Knowledge Systems Institute
Student Handbook 2014

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### 1. Student Rights and Responsibilities

#### 1.1 – Student Rights and Privileges

As a student of Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School (KSI), the responsibility of being aware and knowledgeable of this handbook rests completely on each individual student. As important as it is to earn a degree or certification, it is imperative that all students adhere to the statutes that are presented in this handbook. Updates are available online ([www.ksi.edu/studenthandbook.pdf](http://www.ksi.edu/studenthandbook.pdf)) as well as in printed media.

Each student is expected to be thoroughly familiar with the school’s policies for maintaining the privacy of education records. Students may obtain access to their own educational records by presenting proper identification with their written request to view their records. Petitions and redress of grievances are noted by the administration when fully explained in writing before presentation.

#### 1.2 – Self-Discipline

KSI believes that acquiring self-discipline is part of the educational process. As in any civic community, students will be held accountable for their own conduct. They are therefore responsible for any damage they may do to the school property and should observe satisfactory standards of conduct both on and off campus. Students are expected
to keep themselves informed of all school regulations.
2. Admissions

2.1 – Criteria and Standards for Admission

Students wishing to take courses for credit or wishing to pursue the MS Degree Program will be subject to the normal admission requirements as articulated in the KSI Course Catalog and KSI website (www.ksi.edu) and below.

Students wishing to take courses not for credit will be allowed to do so without having to adhere to the normal admission procedures, in which case no credit will be awarded for completed courses and no official transcript will be released.

2.2 – Admission Requirements

Admission as a graduate student requires a Bachelor’s Degree. A student may be required to take prerequisite courses to make up for deficiency in previous education. Persons with inadequate background are required to complete a program of up to 20 prerequisite courses before being considered for admission to the graduate program. Such prerequisite courses shall not be counted toward the fulfillment of degree requirements. International students can only be admitted as full-time students. Before a student may matriculate, he or she must have an official transcript of previous college work on file in the registrar’s office.

2.2.a - TOEFL Requirement:

An applicant from a country whose native language is not English must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 80 iBT or higher before admission. If a student has not submitted a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher, this will be stated in a student’s I-20 as “The student is not yet proficient English instructions will be given at the school.” This clause will only be removed from a student's I-20 after they submit a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher.

2.3 – How to Apply

Applicants should submit the following application materials:

- Completed application form (available at the administration office and online at www.ksi.edu/application/)
- $50.00 non-refundable application fee
- Original three letters of reference letters
- All official transcripts in sealed envelopes provided directly from degree granting institution (copies will not be accepted).
- Copies of all previously earned diplomas including Bachelor’s Degree
- State I.D, Drivers License or Passport
- (International Students only): Copy of passport / Visa / I-94 card must be submitted. Copies of all I-20s received from previous institutions must also be submitted.
• (International Students only): TOEFL grade report. This grade report should be sent directly from the testing center to the school using the school’s TOEFL test center code, which is 1379.

• (International Students only): Official financial Support Documents including bank statements and notarized affidavit of support. Please contact administrative office for sufficient amounts.

• Conversion/Reinstatement students: Contact Administrative Office for the required documents

• New F-1 students who wish to join KSI must show ECE or WES evaluated transcripts of their foreign bachelor’s or master’s degree. The purpose of the evaluation is to have evidence that you have the US Equivalency to a Bachelor’s Degree. KSI only accepts WES and ECE evaluations, other evaluation companies will not be accepted. To find out more about WES, please visit this website: http://www.wes.org/index.asp. To find out more about ECE, please visit this website: https://www.ece.org/. Each evaluation company has a fee to do the evaluation, their websites will guide you on the fees and requirements.

Application materials should be submitted to:

• KSI Admissions Office
  3420 Main Street
  Skokie, Illinois 60076

2.4 – When to Apply

Applications for admission are accepted throughout the year. Students who wish to register for courses during a particular semester must complete the application process prior to the semester application deadline. Semester deadlines vary, to find out the semester application deadline for a particular semester contact the Administration Office (office@ksi.edu) or visit KSI’s academic calendar available at www.ksi.edu/schedule.html. The application cut off date is two weeks before the next semester’s Registration Day. Class start dates are presented on the academic calendar, which is available on the KSI website (www.ksi.edu/schedule.html).

2.5 – Transfer of Credit Policy

Students who have completed graduate-level coursework in computer and information sciences but did not earn a master’s degree in computer information science at a regionally accredited institution may request the credit of equivalent graduate courses be applied towards a graduate degree subject to the constraints listed below.

1. Only matriculated students may transfer a maximum of six graduate credits from another regionally accredited institution toward a KSI master’s degree.
2. The University or college previously attended must be a regionally accredited institution awarding graduate credits.

3. Credits may be transferred for courses earning credit and successfully completed with a grade of “B” or higher.

4. Only credit hours are transferable. Grade associated with the credit are not transferable, nor are they included in computing the grade point average at KSI.

5. Only graduate courses in computer science having an equivalent KSI course may be transferred. Graduate-level coursework from other disciplines is not transferable.

2.6 Incomplete Bachelor’s Degree Credit Policy

Any student that has completed two to three years of college is required to take between seven (7) to twenty (20) undergraduate level Computer Science courses to make up for their deficiency in order for them to take Knowledge Systems Institute Graduate School masters degree program. Students must eventually complete a Bachelor’s Degree program and provide KSI with the Bachelor’s degree copy.

2.7 Non-Discrimination 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.
3. Registration and Records

3.1 – Audit Policy

A student may elect to take a course on a listen-in basis. However, his/her decision must be made when he/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.

3.2 – Registration and Refund Policy for Domestic Students

Domestic students must register at least one (1) week prior to the beginning of each semester. Domestic students may cancel registration and obtain a full refund within six (6) class hours from the beginning of the course. However, a completed “Add/Drop Form” must be completed and turned into the Administration Office in order to be eligible for refund.

3.3 - Registration and Refund Policy for International Students

International students must register at least one (1) week prior to the beginning of each semester. The tuition of the semester must be paid in full at the time of registration. International students may cancel registration and obtain a full refund prior to their arrival in the United States. A written cancellation letter must be sent to the Administration Office. Once an international student has entered the United States using an I-20 form issued by KSI, no refund of tuition will be given, regardless of a withdrawal or transfer.

3.4 - Registration and Refund Policy for Current/Transfer International Students

International students must register no later than Registration Day of each semester. The tuition of the semester must be paid in full at the time of registration. International students may cancel registration and obtain a full refund within the sixth hour of class. However, that will drop the student to a part-time status, which is unacceptable at KSI. If a student drops to part-time status, approval is needed by the school. Failure to seek approval will result in expulsion and/or termination from KSI. Please view 11.4 Academic Load for International Students.

Students who are traveling out of country during semester breaks must pre-pay the tuition in full of the pre-registered semester. If the student does not return, refunds will not be processed for pre-registration.

3.5 - Textbooks
Each student is responsible for purchasing the required textbooks for the courses he/she has selected. On registration day, the Administrative Office will have available a list indicating what text will be used for each of the courses being offered.

3.6 – 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/she drops and also by the instructor of course that he/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/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-on to the online course-ware is rendered to student.

3.7 - Withdrawal Policy

A student may withdraw from a course within the first six (6) class hours from the beginning of the course and a tuition refund or credit may be granted. The student should come to the Administrative Office and complete an “Add/Drop” form in order to withdraw from a course. The instructor of the course from which he/she withdraws must sign the Form. Any students who fail to follow this procedure or does not withdraw until the seventh class hour shall receive no refund or credit. Students withdrawing from an online course will receive no refund once the course materials have been downloaded.

3.8 – Travel Policy (International Students)

International students are allowed a maximum of nine (9) days to travel overseas when school is in session. Students must request for a travel I-20. If approved, the 3rd page of the I-20 will be signed, which indicates that the student has been approved to travel. Without this signature, the student will not be allowed back into the United States. In addition to the signed I-20 the student must carry with them during their travel the school catalog as well as their SEVIS I-901 fee, which can be retrieved from www.fmjfee.com, recent registration form/tuition receipt, your contact details in USA and proof of financial support (original bank statements and/or Affidavit of Support). No special letters will be given for travel purposes. If a student starts during the summer semester, then he/she will be entitled to take the spring semester off. No international student will be given permission to take a semester off if they are not maintaining the required grade point average and full time status requirements.

If international students are traveling during semester breaks, submission of a flight itinerary is needed along with pre-registration
and submission of a pre-payment of tuition for the pre-registered semester. If the student does not return, refunds will not be processed for pre-registration.

Any international student who wants to take a trip abroad or go to their home country must first obtain permission from the Executive Director. The PDSO/DSO will then endorse the student’s I-20.

3.9 - Grading

Letter grades will be given for all courses, except those courses that are related to a student’s thesis project. MS project courses will be graded as either “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.” MS students must maintain a “B” average to graduate. If a student receives a grade below minimal passing standard (“C" or below for graduate and “D” or below for prerequisite course) for a required course, he/she must repeat the course and the new grade will replace the previous grade. If the course is an elective, he/she may take a different course and the new course will replace the previous course taken. Any student receiving a failing grade will not be entitled to any type of refund or credit on their tuition. Furthermore, if the student has received a failing grade in a required course, that student will have to retake the course and pay the appropriate tuition fee.

3.9.a – Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory (minimal passing for graduates)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Minimal passing (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Non-Credit</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Maternity Leave or Other Leave</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Retake</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/U</td>
<td>Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (MS Project Only)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdraw</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WF</td>
<td>Withdrawal Fail</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades may be modified furthermore by the use of plus (+) or minus (-) following a letter grade as follows:
0.25 quality point is added by each plus, except grade A.
0.25 quality point is subtracted by each minus.
3.9.b – Maternity Leave Grade Policy

Faculty are expected and encouraged to make arrangements with the student to submit work for completion of course requirements when the student returns from leave. While on leave, the student will receive an "O" for the course. The grade will convert to an "F" if the student does not update the school in any way in regards to a return for course completion. A student on maternity leave can only have one semester off. If the student needs more than one semester off, they cannot continue their education and must transfer to another school.

3.9.c - Incomplete Grade Policy

Any student who has failed to fulfill all of the requirements of the class when the grades are turned in will automatically receive an "I" (Incomplete) grade from the professor. Thirty (30) calendar days after receiving an "I" grade, the grade will be converted into an "F" grade if the student fails to finish the required coursework in the allotted time. 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.

The professors may give incomplete grades to students who do not complete an exam, project, paper or other final coursework, or to students who attended at least 70% of the classes and completed at least 70% of the course requirements, but were unable to finish.

A student shall have thirty (30) calendar days in which to finish projects, homework assignments, take final exams, etc. in order to have the "I" grade converted into "B", "C" or "D".

In no event shall a student who has received an "I" grade be entitled to a grade higher than 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.

3.9.d – Grade Point Average

A grade point system is used to determine academic rank. To determine grade point average (GPA), divide the total number of grade points earned by the total number of graded semester credits. Note: graded semester credits do not include course registrations with 0 (zero) quality points.

3.9.e – Grade Reports

Grade reports are issued at the completion of each semester. Privacy Act of 1974 as amended. Requests for transcripts should be made at least ten (10) days prior to the date the
transcript is needed. During registration week, please allow additional time for processing transcripts. Transcripts will be released only after the student has fulfilled all financial obligations to the school.

3.9.f – Class Attendance

All students are expected to attend class regularly. If a student fails to attend the first three classes of any course, the student will receive an 'F' and be dropped from that course. Any student who fails to attend five (5) or more classes will receive an "F" grade for the course and will not be entitled to any type of tuition refund. Excessive absences may cause a student to be dropped from a course at the discretion of the instructor and the department chair. Students are allotted to miss two class sessions maximum, should the student request for an excused absence, he/she must provide their instructor with written notification when an illness or emergency will cause them to miss classes. Upon returning to class, the student shall provide the Administrative Office with written documentation verifying the reason for that absence, after such submission the absence will be recognized as 'E' excused.

Missing any five (5) classes of any course during the Fall and Spring semesters will result in an ‘F’ for that course and for International Students: our institute will not register you into the SEVIS system for the next term resulting in the student to seek transfer or termination of SEVIS status may occur with formal notice from the Administrative Office.

Missing any three (3) classes of any course during the Summer semester will result in an ‘F’ for that course and for International Students: KSI will not register you into the SEVIS system for the next term resulting in the student to seek transfer or termination of SEVIS status may occur with formal notice from the Administrative Office.

Missing any three (3) classes consecutively throughout the full semester; i.e. missing the first (3) three classes repetitively, will result in an ‘F’ grade; for International Students: our institute will not register you into the SEVIS system for the next term resulting in the student to seek transfer or termination of SEVIS status may occur with formal notice from the Administrative Office. If a student misses three weeks consecutively in the semester, the student will fail the course and will be put on academic probation, which can lead to termination.

Additionally, Being late to class or leaving a class early 3 times will be accounted as a missed class. If a student tends to a phone call or is dismissed by the professor, or instructor for whatever reason, will be marked as leaving early for a class. Teaching Assistant (TA) have the right to mark your attendance
as late/leaving early when the professor is unavailable or is occupied in teaching the course. They also have the right to ask you to leave the class if you persistently visit video streaming sites.

3.9.g – Illness or Emergency

In the case of illness or hospitalization, which will require a student to be absent for two or more days, the student is required to give the professor(s) and administration office written notice explaining the reason for non-attendance. Furthermore, the student will be required to provide original documentation for the absence such as a statement from a hospital indicating admittance/release dates or an attending physician letter stating the nature of the illness.

International Students: Students who need more than one semester off cannot continue with KSI and must transfer out after the first semester off.

3.9.h – Prolonged Absences/Hiatus

Any student who has had a prolonged absence or who has taken a hiatus from his/her studies, due to either medical reasons or other circumstances will have to follow the procedures for Reinstatement. Domestic Students, who have not registered for classes for ten (10) consecutive years or more, will have to start their program over.

International Students: Students who have not registered for classes for one (1) consecutive year or under, will have to start their program over. Previously earned credits will be recognized, except for thesis courses. The nine (9) credit thesis courses must be retaken.

Students who have not registered for over one (1) year must take prove proficiency by taking and passing (75% or higher) for any 500 level or 300 level courses taken.

3.9.i - Graduate Level Course Grading

MS students must maintain a 'B' in all core (required) courses. If the student achieves a grade lower than a 'B' for a core course the student must retake the course in order to graduate. MS students must maintain a 'B' average for all area (elective) courses. If the student must retake a class due to low grades the student will not be entitled to a refund or credit on tuition.

In the event that the student takes an elective or core course which is not listed on the degree program requirements available in the KSI course catalog and KSI's official website (particular link: http://www.ksi.edu/MSDegree.html) the course will not count towards
the students degree completion regardless of the grade. Only the courses listed in the degree requirements directly relate to the program completion. In order to have a course which is not listed on the program completion list substituted to go towards the degree program completion, the student must attain permission from their Advisor, Dean of Student Affairs and the Executive Director of KSI before Registration Day of that given semester.

3.9 j - Thesis Project Course Grading

MS Project courses will be graded as 'I' incomplete until the project is fully completed after which the grade will convert to 'S' for Satisfactory or 'U/S' Unsatisfactory.

3.10 – Transcripts

Transcripts may be requested from the Administrative Office by completing a “Transcript Request Form” (available at www.ksi.edu/forms/transcriptrequestform.pdf) and paying the document preparation fee per transcript. Requests must bear the signature of the student.
4. Tuition and Fees

Tuition

Students must pay tuition in full by registration day (one week prior to the semester start date). Tuition includes material fees and laboratory fees.

If tuition is 1-30 days late, a 10% penalty will be reflected in the tuition amount. If tuition is 31-60 days late, a 20% penalty will be reflected in the tuition amount. If tuition is 61-80 days late, a 30% penalty will be reflected in the tuition amount. On the 81st day the student will be dropped from all course work and if the student is an international student, the lack of tuition paid will be regarded in the SEVIS which can result in termination of the student status.

*For all checks or credit card transactions returned by the bank upon which is marked "Not Sufficient Funds," "Payment Stopped," or "Account Closed," a penalty charge will be assessed for each returned check or credit card transaction. KSI reserves the right to charge a ten percent (10%) penalty on the unpaid balance of tuition past due.

Additional fees

Student additional fees include an initial non-refundable application fee and student I.D. fees (student I.D must be renewed annually). The following are circumstances as requested by students for additional fees: Special letters and transcripts. For international students; I-20's, re-printing of I-20's, reinstatement processing, dependent, OPT processing, and conversion fees.

Document Preparation

The Administrative Office reserves the right to charge students a document preparation fee to prepare documents on their behalf. These documents may include, but are not limited to, photocopies, transcripts, and preparation of original documents or preparation of forms and letters either by direct request from the student or on the student’s behalf. Furthermore, KSI reserves the right to charge the student any and all appropriate shipping, handling and postage fees.

Students will be charged fees for creation and help with special letters and statement letters by the Administrative Office. Special letters are letters created by the Administrative Officer regarding student verification or recommendation. Statement letters are letters created in part by the student and in part by an Administrative Officer regarding circumstances such as changes in international student status.

Following are the tuition rates and fee amounts
## Description of Services *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters Application Fee (Payable with application and non-refundable)</td>
<td>$ 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students per credit hour</td>
<td>$ 450.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students (non immigrant students) per credit hour</td>
<td>$ 540.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Registration Fee</td>
<td>$ 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Learning Lab Fee per course</td>
<td>$ 150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Fee per semester</td>
<td>$ 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Fee per course</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript Request</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript Request (Expedited processing: same day)</td>
<td>$ 10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Status Conversion Service Fee</td>
<td>$ 295.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Reinstatement Service Fee</td>
<td>$ 295.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-issue of I-20 Form for International Students</td>
<td>$ 25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned Check Fee*</td>
<td>$ 35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned Credit Card Transaction Fee*</td>
<td>$ 35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student ID Card (renewed every year)</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of Specialty Letters (per letter) Service Fee</td>
<td>$ 25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of OPT Package (includes S&amp;H) Service Fee</td>
<td>$ 55.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of OPT Extension Package (includes S&amp;H) Service Fee</td>
<td>$ 55.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Effective Fall 2013 Tuition and Fees subject to change without notification. For all checks returned by the bank upon which is marked ‘Not Sufficient Funds’, ‘Payment Stopped’ or ‘Account Closed’, a penalty charge will be assessed for each returned check.

*Conversions and reinstatements include a $45 FedEx one-day shipping and $10 handling fee

Shipping and handling costs differ on case by case basis and will be charged separately.

All service fees are non-refundable.
5. Academic Advising

5.1 – Academic Advisor

Once a student has received an Admissions Letter to KSI, he/she will be assigned an Academic Advisor to guide the student through his/her program. During the registration period before each semester, the student is required to meet with their advisor to discuss the courses they are interested in taking. When a decision has been made relative to course selection, the advisor will then fill out the student’s “Advising Form.” The form is a permanent document to be kept as part of the student’s academic record.

Furthermore, students are required to meet with his/her advisor and obtain the advisor’s signature on the “Add/Drop” Forms should any changes be made to their registration. More information about Add/Drop is available in section 3.6 in the Student Handbook.

5.2 – MS Project Advisor

Each MS Degree Program student must have a Project Advisor. Advisors will be assigned by the Administrative Office. The student should meet with his/her Academic Advisor to discuss his/her MS thesis plan. Thereafter, the Academic Advisor will help guide the student in the selection of a Project Advisor. The Chairman of Thesis Committee must approve of the advisor selection. Once selected, the Project Advisor will supervise the progress of the student’s research activities. The “Master of Science Project Worksheet” contract must be signed by the Project Advisor and approved by the Chairman of Thesis Committee.

5.3 – MS Project Advising Procedure

Please consult the MS Project Worksheet (available at www.ksi.edu/forms/msprojectworksheet.pdf) for complete MS Project requirements and procedures.

5.3.a – Enrollment Status

Students are required to fulfill all of the requirements outlined below in order to present/defend their thesis. Furthermore, the individual must be currently enrolled as a KSI student in at least three (3) credit hours in order to present/defend his/her thesis.

International students must be currently enrolled as full time students when presenting and defending the MS Thesis. Upon registration, international students who are currently enrolled as non-F1 students must provide official documents to support their legal status.

5.3.b – Nine (9) Months Prior to Graduation (or earlier)
A) Your advisor will be assigned to you by the Administrative Office. Contact your Advisor to schedule a meeting to discuss the subject and scope of your Thesis Project. You must meet with your Advisor every other week during the full semester for at least one hour. You should also borrow a thesis from the KSI Library.

B) Turn in a copy of the Graduation Application Form (page 3 of MS project worksheet, www.ksi.edu/forms/msprojectworksheet.pdf) to the Administrative Office. It is important that this signed form is submitted 7 months or earlier. Failure to submit it despite completion of thesis would make you ineligible for graduation.

C) **CIS599A is now a required core course**- Students who register for Thesis Part A will have to attend classes on a weekly basis. **This class will cover the content of thesis and the writing aspect of thesis; selecting a strong topic, how to do research and how to write a thesis.** The weekly sessions will include the Chairman of the Thesis Committee, all thesis advisors and a writing advisor. This course will strengthen the chances for students to complete their thesis successfully without delays and is an excellent background element in the MS Degree completion to display pure CIS knowledge-ability.

**5.3.c – Eight (8) Months Prior to Graduation (or earlier)**

A) Select a thesis topic. Turn in a thesis proposal for approval to your advisor. The advisor will then ask you to submit the topic and abstract to the Chairman of Thesis Committee for approval. Without the Chairman of Thesis Committee approval of your thesis proposal, you cannot begin to write your thesis.

B) Turn in an outline with a bibliography to your Advisor.

C) **Meet with your Advisor at least twice a month** for a minimum of one (1) hour per thesis course. **Correspond (via email) with your Advisor at least once a week; submit your Graduation Application Form for your Advisor’s approval.** This approved sheet MUST be turned in with the project upon its completion.

D) Keep a record of all revision history which will accumulate during your meetings with the advisor. Without the accumulated revision history, your graduation date may be postponed.

E) Please keep in mind that your thesis must meet the Thesis committee’s legitimacy regulations; a direct contribution towards innovative applications of computing/information management, technology for the development of an application in areas that are still under exploration. The thesis must include or involve significant applications toward advancing the
exploring area.

F) Student must complete Comprehensive Exam prior to completing the thesis.

5.3.d – Six (6) to Four (4) Months Prior to Graduation

Turn in a draft of your full thesis, the revision history and submit the Thesis Project Proof-reader Acknowledgment Form (available at the KSI website and the Administrative Office). Without submission of the Proof-reader Acknowledgment Form, the project advisor cannot send the Chairman of Thesis Committee for review. The draft must include a table of contents and index. Your Advisor should review and approve your project draft. Once you have obtained your Advisor’s approval, an electronic copy via email will be sent to your advisor to the Chairman of Thesis Committee.

A) International Students: Turn in your TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher. You will not be eligible to apply for OPT if the score is not submitted. As stated in the admissions requirements, if a student has not submitted a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher, this will be stated in a student’s I-20 as “English Proficiency Not Met.” This clause will only be removed from a student’s I-20 after they submit a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher.

B) Final Thesis Approval: As a reminder, it takes at least one month for the Chairman of the Thesis Committee to read the final draft of your thesis. If your final draft is not read at least 6 weeks prior to Graduation, students might have to register for an additional thesis course in the following semester.

C) After final approval, the student must do a rehearsal presentation of their project with the advisor of course CIS599A. After the advisor of course CIS599A approves the rehearsal presentation successful, the advisor will authorize scheduling of a formal final presentation with the student's advisor.

5.3.e – Two (2) Months Prior to Graduation/Thesis Presentation

You will give a live formal presentation of the thesis project in the presence of three faculty members, and up to nine invited guests. This selection should be done around six (6) - seven (7) weeks before the presentation.

A. Prepare in PowerPoint format for a live presentation. The PowerPoint presentation should be submitted 10 days before the scheduled presentation. Also prepare hard copies of the presentation for the faculty and fellow students viewing the presentation.
B. Your Advisor will select a committee of three or more faculty members to serve as advisors and examiners.

C. If you are an on-campus student, you must post an announcement of your Thesis Presentation on the student activities bulletin board 2-3 weeks before your presentation day. The posted announcement should include date, time, your name, your advisor’s name, room number where your presentation will be held and the title of your thesis. Additionally, you can e-mail or call guests/peers regarding your presentation announcement.

D. Your presentation date must be scheduled at least six (6) - seven (7) weeks prior to the semester graduation date. If your presentation is not scheduled at least one month prior to the semester graduation date, you must register for an additional thesis project course in the following semester.

5.3.f – Five (5) weeks Prior to Graduation

A) After the presentation, there might be more review and revising. Your advisor will look over your thesis to be sure that you made the changes that were required. It will then be submitted to the Chairman of Thesis Committee to review again.

B) After the Chairman of Thesis Committee gives a final approval, after your presentation, you can start to bind the thesis. If you bind your thesis before the thesis presentation, your bound thesis will be invalid. Binding can only be done after your thesis presentation. Thesis binding usually takes three (3) weeks. Please plan accordingly. See the MS Project Worksheet for thesis binding requirements. The thesis must be error-free and grammatically correct. It is the responsibility of the student to meet this requirement. Proofreader services are required.

5.3.g – Three (3) weeks Prior to Graduation

A) Submit THREE (3) copies of your approved bound thesis, and the Graduation Application Form with all required signatures to KSI’s Administrative Office by the appropriate deadline. *If a student fails to submit by one of due dates, he/she will not be able to graduate until the next semester. For example, if a student fails to submit their bound thesis by May 20, he/she will not graduate until the next submissions date of August 20. He/she will also register for an additional thesis course(s) in the following semester.

5.4 - Thesis Completion

Students must be advised that if they cannot finish their thesis (according to the guidelines clearly detailed above) within
CIS599A, CIS599B, and CIS599C, they must continue to register for CIS599_ until the thesis is completed. As a reminder, International Students must maintain full time status every semester. International Students must maintain a minimum 18 credits per year to maintain full time status. See policies 12.1 and 12.3 for further clarification.
6. Student Feedback & Assessment Practices

6.1 – Course Evaluations

Students are expected to participate in, complete and submit a formal course evaluation for each course he/she is enrolled in. During the midterm week, 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 evaluating and improving 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 how student 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.

6.2 – Student Experience Surveys

Once per semester students will be asked to complete a Student Experience Survey relating to non-curriculum matters of learning environment assessment. The completion of the survey will take place during class time. The Student Experience Survey 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.

6.3 – Curricular Practical Training Evaluation Letters

Students who partake in Curricular Practical Training/Applied CIS Practicum and register for a CPT course (CIS600 Applied CIS Practicum) must submit an evaluation of their progress from their employer. Letters must be received no later than two (2) weeks prior to the current semester's end date. If letters are not received in a timely manner, students will not be eligible to partake in CPT in the following semester. Additional information is available for students in section 12.5 in the Student Handbook.

6.4 – Student Complaint & 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 Students Affairs, academic advisors or the Executive Director. Please see the Academic Integrity Section 10 below for the student grievance procedure and faculty responsibilities.
7. Facilities & Student Services

7.1 – 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.

7.2 – 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.

7.3 – 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.

7.4 – Student Wireless Network

KSI maintains a wireless network available for student access from classrooms, labs and work areas. Registered students will be provided with the access key by the IT support staff. Students may bring their own laptop computers to class in order to get the network access via KSI’s wireless network. It is the students’ responsibility to purchase and install their own wireless network card.

7.5 – 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. 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.

**7.5.a. Property Abuse** – If any laboratory equipments are 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.

**7.5.b WiFi Usage** - Any students seen visiting Netflix or other video streaming provider websites, using KSI’s internet will be asked to close out of the site, continuous use of video streaming sites will result in the professor or TA having you removed from the class, in which case you will be marked as ‘Leaving Early’. Video streaming causes frequent Wifi crashes.

**7.6 – 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 the KSI website.

**7.7 – 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.

**7.8 – Health Insurance**

All international students are required to carry health insurance as part of the requirements for maintaining their F-1 status. Students may purchase this coverage from an insurance agency through the school. Students purchase the insurance on a per semester basis paying a flat fee per month. Furthermore, dependents and children of an international student may be covered as well. If an international student is interested in purchasing this insurance, he or she should contact the Administrative Office.

If an international student already has insurance, the student should obtain from the insurance company a “confirmation of insurance” statement and bring it to the Administrative Office. The confirmation should show the “start date” and “end date” of the policy.
Furthermore, the confirmation should indicate a policy number and who is insured.

International students who fail to provide the Administrative Office with proof of insurance, or who fail to renew their insurance policy when due, will have the insurance premium automatically withdrawn from their tuition accounts in order to prevent lapse in coverage.

**7.9 – Immunization and Health Report**

International students are required to get immunization shots and provide personal health reports to the Administrative Office. To receive immunization shots (MMR and TD) for a $5.00 clinic fee, the student must make an appointment through the Administrative Office. The other option is for a student to schedule his/her own appointment for immunizations through a private physician or health care facility.

Furthermore, all international students should get a medical examination from their own physician and request the physician to provide the school with a proper medical report.

**7.10 – Career Placement & Resume Service**

KSI maintains an ongoing relationship with prospective employers and provides KSI students with advice and connections in the computer science industry. Additionally, KSI encourages students to select MS Project topics which facilitate post-graduate job opportunities. Students seeking career assistance in these areas should contact the administration office for further information.

**7.11 – Alumni Network**

The KSI Alumni Network is an important resource for graduates and students to connect and foster career building relationships. KSI students interested in connecting with the Alumni Net should inquire
8. Financial Assistance & Student Loans

8.1 – Financial Assistance

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.

8.2 – Student Loans


8.3 – Federal Direct 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.
8.4 – 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.

8.5 – 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.

Questions regarding student eligibility should be directed to the Administration Office.
8.6 – 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.
5. Notify the Office of Academic Affairs (by completing Add/Drop forms) of all changes to enrollment (credit hours carried).

**8.7 – Yearly & Lifetime Loan Limits**

Through debt management and loan counseling, students are discouraged from borrowing more than can be financed by the "recommended" eight percent of projected first year earnings (available from the KSI Financial Aid Office). KSI reserves the right, as granted by the U.S. Dept. of Education, to refuse to certify a student’s Stafford loan or to certify the loan for an amount less than the established federal limits. In that instance, KSI must document the reason and provide that written explanation to the student. KSI’s decision is final and cannot be appealed to the Dept. of Education.

### ACADEMIC YEAR LOAN LIMITS

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<tr>
<th>Dependent Students</th>
<th>Annual Loan Limits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>$5,500 ($3,500 subsidized/$2,000 unsubsidized)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Year</td>
<td>$6,500 ($4,500 subsidized/$2,000 unsubsidized)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year and Beyond</td>
<td>$7,500 ($5,500 subsidized/$2,000 unsubsidized)</td>
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### Dependent Students

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<td>Third Year and Beyond</td>
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<td>Graduate or Professional</td>
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<td>LIFETIME YEAR LOAN LIMITS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependent Undergraduate</td>
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<td>Independent Undergraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate/Professional Study</td>
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9. Graduation

9.1 – Comprehensive Examination Procedures

A student may take the Comprehensive Examination only when he/she is about to complete all coursework in a designated program. The student should obtain the “Comprehensive Examination Application” form from the Administrative Office (or online at www.ksi.edu/forms/compexam.pdf) and formally submit the request to the school two (2) months prior to the examination date. If the request is approved, the school will notify the student about the date of the examination. Once the examination has been taken and graded, the student will receive written notification. The student should follow the recommendation of the letter that could require the student to retake certain courses or retake the examination.

9.2 – Graduation Requirements

The MS degree program in Computer and Information Sciences requires a curriculum of twenty-seven (27) credit hours of graduate coursework or a curriculum of thirty (30) credit hours of graduate coursework for any chosen area of concentration, nine (9) credit hours of individual project research, and passing the Comprehensive Examination. For International Students, a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher must also be submitted on its proper due date (four months prior to graduation).

All students who are degree candidates are expected to maintain a satisfactory grade point average and a satisfactory rate of progress toward completion of the graduate coursework. An unsatisfactory grade point average and/or lack of a satisfactory rate of progress will result in academic probation or dismissal from the degree program. To maintain his or her status as a graduate student, a graduate student is required to maintain a “B” average in all graduate courses and must earn a grade of “B” or higher in all core courses of the degree program. Furthermore, students are to maintain a “C” average in any and all prerequisite (300 level) courses at the pre-graduate level (if a course grade is “D” or lower, the student must repeat that course). Any student failing to meet the aforementioned requirements will be placed on academic probation. Any student whose grade point average falls below the requirements must raise their grades in the following semester. Otherwise, the student may continue only at the discretion of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The MS degree program in Computer and Information Sciences, with a concentration in Management Information Systems, or other area of concentration, requires a curriculum of thirty (30) credit hours of coursework, nine (9) credit hours of MS Thesis Project (individual project research), and passing the Comprehensive Examination.

To graduate with an MS Degree, the student must have successfully:
(a) completed and turned in the “Graduation Application” (online at www.ksi.edu/forms/compexam.pdf) form to the Administrative Office six (6) months prior to graduation;

(b) completed all coursework;

(c) passed the Comprehensive Examination;

(d) International Students: Submit a TOEFL score of 80iBT or higher;

(e) completed the MS project;

(f) completed/submitted his/her Master of Science Project Worksheet;

(g) presented Thesis and revised any changes after Thesis;

(h) submitted to KSI three (3) copies of the MS project properly bound according to the guidelines, and obtained approval from the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Project Advisor; and

(i) paid all fines due KSI (such as library fines, etc.) and any outstanding tuition balances due KSI.

9.3 – Completion of MS Thesis Project

After the Chairman of the Thesis Committee has reviewed a student's thesis and has approved the thesis for presentation, the student is allowed one semester after his/her expected graduation date to complete the project. If the project is not completed by this time, academic credits earned at KSI by the student, may no longer count towards a MS in CIS degree. In certain cases where the student has not completed their thesis project, he/she may be required to enroll in additional thesis hours to complete the project.

*International students must also fulfill the English language proficiency requirement prior to graduation.

9.4 – Awarding of the Diploma

After the student has fulfilled all of the graduation requirements as outlined, the student will be awarded a diploma at the end of the semester he/she is currently registered for. Graduation dates are specified as May 20 for the Spring semester, August 20 for the Summer semester and December 20 for the Fall semester. If the student intends to leave before the award ceremony, the diploma will be mailed to the student.

9.5 – Graduation Ceremony

Graduation ceremony is usually held once a year in May. Graduates may participate ceremony occurring on the date closest to the data on which his/her diploma was awarded.
10. Academic Integrity

10.1 – 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.

10.2 – 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.

10.3 – 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.

10.4 – 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.

10.5 – Grievance Procedure

A student (or group of students) who wishes to voice a grievance should contact the Dean of Student Affairs. In the event that the grievance involves one or both of these parties, 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
both 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 Student 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 Student 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.

**10.6 – 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.

**10.6 a – Plagiarism**

The act of stealing or copying off the ideas or words of another and passing said idea or words as one's own: using another's production without crediting the source: copying, cheating; is not tolerated in KSI Graduate School and can lead to expulsion authorized by the Dean of Student and Academic Affairs.

**10.6 b – Cheating during active testing periods of class**

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.

10.6 c – 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 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.

10.7 – Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of Knowledge Systems Institute 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.
11. Academic Load

11.1 – Full-Time Domestic Students
The full-time academic load for domestic students ranges from between nine (9) to twelve (12) credit hours, during the fall or spring semester. The minimum registration required for full-time status during the fall or spring semester is nine (9) credit hours. The minimum registration required for full-time status during the summer semester is three (3) credit hours. However, registration in the summer is optional. To maintain full-time status, full-time students must register in both the fall and spring semesters each year. Students of exceptional ability who wish to enroll for more than fifteen (15) credit hours during the fall or spring semester must obtain written permission from the Dean of Academic Affairs.

11.2 – Part-Time Domestic Students
To maintain part-time status for domestic students, students must register for at least three (3) credit hours during one of the three semesters.

11.3 – Academic Load for New International Students
New F-1 students in the United States must complete 24 credit hours their first academic year. This means the student must take eight (8) courses in their first year at KSI Graduate School. After completing one (1) full year of F-1 status, students must maintain full-time student status by completing 18 credit hours each year.

11.4 – Academic Load for Transfer/Current International Students
As mandated by immigration law, International students must maintain full-time status (18 credit hours per year minimum) for the entire academic year. Students must take a minimum of two (2) courses every semester. Students can also take three (3) courses per semester, for two semesters consecutively, if they would like the third semester off. Taking one (1) course in any semester is not permitted unless the student will definitely graduate in the semester which the one course was registered for. If the student fails to graduate, the student must take two (2) course in the following term to maintain status.

11.5 – Reinstatement of International Student Status
To reinstate student status, the student must file an appeal at the Administrative Office. Reinstatement students are only accepted as a case by case basis only. A meeting with an Administrative Officer is required for admission process.
11.6 – International Student Termination Policy

International Students are required to be enrolled full-time to maintain their active status in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Students who fail to meet full-time enrollment requirements will have their status terminated in SEVIS. Therefore, students should be aware of the following International Student policies that may affect their full-time status:

- If a student fails to pay tuition for a course by the designated due date, the student will not be permitted to attend classes until tuition is paid. In this event, the student would be held responsible for missing classes and paying the allotted penalty.

- If a student fails to attend first three classes of any a course, the student will be given an "F" for the course and will be terminated (if an International Student), or, put under academic probation (based on the decision made by the Dean of Student Affairs).

11.7 – Attendance Absences/Hiatus

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 who request official documents (diploma copies, transcripts, 1098 tax forms, etc.) will have their request rejected until the delinquent balance is cleared.

For the policy on extended absences or academic hiatus due to illness or emergency, please see Section 3.7 – Grading above.
12. International Students

International students are required by law to maintain full-time student status. For requirements on academic load for full-time students, please see Section 11. Academic Load above.

In addition to the information included in this Student Handbook, International Students are required to fully read and understand the Guidelines for International Students publication available at the Administrative Office.

12.1 – Full Course of Study

International students must comply with USCIS and SEVIS (Immigration Law) concerning full-time student status; therefore, Academic Advisors will comply with USCIS and SEVIS policies and register each F-1 student as full-time. The student must complete 18 credit hours per year.

Courses must be taken in consecutive semesters. Failure to do so will jeopardize visa status and is grounds for expulsion from the school. Any student who has been expelled from KSI will not have his/her I-20 renewed, nor will KSI prepare any type of reinstatement documents for the student.

12.2 – English Proficiency

All F-1 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 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. As mentioned in the admissions requirements, if a student has not submitted a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher, this will be stated in a student's I-20 as “English Proficiency Not Met.” This clause will only be removed from a student's I-20 after they submit a TOEFL score of 80 iBT or higher.

12.3 – Maintaining F-1 Status

As mandated by immigration law, all International Students must be registered for a full course of study (18 credit hours per year) to be considered full time students. Each course at KSI Graduate School is three credit hours. KSI Graduate School offers three semesters per year, Fall, Spring and Summer. Thus the student has the ability to utilize KSI’s three semesters and register accordingly to achieve the full course of study requirement by immigration law. Registering for only one course in any semester is not permitted.

All international students are required to adhere to the following policies
which are based upon U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Student & Exchange Visitor Program (SEVIS) regulations:

Maintain full-time student status (see Section 11. Academic Load for requirements)

1. No student will be allowed to register for the following term if an unpaid balance remains from the previous semester. Hence, all previous semester balances must be cleared before you register for the next semester.

2. Hold a valid SEVIS I-20.

3. Have their enrollment status registered in the SEVIS system each semester (Administration Office will automatically update students' records based on registrations.) Any student who does not have their registration data entered into the SEVIS system every semester will automatically show up on the SEVIS "Alert" list as being out-of-status. Once the student still hasn't registered 60 days after Registration Day, SEVIS will terminate the student's status.

4. Maintain health insurance at all times while holding an F-1 Visa (regardless of enrollment status).

5. Have the proper immunizations and health records on file with the Administration Office.

6. Attend all scheduled classes (those students who fail to report to class will be reported to the SEVIS which may jeopardize their status).

7. Student must notify Administrative Office within 10 days of changes in either residential address, e-mail, or phone number. The office will then inform the DSO so that the appropriate updated changes can be made.

12.4 - Break Procedures

Students can have a semester break after completing 18 credits consecutively (three semesters in a row). Students cannot accumulate credits from the year prior. If a student has completed 18 credits successfully, meaning they have passing grades and have cleared off their tuition, student's can request for a semester break. If students plan to travel, please look at Section 3.8 - Travel Policy for further details. If students are requesting to take a break due to illness or hospitalization, please look at Section 3.9g - Illness or Emergency Policy for further details.

Students who have not completed 18 credits consecutively, but are requesting for a break, would need approval from the PDSO/DSO and Dean of Academic Affairs. If a student's request has been granted, the student must pre-register and pre-pay the tuition of the following semester. If a student decides not to return to KSI Graduate School, tuition will not be refunded for the student.

12.5 - CPT Procedures
Curricular Practical Training (CPT) was established by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to enhance a student's classroom learning with practical experience and training. It allows students to accept paid alternative work/study, internships, cooperative education or any other type of required internship or practicum that employers offer through conjunctive agreements with the student’s school. The training must be related to the student’s field of study.

KSI offers only part-time CPT as a credit course, as an integral degree completion requirement. International Student applicants of part-time CPT must register for Applied CIS Practicum (Course Name 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. The following is the definition of CPT - refer to USCIS Federal Regulation Code 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i):

"Curricular Practical Training: An F-1 student may be authorized by the DSO to participate in a curricular practical training program that is an integral part of an established curriculum. Curricular practical training is defined to be alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school."

As stated above, your internship must be directly related to Computer Science. If a student's internship is not related to Computer Science, the CPT application will be rejected by the PDSO/DSO.

Requirements for CPT & Application

- In good academic standing (3.0 GPA)
- Must have a valid and active F-1 immigration status
- Must have been in valid F-1 status for a minimum of 9 consecutive months (1 academic year) prior to submitting a CPT application request
- Must be a full-time student
  - Must be registered for a minimum of two (2) courses per semester. If a student drops below full time, they will not be eligible for CPT.
- Job must be related to Computer Science
- Submission of CPT Application Form (available online & at the Administrative Office)
- Enrolled in Applied CIS Practicum (CIS600)
  - CIS600 course is 1 credit.
- Tuition must be paid in full, including the fee for CIS600

Application Requirements for CPT:

Provide proper documentation (please review sample format in CPT application packet)
1. **Original** job offer letter from the employer, which must include the following:
   (a) Written on company's letterhead
   (b) Specify company's e-verification number
   (c) Specify employment address
   (d) Provide an Illinois address (Students can only work in the State of Illinois; employment outside the State of Illinois is not allowed)
   (e) Include job title
   (f) Provide job description
   (g) Specify **part time** CPT; Specify number of hours you will work (no more than 20 hours)
   (h) Specify exact dates of CPT employment; must match the semester start and end date at KSI.

(1) Under no circumstances will CPT be backdated to include unauthorized work done before it was authorized. For example, if your start date was May 20, 2013 and the Office received your letter on June 1, 2013, the start date will be June 1, 2013.

CPT processing time is 2-3 business days upon arrival of the proper documentation. During peak/high volume period (week prior & post registration day), processing may take longer. You may engage in CPT only **after** you have received your I-20 with the CPT authorization from DSO/PDSO. CPT I-20's cannot be back-dated. **To avoid date errors, provide your company letter and CPT application form one week prior to the semester start date.** This work authorization is only valid for the specific employer, location, time period and on a part time basis as approved and recorded by the DSO/PDSO as evidenced on your I-20 that is issued for CPT.

An evaluation report must be submitted by the company **2 weeks prior to the Semester End date.** If an evaluation report has not been submitted on time, the student will not be eligible to have CPT in the following semester.

Any student who does not follow the above mentioned criteria will not be eligible for CPT or will have their CPT revoked.

**12.6 – OPT Procedures**

International students should follow the same guidelines outlined in the “**Pre-Graduation Procedures**” section of the Student Handbook.

**NO STUDENT SHALL BE ALLOWED TO APPLY FOR OPT UNTIL HIS/HER TOEFL/ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN FULFILLED. NO OPT PROCEDURES SHALL BEGIN WITHOUT COMPLETED PRESENTATION’S OF THESIS PROJECT.**

Three (3) months prior to graduation, the following procedures must be fulfilled **prior to requesting OPT.** The dates shown below are approximate and based upon a December graduation date.
1. Turn in a proofread draft thesis and thesis proof-reading acknowledgment form to Project Advisor.  
(Student turns draft in on September 1st.)

2. Student informs the Administrative Office of intent to apply for OPT.  
(Student notifies office on September 1st.)

3. Student and Administrative Office receive notification from the Project Advisor that the draft thesis has been approved.  
(Approximately 20 days later (9/21), draft thesis is approved.)

4. Thesis is presented to Dean of Academic Affairs for approval.  
(Approximately 30 days later (10/21) thesis is turned over to Dean of Academic Affairs.)

5. Student and Administrative Office receive notification from the Dean of Academic Affairs that the thesis has been approved for Presentation.  
(Appproximately 10 days later (10/31) thesis has been approved.)

6. Administrative Office forwards OPT application to USCIS.  
(Shortly after approval (11/1), OPT application is submitted to USCIS.)

For example, a student who intends to graduate on December 20th should have turned in a proofread draft thesis to their Project Advisor and notify the Administrative Office of his/her intent to apply for OPT by September 1st. During the remaining time, the student will have time to meet with his/her Project Advisor and make any revisions to the draft as suggested by the Project Advisor.

After the Project Advisor has approved the thesis, it is then ready for review by the Dean of Academic Affairs (10/20). Only after the Dean of Academic Affairs has approved the thesis and has notified the Administrative Office the thesis is ready for presentation (10/31) will the Administrative Office forward the OPT application to the USCIS for processing (11/1).

Any student who fails to start the OPT process ninety (90) days prior to his/her graduation date run the risk of being issued an EAD card that has less than the twelve (12) months he/she is entitled to.

Once a student has applied for OPT, he/she should not move from their current address. The student should wait until the EAD card has been received before relocating.