Purdue MS in CGT w/ UX Concentration Frequently Asked Questions

Updated January 18, 2024

GENERAL

Is the MS in CGT a "STEM program"?

Yes, we are a STEM program as defined by the US State Department (CIP code: 11.0803), which qualifies international students for a longer period of OPT upon graduation.

Is there a remote option?

No, we do not offer a remote option at this time.

How big is the program?

We have a substantial UX presence within the CGT Department, including over 160 students in our novel undergraduate UX program, and more than 60 graduate students in our UX concentration. The UX cohort size is approximately 25-30 students. The CGT department as a whole currently has over 100 MS students.

Are research or teaching assistantships available?

We do have some funded positions available, but they are allocated based on departmental and individual professor priorities. Teaching assistantships are awarded by the department based on skillset, and applicants may apply using the link at the following site by March 1st: https://polytechnic.purdue.edu/degrees/ms-computer-graphics-technology/funding. Faculty may also extend an offer for research assistantships, but this is generally based on external funding, and frequently, doctoral students are prioritized.

What is the work environment like for a UX student—are the projects more collaborative or individual in nature?

We put a strong emphasis on collaboration and teamwork. Most major projects you work on will be done in teams, although we have individual exercises as well. One exception to this is the final capstone project (CGT 59700) which is done individually.

What opportunities does your program provide for students to gain real-world experience, such as internships or capstone projects?

We do not have a formal internship or co-op program; however, a high percentage of our students end up getting internships during the summer. We also have one class that involves working on real-world industry-sponsored projects (CGT 57207).

APPLICATION DETAILS

Do I have to have a UX or HCI background prior to application?

No! In fact, most of our students have no prior industry or academic experience in this area, and we gladly welcome students from a range of backgrounds, including technical, design, art, and humanities.

What should I include in my portfolio?

Submit examples of any kind of work you have previously completed. Since we do not expect a substantial UX background, the portfolio can be used to demonstrate competency in any other technical, art, or design area. Creative work, white papers, or other relevant work from your prior discipline are acceptable. We understand that people come from various backgrounds and do not have the same kinds of work to show.

Must I complete the UX Design concentration if I am admitted?

In general, yes, we do expect you to complete the concentration. However, we encourage you to take other courses within the CGT Department, including courses in AR/VR, animation, data visualization, and computer graphics programming. Our assumption is that if we admit you as a UX-focused student, you will complete the non-thesis track, culminating in the graduate capstone.

Is the GRE required?

The GRE IS a program requirement for Fall 2024 admission.

Do you accept the DuoLingo test?

Yes, we do accept Duolingo scores. Purdue globally requires a minimum overall score of 115, and a score of 115 in each section. For the UX program, we give preference to applications with scores above 130.

Can I get a language test waiver?

If you have graduated from an English-speaking institution in a location where the primary language is English in the last 36 months, you should qualify for a TOEFL waiver. Please consult the information here:
https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/admissions/how-to-apply/apply-toefl.html. If you do not

meet this requirement, you must submit valid TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores. We give preference to students with a TOEFL combined score of 100 or greater, or an IELTS band score of 7.5 or greater, or a Duolingo score of 130 or greater.

Does Purdue accept TOEFL "My Best" Scores?

Purdue does not accept My Best scores. See section 3 here:
https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=18610

Who should I choose as my advisor?

We manage all incoming students with a UX focus as a cohort, so the advisor selection is not as important as it might be with a thesis-based program where the advisor is your presumptive committee chair. You are encouraged to select the faculty member you are most interested in working with by mentioning your chosen faculty member(s) in your statement of purpose, and by specifying one or more UX faculty in your grad application. The UX-focused faculty include Parsons, Williams, He, Rasche, and Ostrowski.

What factors are considered in application decisions?

We look at all submitted materials and make a holistic assessment.

When are decisions released?

We do not have a predetermined date for releasing decisions. We begin reviewing applications in February, and typically release the bulk of decisions in March and April. If you have not heard from us by late April, feel free to reach out.

FINANCIAL

Where can I find out about tuition and fees?

The Office of the Bursar sets the rates each year; see their webpage for the 2023-24 rates.

Can I get a fee waiver?

This is not something we control. Details about waivers can be found here:
https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/admissions/how-to-apply/apply-fee.html