 6000)	
Graduate Accounting Courses (excluding ACCT 5500 and ACCT 6100)	
Internship in Accounting	ACCT 6960



# MSA CURRICULUM

MSA students choose their business electives from any 6000-level business courses in the MBA program (except STRT 6000 and ACCT 6100). Students may also focus their electives in a specific area to earn a business graduate certificate. The accounting faculty recommend the following classes as being particularly relevant to future accounting professionals.

## >> MSA BUSINESS ELECTIVES

Course Title	UCCS Course Number
Special Topics in Business	BUAD 6950
Visual Analytics: Principles & Applications for Business	BUAN 6100
Applied Predictive Analytics for Strategic Insights	BUAN 6200
Business Intelligence for Managers	BUAN 6300
Cybersecurity Technologies	CYSM 6100
Enterprise Information Security	CYSM 6200
Cybersecurity Governance	CYSM 6300
Cybersecurity Law and Cybercrime Investigations	CYSM 6400
Corporate Financial Management	FNCE 6000
Problems and Policies in Financial Management	FNCE 6100
Investment Management & Analysis	FNCE 6200
International Financial Management	FNCE 6400
Management of Financial Institutions	FNCE 6500
Legal Issues in Managing Human Resources	MGMT 6400
Applied Principles of Negotiation & Conflict Management	MGMT 6550

## >> MSA + CERTIFICATE OPTION

The MSA program requires students to choose any four graduate business electives (12 credits). The MSA+ provides an opportunity for students to earn an MSA degree plus graduate certificate in a non-accounting business area. Students take their four business electives in a specialized area of study. Adding a graduate business certificate enhances the strong accounting foundation obtained in the MSA program with a concentration in another business management area.

# MSA APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Follow the checklist below a smooth application process. There are three admission terms during the year. We recommend starting the application process two to four months prior to the deadlines listed below. Typically, you will be notified of the admission decision within 30 days of submitting your application package.

- COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL ONLINE APPLICATION
- \$60 NON-REFUNDABLE APPLICATION FEE
- GOAL STATEMENT:  
Tell us why you are interested in pursuing an MSA at UCCS. How will you contribute to the program and what do you hope to gain? (1-2 pages)
- CURRENT RESUME
- LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (Optional)
- OFFICIAL SCORES FOR THE GMAT OR THE GRE OR WAIVER

**GMAT Information:** Program code (PS4-4-f-02), UCCS will be listed under "Part-Time MBA Programs"

**GRE Information:** UCCS School Code (4874), Business Department Code (4201), applicants should take the general test **ONLY**

**Waiver:** Well-qualified applicants may be eligible for a GMAT waiver (see reverse for details)

- OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS FROM **EVERY** INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION ATTENDED
- INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS MUST ALSO SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:
  - Proof of English Proficiency (i.e. official TOEFL, IELTS, etc.)
  - Copy of Visa, Alien Registration Card, or I-94
  - Non-US transcripts must be evaluated (course-by-course) by a member from the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES)

Learn more at [uccs.edu/mba/international](https://uccs.edu/mba/international)

## PRIORITY DEADLINES:

FALL: JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>

SPRING: NOV. 1<sup>ST</sup>

SUMMER: APR. 1<sup>ST</sup>

# GMAT & GRE WAIVER & RESOURCES

## GMAT Waiver Options

The College of Business values the varied academic background and real world experience that students bring into the classroom. Applicants who meet any of the following criteria may petition for a GMAT waiver option.

- **Option A:** GPA 3.5 or higher with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: *transcripts and resume.*
- **Option B:** GPA 3.0 or higher with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: 3 years of meaningful professional work experience in accounting/finance industry or advanced degree (i.e. earned masters or doctorate): *transcripts, goal statement, resume and optional letter(s) of recommendation.*
- **Option C:** GPA less than 3.0\* with a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution: *transcripts, goal statement, resume, optional letter(s) of recommendation, and one of the following:*
  - 5+ years of meaningful professional work experience in accounting/finance industry
  - GMAT or GRE test scores\*\*

\*Cumulative GPA or GPA for last 60 credit hours, whichever is higher.

\*\*If undergraduate GPA\* is less than 2.75, applicants must submit GMAT or GRE test scores.

Graduate entrance exams provide one measure of a prospective student's qualification for advanced academic study. The UCCS Master of Science in Accounting program accepts either the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) or the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) for this purpose.

We generally receive official test scores within 2-4 weeks of testing.

## GMAT Focus Edition:

**Official GMAT Website:** [MBA.com](http://MBA.com)

**Online Cost:** \$300

**Test Center Cost:** \$275

**Scores:** Range is 200-800 for the combined quantitative and verbal sections. Average score of admitted UCCS MBA students is 550.

## GRE:

**Official GRE Website:** [TakeTheGRE.com](http://TakeTheGRE.com)

**Cost:** \$220

**Scores:** Range is 130-170 each for the verbal and quantitative sections. A score of 152 or higher on each section will make an applicant a strong candidate for our program.

[ed2go.com/uccs](http://ed2go.com/uccs)

[PowerScore.com](http://PowerScore.com)

[KapTest.com](http://KapTest.com)

[800score.com](http://800score.com)

[PrincetonReview.com](http://PrincetonReview.com)

TEST PREP  
RESOURCES  
FOR BOTH  
EXAMS

Test preparation websites are provided as a resource only and should not be interpreted as an endorsement by UCCS or the Graduate School of Business Administration.

# MSA TUITION

## 2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR

The investment in a quality graduate program can pay dividends throughout your career. The MSA program at UCCS provides tremendous value to our students. The academic rigor, breadth and depth, and flexibility of the program deliver convenience and quality - all at an affordable price.

The UCCS MSA program qualifies for federal financial aid, Veteran educational benefits, and employer reimbursement programs. Graduate level fellowships and scholarships are available. Please visit the UCCS Financial Aid website for more information. ([uccs.edu/finaid](https://uccs.edu/finaid))

	Colorado Resident Campus and/or Online* Classes	Non-Resident Campus and/or Online* Classes	Non-Resident Fully Online* Program
<b>1 Course (3 credit hours)</b>	\$2,970	\$4,965	\$3,050
<b>2 Courses (6 credit hours)</b>	\$5,392	\$9,382	\$6,100
<b>3 Courses (9 credit hours)</b>	\$7,815	\$13,800	\$9,149
<b>4 Courses (12 credit hours)</b>	\$10,237	\$18,217	\$12,199
<b>5 Courses (15 credits hours)</b>	\$12,659	\$22,634	\$15,249

\* Online classes have a \$100 per course online program fee.



The table above is approximate and includes most student fees. Visit the Bursar's Office website to estimate your bill. ([uccs.edu/bursar](https://uccs.edu/bursar))

Additionally, UCCS recently announced the Textbook Affordability and Access Program (TAAP), an initiative that provides an innovative, personalized, and affordable course material experience for all students. More information about this program and how to utilize its resources can be found online. ([uccs.edu/taap](https://uccs.edu/taap))

# WHY CHOOSE A GRADUATE DEGREE FROM UCCS...

## AACSB ACCREDITED

The College of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International). This represents the highest standard of achievement for business schools worldwide.

## TOP RANKED BUSINESS PROGRAM

The UCCS College of Business has consistently ranked as a Top Business Program by U.S. News & World Report and is one of the top public, master's granting universities in the western region.

## DANIELS FUND ETHICS INITIATIVE COLLEGIATE PROGRAM

The Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Collegiate Program at the UCCS College of Business is a resource for principle-based ethics education, serving students, educators and business community. The UCCS College of Business is one of eight original participating schools in the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Collegiate Program that now includes twelve participating schools.

## CONSISTENTLY RANKED A MILITARY FRIENDLY SCHOOL

We are proud to serve our active duty, reserve, and retired service personnel and their families. Our UCCS McCord-Herbst Student Veteran Center partners with the College of Business to ensure accurate and timely service and support.

## AMONG THE TOP PROGRAMS CITED BY MILITARY TIMES

The UCCS College of Business was among the top 100 programs cited by Military Times among four year schools. It's our fourth consecutive top 100 ranking. The Military Times newsweeklies and digital platforms are a trusted source for independent news and information for service members and their families.





UCCS GRAD SLAM

# 3-MINUTE THESIS



## Competition

1 SLIDE - 3 MINUTES  
RESEARCH AWARDS GIVEN

**\$750 - \$500 - \$250**

JAN 28 OR 29, & FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Priority Registration DEC 20  
Final Registration JAN 17

**GRAD3MT@UCCS.EDU**

**719-255-3417**

**GRADINFO@UCCS.EDU**





University of Colorado  
Colorado Springs



SPRING 2025

# Graduate School Welcome Reception

A great opportunity for new UCCS graduate students to connect with other students, staff, and faculty, and to learn about available campus resources.

Dinner will be provided.

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Kettle Creek

Next to the Roaring Fork Dining Hall in Alpine Village

\*Free Parking in Alpine Garage\*

RSVP by January 10th THRU MOUNTAIN LION CONNECT!

Questions? 719-255-3417 or [gradinfo@uccs.edu](mailto:gradinfo@uccs.edu)