COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

PHD MANUAL

(Last updated October 9, 2026)

OVERVIEW

Our PhD program takes about 5-6 years to complete, but the duration varies depending on the student and the advisor. Here is a high-level timetable of the requirements:

Year 1	WSE Academic Ethics online course Title IX online training module Responsible Conduct of Research
Years 1 - 3 ("qualifying requirements")	Eight courses Two Research projects
Years 3 - 4	PhD Oral Exam (POE) First meeting with thesis committee Finish Research Projects
Years 4 – (n-1)	Annual meetings with thesis committee Research
Year n	Departmental seminar Thesis defense Submit final dissertation to library

These requirements are discussed below. The timetable is designed to help you keep moving along toward the PhD, it is not a strict requirement to finish the items by the listed timeframe.

Note that the PhD qualifying requirements are a slightly stricter version of the MSE requirements. Once you complete the coursework requirements and your first qualifying project, you may be entitled to an MSE degree from JHU (upon request.) Questions about picking up your MSE degree should be directed to MSE Academic Program Manager Revelie Williams.

If you transfer into the PhD program from our master's program, then to align with the timetable you can approximately assume you are starting out as a second-year PhD student – the 1.5 - 2 years of an MSE roughly approximates one year of a PhD.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

As a PhD student, you will get to know many of the faculty. However, you will have special relationships with the following people:

YOUR ADVISOR

Your advisor's job is to help you become a successful member of the academic community. They will guide your course selections and your research, give you career advice, and tell you when you are ready to defend your thesis. Learn more about mentoring expectations of faculty advisors and PhD students at Johns Hopkins University here.

A faculty advisor will be assigned to you when you are accepted into the PhD program. Most students keep their advisors until they graduate, but you may change advisors at any time. Any consenting JHU CS professor may serve as your advisor, including those with secondary, joint, or Research Professor appointment in the Department of Computer Science. However, by the end of your first year, you must have an assigned research advisor in order to remain in good standing; and if you are beyond your first year and find yourself without an approved research advisor at any point for any reason, you will have 4 months to find a new and approved research advisor in order to remain in good standing (see the PhD Good Standing Policy for more information). If a student is in danger of falling out/has fallen out of good standing, the department may place that student on probation or dismiss them. Here's where you can learn more about the PhD Good Standing Policy and the WSE Residential Graduate Student Probation and Dismissal Policy.

ADVISOR TRANSITIONS IN CS

Generally, most PhD advisor transitions are routine, and it is usually by mutual agreement of the old and new advisor and student that the student will move to a new research advisor. It is only the case where things are not working out with the current advisor (for whatever reason) and there is no obvious candidate for a new advisor that the process can be more challenging. The department is committed to do everything within reason to help such students find new research advisors, and there are also Whiting School resources to help students think through options and make the decision best for them.

Ultimately students lead their search for an approved research advisor. This is because the student is the person that knows their own interests and expertise the best, and knows how that might align with faculty prospects; and the department is not capable of assigning a research advisor for the student because faculty have narrow areas of expertise. What the department does do is to assign a faculty member (typically the DGS) as point person so that the student has someone they can call on for help in vetting names or discussing any other aspect of the advisor search process. The point person will always do an initial check-in with any such student; after that it is largely up to the student to seek out the point person to help them in their search. The dept is very willing to help by meeting as often as needed, going through possible advisors, pointing out potential new or joint appointment faculty that are potential advisors, and to contact potential advisors the student is interested in to feel out possibilities.

If a student is making some solid progress in finding a new advisor but is not yet to a commitment from that new advisor, the dept may be able to extend the period needed for the transition on a case-by-case basis. The department will also work with potential new advisors on a funding plan to mitigate the impact of funding on advisor transitions. Transitions are not guaranteed, but the department has a solid track record in supporting students during these times.

Your Thesis Committee

Your thesis committee's main job is to decide when to accept your PhD thesis. Obviously, it's wise to keep them informed and seek their counsel while you are researching and writing the thesis. You will probably also approach them for letters of recommendation as you are finishing the program.

You should aim to choose your thesis committee by the end of the third year, and plan to meet with them annually. The committee is chosen in consultation with your advisor and must include:

- Your advisor;
- Another member of the JHU CS faculty, who must have a primary, tenure-track appointment in the JHU CS department if your advisor does not;
- One or more other committee members with PhD degrees. You are strongly encouraged to include someone from outside the department or university, to get the benefit of an outside perspective and to increase your work's visibility.

Your POE (formerly GBO) Committee

Your sitting committee will consist of 2 inside and 2 outside faculty examiners plus one additional examiner. Inside examiners are primary CS faculty; outside examiners are usually primary faculty in another JHU department. More details can be found below in the *POE Examination section*.

The Graduate Academic Program Staff

The Graduate Academic Program Manager, currently Kim Franklin, can help you with most matters related to degree requirements, enrollment issues, programming activities, POE planning, student status changes, PhD appointment questions, funding concerns, preparing for your defense, conferral, and health and well-being resources. You can set up a meeting with her using this link. You can also reach out to Megan Dakwa, PhD Sr. Academic Coordinator, who can help you with most administrative matters, in addition to POE scheduling and any issues with your stipend.

The Director of Graduate Studies

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), currently Professor Scott Smith, oversees the CS graduate program and CS graduate student life generally. If you feel you need to talk to someone outside your committee, confidentially or otherwise, try the DGS (or the Department Head). The Director of Graduate Studies also welcomes more general questions, comments, and concerns.

The WSE Associate Vice Dean for Graduate Education and Lifelong Learning

The current Associate Vice Dean is Christine Kavanagh. She is a great resource for any academic or student life questions/concerns that you'd rather not, at least initially, ask the department.

The WSE Student Affairs Office

Hannah Nelson is the Student Support & Advocacy Case Manager for CS Graduate Students. She is your best point of contact for non-academic issues that may get in the way of being a successful student, such as physical or mental health issues, family emergencies, financial difficulties, housing issues, concern or worry about a friend, and questions or concerns related to your PhD advisor.

COURSEWORK

Coursework will help you educate yourself in your research area and in CS more broadly. You may enroll in courses as long as you are here, including courses in other departments. Select courses are offered during the summer.

Students should aim to take 8 graduate courses within their first two years. Students who began the program in the Fall 2022 or later must follow the current Coursework Completion Worksheet, which stipulates that more than half of all courses (at least 5 out of 8) must be taught in the Department of Computer Science. Of those courses, 4 out of the 5 core distribution areas must be satisfied. Distribution areas include **Theory, Applications, Systems, Software and Reasoning**. The remaining courses may be faculty advisor-approved electives inside or outside of the Computer Science Department. When coursework requirements are complete, students must submit the appropriate PhD coursework completion worksheet (signed by their advisor) to Department Academic Program Staff.

Some students prefer to get this requirement out of the way in the first year. However, 4 graduate courses per semester leaves little time for research and teaching. Your decision will depend on your funding situation, your personal preference, and your advisor's recommendation.

As a full-time, residential PhD student you should register for at least 20 credits each semester through the self-service Student Information System (SIS) portal. Your advisor must approve your course registration, and every semester you must enroll in 15-20 credits of your advisor's section of "PhD Research" (EN.601.809). This is in addition to any other courses you're taking and applies even if you've completed all of your coursework requirements. The Registrar caps the credit limit for PhD students to 25 credits each semester. You'll want to adjust the variable credit amount of your PhD Research section depending on your full course load. If you need to adjust PhD Research credits after initial enrollment, or adjust course enrollment after the self-service SIS open enrollment closes, your action is to submit a SEAM online case to request an update. Prior to submitting your request you'll need to email your advisor (or the instructor) and department academic staff to obtain enrollment approval, then upload the communication thread as a PDF into your SEAM case. If continuing in your RA-ship during the summer term you must register for 6 credits of "PhD Research" (EN.601.809).

Every semester, ALL students must attend a fair number of Computer Science Seminars. SIS enrollment in the "Computer Science Seminar" (601.801-802) course is required for first year students only.

How do I know if a CS course can be used as one of the 8 graduate courses? The eligible CS courses are generally those courses numbered xxx.600 and above. The rarely used "Independent Study" (601.805-806) may be taken for graduate credit and a letter grade, under a faculty member's supervision. Courses do not count unless they are taken for a grade; thus you cannot count pass/fail seminars or the required department seminar series (601.801-802). Also, courses are ordinarily 3 credits; a 1-credit course counts as only 1/3 of a course and three such courses can serve to count for one full course. *Effective Fall 2017, only courses that are 600-level and above are eligible to be put toward the CS coursework requirements, except for documented and approved exceptions. This is a WSE-wide initiative and will not impact courses taken prior to the Fall 2017 semester.*

How do I know if a non-CS course can be used as one of the 8 graduate courses? Any graduate course offered by a full-time JHU program is eligible with advisor approval. Your advisor must agree that the course is relevant to your degree -- either to computer science generally, or to your specific program of study and research. Graduate level courses in most departments are those numbered 600 and above. Students who wish to register for a course in a division outside of WSE (such as through the WSE Engineering for Professionals programs or the School of Medicine), must complete the Interdivisional Registration (IDR) form. Visit the Interdivisional Registration website for

information and a link to the IDR form. Once completed and signed by your advisor, the form can be submitted via SEAM's online form. Submitting an IDR request does not guarantee enrollment.

How do I know if a course can be used as one of the 5 core CS distribution areas? The official designator list is on the CS website. For CS courses, the designations are also given in the course catalog.

Do I have to do well in the courses? You need at least a C- for a course to count, and your average grade for the 8 courses must be at least B+. What you learn will also help you in your POE Exam, your research, and your future career. But ultimately, the world will judge you on your research, not your grades.

Can I fulfill any of these requirements using graduate courses taken outside of the University? Yes, if the courses have not been counted toward an undergraduate degree or taken as an undergraduate in another institution. They must be of comparable rigor and appropriate for the requirements in question, as attested by a syllabus, problem sets, or other course materials. You may apply up to 2 appropriate non-JHU courses toward the course requirements, with solely your advisor's approval. You may apply more than 2 appropriate non-JHU courses toward the PhD requirements, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, Scott Smith; this may include up to 4 appropriate courses from JHU's EP programs. To proceed with obtaining Dr. Smith's approval, please complete a Transfer Request Form and send it, along with a PDF of your transcript, to scott@cs.jhu.edu, copying your advisor. You may wish to reference the PhD Coursework Worksheet and CS course area designation list prior to submitting your request. You can review WSE's policy on transferring and double-counting courses here.

Can I pick up my CS MSE on the way to my PhD? Often this is possible as the coursework requirements for the CS MSE and CS PhD are nearly identical. In particular, the PhD coursework requirement plus one PhD qualifying project will often satisfy the MSE degree requirements since one PhD project will count as an MSE project. Note however that **no** external transfer courses will be permitted to count toward the MSE if they were already applied to some other completed degree. So if you transferred in courses from a previous Masters degree you will likely **not** be getting an MSE along the way, unless you decide to take additional courses as part of your PhD. Questions about picking up your MSE degree should be directed to MSE Academic Program Manager Revelie Williams. You can review WSE's policy on transferring and double-counting courses here.

Responsible Conduct of Research Course

Before you begin your second year, you must take the in-person mini-course AS.360.625 Responsible Conduct of Research. This is under 10 hours and is offered during the summer, fall, intersession, and spring sessions. Failure to comply with this requirement by the end of the first year of enrollment may result in the inability to conduct research and receive the associated stipend/salary.

Academic Ethics

This mandatory module and quiz is embedded in the WSE online orientation and part of every graduate student's degree requirements. You will see the course EN.500.603 added to your SIS enrollment. Do not drop this course!

Qualifying Projects

The PhD degree is primarily a research degree, of which coursework is merely the foundation. Our program quickly gets you involved in research projects. Here are the official project requirements:

A student must complete two qualifying projects as a requirement for the PhD. One project must be under the supervision of a faculty member with an appointment in the Department of Computer Science (Professor, Research

Professor, Visiting or Joint appointment). The second project must be supervised by a different tenure-track or research faculty member in any division of Johns Hopkins, or with advance approval from the department, by any outside researcher.

Before starting a project, students must submit a Qualifying Project Agreement Form to the Academic Program Coordinator. If the project supervisor needs approval (i.e. they lack an appropriate appointment at Hopkins), a copy of their CV must also be included with the form and work on the project should not commence until the department has approved the outside supervisor. Note: all project supervisors must have a doctoral degree.

Upon conclusion of each project, the student must write a Project Report describing the project in detail. The supervisor or student will forward the final version of the report in PDF format, along with the signed Qualifying Project Coversheet to the Academic Program Coordinator. These reports are archived and are available for members of the department to browse on request.

The project requirement can give you a chance to try out two prospective advisors/areas. If you have already settled on an advisor, then the second project can be a way to develop skills in a related area of computer science, or to experience the perspectives and working style of a different advisor.

The advisor's signature attests that the student has taken a well-defined piece of work from conception through execution to write-up, and understands what is involved in producing a complete unit of scholarship in this area. This may be a relatively small unit of scholarship for purposes of the departmental requirement, although sometimes the student and the project advisor may agree to target a larger unit in order to make the collaboration worth undertaking.

Note that faculty members may have varying ideas about the appropriate topic, scope and duration of a project, so you should discuss this at the start to reach agreement. The required Qualifying Project Agreement Form you must submit upon starting a project is an informal contract of agreement on the scope of the project. Research projects often evolve over time, but any significant changes to the completion criteria should be mutually agreed on. Note that an acceptable outcome is a report clearly showing that the original idea, when diligently pursued, turned out not to work.

It is your job to find faculty members who are willing to supervise you on projects of mutual interest. Often you will take someone's graduate course before trying to do research with him or her. The idea for a project may come from you or from the faculty member. Multi-advisor projects are encouraged, as are inter-disciplinary projects, but they must be signed off by the (sole) project advisor as satisfying the CS qualifying project requirement.

If a qualifying project builds on a course project, the work done for course credit should not be double-counted. A project may be abandoned if it is not working out; notify the Academic Program Coordinator if this is the case.

THE POE (FORMERLY GBO) EXAMINATION

You will face a committee of 5 professors who will evaluate your readiness to do PhD research. This PhD Oral Examination (POE) is a University examination, required of all doctoral students at JHU. You should aim to complete the POE requirement by the end of your third year. Coursework requirements and one qualifying project must be completed prior to scheduling your exam.

POE Preliminary Research Proposal

In our department's tradition, the center of the POE exam is a Preliminary Research Proposal that you write and present. This does not have to be a fully developed thesis proposal (although it could be, if you have progressed quickly). It should at least motivate some interesting research problem in the context of previous work, and sketch your possible approaches to solving it. Preliminary results are helpful but are not required.

Writing the proposal should be useful for you, and it will typically develop into the thesis topic. However, it is not a commitment to a topic. Its purpose is simply to focus the POE exam. You must distribute it to all POE examiners at least 2 weeks before the POE. 8 to 10 pages is sufficient.

POE Format

The POE is a closed-door exam two hours in length. You will begin by presenting your Preliminary Research Proposal, and then the examiners are free to ask any questions they want. The department prefers that examiners focus on your readiness to do original research in the area of the Preliminary Research Proposal. We hope that their questions will focus on the technical substance of the proposal, your ability to discuss the broad area with clarity, flexibility and maturity, and your knowledge of subjects that are likely to come into your work. However, the examiners are not bound by our requests and may assess you in any way they choose. You are therefore advised to discuss expectations with them before the exam, if they are willing. Further POE policies and guidelines can be found here.

POE Examiners

The sitting POE committee will consist of 5 examiners. You may select 2 from inside the department and 2 from outside the department, plus a 5th member either inside or outside the department. You must also name 1 additional inside alternate and 1 additional outside alternate in the unlikely event of a last-minute cancellation. Your advisor always counts as an inside examiner and so do all faculty with primary appointments in Computer Science, including Bloomberg Distinguished Professors. Faculty holding primary appointments outside of Computer Science who have a Computer Science affiliation are considered outside examiners. Outside examiners are intended to contribute valuable perspectives and also ensure that the department doesn't let its standards slip. At least one of the outside examiners must be an Associate, Full, or Emeritus Professor at JHU, and there must be another such-ranked outside Professor proposed to sit on the Committee or as an Alternate; the most senior outside examiner will serve as committee chair and an alternate for that role is also required. You may contact your faculty examiners prior to your POE to inquire about their expectations. Please keep in mind that an examiner is not required to discuss expectations – if they choose to do so, it is as a courtesy to you.

Most commonly, examiners are tenure-track JHU faculty. However, the Graduate Board can approve scholars from outside JHU, or research faculty at JHU. The department must petition the Graduate Board 4 weeks in advance to authorize such persons, see below for details on this process.

POE Outcomes

Possible exam outcomes described on the Whiting School PhD Oral Exam website. The most common ones are unconditional pass and conditional pass. In a conditional pass, the committee will require you to remedy some weakness in your preparation (e.g., by earning an A- or better in a particular course).

SCHEDULING THE POE

It is the department's job to schedule your POE. At least a month before you are to take the POE, you or your advisor should inform the CS Graduate Academic Program Manager. The hardest part of the POE is finding an appropriate committee of 5 faculty examiners plus 2 alternates who are all free at the same time as you are. Fortunately, this is not your responsibility. It is handled by the department (i.e., The Academic Program Manager together with the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Smith).

The Academic Program Manager will suggest that you and your advisor give him/her the names of appropriate potential examiners; In particular, you and your advisor should predict who will be on your thesis committee so that those faculty can be included on your POE committee if possible. It is helpful if you approach your chosen committee members in advance to remind them of who you are, and inquire if they are generally available and willing to serve as a POE committee member. Further POE guidance can be found here.

In consultation with your advisor, you should send the Academic Program Manager:

- The POE Form containing the name, rank, and department affiliation of 7 potential POE committee members in addition to your name, Hopkins ID, and advisor's name. Note that alternates are called in to participate only when someone cancels or doesn't show up.
- Depending on how you wish to shape your committee (see heading POE Examiners above for more detail), 3-4 of those potential members should be inside. Again, your advisor will serve as an inside member regardless of their primary department affiliation.
- Depending on how you wish to shape your committee, 3-4 of those potential members should be outside members. At least 2 of the potential outside members must be Associate, Full, or Emeritus Professors, so that someone can serve as chair and you have a back-up chair if needed. The POE Chair is appointed by the Graduate Board and is typically the most senior outside Associate Professor or above.
- If any of the above is not a tenure-track JHU faculty member, then you should send the Academic Program Manager (1) that person's full CV, (2) a one-page summary of your research, and (3) an explanation of why that person's expertise is needed at your POE or on your thesis committee. The department will combine these into a letter petitioning the WSE Office of Graduate Education and Lifelong Learning for pre-approval. Note that approval can take several weeks, so pre-prepare accordingly. Of course, this is unnecessary if the external examiner is already approved; special authorization to serve on a POE committee lasts for 5 years.

The Academic Program Manager will ask for your and your advisor's availability so that he or she can begin scheduling the exam. Once an exam date and 2-hour timeframe has been identified, committee members will be notified with a calendar invite and the department will reach out to the WSE Office of Graduate Education and Lifelong Learning for its approval.

Once the exam is scheduled, you can send your committee your Preliminary Research Proposal at least two weeks in advance.

DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

Sometime between your POE and thesis defense, you must present your thesis work to the department in a one-hour talk. This is primarily for the department's benefit – everyone deserves to find out what you've been working on all those years. Some students use this requirement as a way to practice their job talk, however, most use it as the first hour of their thesis defense.

THESIS, DEFENSE, REVISION

The PhD thesis, or dissertation, is the signal achievement of the PhD degree. It is a large, careful, and substantive piece of original work. Most computer science dissertations are 150-200 pages long, with hundreds of bibliographic references, and systematically investigate a set of ideas.

Your dissertation is presumably not the last piece of research you will ever publish, or even the most important. However, it may be one of the largest. Writing this document is a satisfying way to wrap up your graduate experience, but is itself a considerable creative act requiring plenty of time. You'll want to synthesize and explain several years of work (a process that may lead to new insights) and fill in the gaps. By year 3, you should've begun to assemble your thesis committee. By year 4, you should be having annual meetings w/ your thesis committee and you should be engaging in dissertation research.

Your advisor will help you decide when your thesis is essentially finished and ready to defend. You must give the thesis to your committee members at least 2 weeks before your scheduled defense date (and preferably earlier), so that they have time to read it carefully. Your defense date must also be publicly announced to the department.

The thesis defense is a public event, usually consisting of a 1-hour talk followed by questions from the committee and other audience members. Following the defense, the committee will decide what changes are required before they will sign off on the thesis.

Thesis committees almost always ask for changes, ranging from expository improvements to substantial further research. You can reduce this workload somewhat by consulting your committee frequently before the defense. But even so, you should plan for a month or more of hard work after the defense.

Unlike the POE, you are responsible for scheduling your Defense. Once you and your committee finalize scheduling details, please provide the following to the Academic Program Manager: (1) Date and Time, (2) Thesis title and abstract, (3) link to your research or thesis website, (4) professional plans after Hopkins, (5) a brief biography, (6) a high-resolution photo as an attachment. The department will reserve a room on campus in which your defense will take place, and provide you with a Zoom link so that attendees may join remotely. Note that no portion of your defense may be recorded.

Your dissertation will be submitted to the JHU library for electronic publication and must follow certain formatting guidelines. Do not submit your dissertation to the library until your advisor has provided a Reader's Letter to the Academic Program Manager, documenting final approval. The Department will cover your ETD submission fee. You should contact the Academic Program Manager to make arrangements.

Time management can be tricky in the final year of the PhD program. You may be applying and interviewing for jobs as you try to finish the research and write the thesis. The process may take longer than you expect, so make sure to leave lots of slack in your schedule. International students should be in touch with the Office of International Services ois@jhu.edu at least one month prior to their defense in order to start the Optional Practical Training (OPT) approval process. All students should report their intended last day on payroll to the Academic Program Manager with at least 3 weeks notice.

GRADUATION

Whiting School conferrals get processed three times each year; spring, summer and fall. Guidance on completer deadlines and conferral types can be found here. Guidance on graduation policies and ceremonies can be found

here. After you pass your defense and finalize your dissertation edits, your advisor will prepare and provide a Reader's Letter signed by all committee members to department academic staff, documenting final approval of your dissertation. Once received by the department, you can submit your dissertation to the library. See information about that here. There is a $60 submission fee associated with the submission that will be covered by the department. Please contact department academic staff when the time comes to arrange funding this expense. After your dissertation has been approved by the library, you will receive an email entitled "Your ETD submission is approved" from etd-support@jhu.edu. You must forward that email to academic staff for the purposes of conferral processing.

Additional actions on your degree completion to-do list include:

- Apply to graduate in SIS. Go to your SIS Self-Service drop down menu, choose Registration, Program of Study, Apply to Graduate, Complete all required fields and click SUBMIT. Lots of students forget this part. The Registrar sets "apply to graduate" deadlines, which you can review here.
- Share your last day on payroll with academic staff as soon as possible. Overpayments often occur if this information isn't provided at least 3 weeks prior to your last day. Settling up with the University isn't a fun for anyone, so best avoid this if you're able.
- Check your transcript for missing grades and work to resolve them since grades for all courses must be entered for your degree to be conferred. If you have a grade(s) missing, please reach out to the instructor and ask them to follow-up. Per the Registrar, faculty must summit late grades directly in SIS. If they ask, you can direct them to this page for guidance on submitting late grades.
- If you have questions about health insurance coverage, reach out to SEAM with your inquiry or write to JHUStudentBenefits@jhu.edu for more information.
- If you're an F-1 visa holder, be communication with OIS early on to work through the OPT application process. Note that due to F-1 visa regulations, students are not allowed to work in their graduate assistant position past the last day of exams in their last semester of enrollment so please plan accordingly.

Questions about any of the above should be sent to department academic staff.

FUNDING

While enrolled full-time in residential student status, actively working on research with your faculty advisor in good academic standing, you will be given full support – in the form of either a Research Assistantship (RA) or a Teaching Assistantship (TA) – for a minimum of 5 years. It is a CS PhD program requirement that full-time, resident PhD students are funded on either a Research Assistantship, Teaching Assistantship, or Fellowship during an academic semester (fall/spring). Exceptions to this requirement may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Full support includes:

- Full tuition coverage – funded by both the JHU Dean's Office and the CS Department (for TAs) or the faculty advisor (for RAs).
- Health, dental and vision insurance coverage – funded by the Department or your faculty advisor.
- Students enrolled full-time in PhD Research, and/or a combination of PhD Research and coursework, will be provided with a monthly living-stipend during the fall and spring academic semesters. That will continue through the summer (12-months) should you continue doing research with your faculty advisor (as opposed to doing an external internship or study away program during the summer term). If continuing to work through the summer in your Research Assistantship, it's important that you maintain PhD Research enrollment in order to avoid being charged FICA taxes.

Note that all JHU students, faculty and staff on payroll are legally subject to the same U.S. taxation and international employment licensing practices. If you intend to travel outside the U.S., or get stuck outside of the U.S. due to immigration issues, and continue working in your RA-ship, an assessment of your circumstances must be completed by Export Control to determine if you can continue to be paid. Please complete the International Work Intake Request Form and share it with the CS Academic Program Manager prior to your extended travel for processing with the Dean's office or if you find yourself in these unplanned circumstances.

Performance and Probation

No matter how brilliant your research is, the department can't give you TA funding if you don't fulfill the degree requirement to teach, and your advisor can't legally give you RA funding from a federal grant unless a reasonable amount of your work is related to the grant topic. Please be sure you have reviewed the WSE Residential Graduate Student Probation and Dismissal Policy. Students may be placed on academic probation if their advisor determines research progress to be unsatisfactory. We encourage advisors to address concerns in the annual PhD progress review. If you are placed on probation and subsequently fail to fulfill the corrective measures outlined in your official probation letter, your program standing could be affected.

Aside from TA-ship or RA-ship, here are some other ways to earn money:

- You may be able to win your own funding from some sort of fellowship. For example, if you are a U.S. citizen and have completed less than 12 months of full- time graduate study, you can apply for an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship.
- If you can find a summer job doing CS research in industry, that can be good experience and pay well. (Although it might interrupt your progress toward graduation.) Of course, you cannot receive summer RA funding if you are also working a full-time job elsewhere.

In general, you should discuss your plans with your advisor.

Teaching Experience

Whether or not your career involves teaching your own classes, it will certainly involve explaining technical ideas in person and in writing. It takes practice to do this clearly and engagingly, and to tailor your presentation to your audience. The experience you gain by serving as a Computer Science TA is invaluable. For this reason, the department has instituted a requirement that all PhD students are required to serve as a Teaching Assistant at least one semester during their program of study. In general, PhD students are permitted to count a TA effort outside of the department toward their CS PhD degree requirement if it's comparable to Computer Science Department TA effort expectations, but this must be pre-approved by your advisor and Director of Graduate Studies, Scott Smith. Please contact the Academic Program Manager to initiate a case review.

As part of the requirement the instructor must give you an opportunity to be in front of a group of students at least once during the course (hopefully more). You will be required to **sign up for the CS course 601.807 (Teaching Practicum)** during the semester of your required TA-ship and at the end your performance will be evaluated by the course instructor.

The department also strongly encourages PhD students to design and teach their own short courses, or to teach their own section of a core course. A short course is a 1-credit course that meets either during intersession (January) or a regular semester for a total of 12 class hours. Teaching a core course section provides the opportunity to

collaborate on course content, assignments, etc., with other section instructors, including at least one regular faculty member, while being fully responsible for a regular semester-long course.

PhD Progress Reviews

At the end of each academic year, the CS department reviews the progress of all its PhD students. The goal of this process is to step back once a year and reflect on your progress in the PhD program. Part of the purpose of the review is making sure various requirements are getting checked off, but it also serves as an annual check-in on the less tangible aspects of progress toward your PhD, including what is going well and what could be improved on.

The first step in the annual evaluation is a written self-review, an opportunity for you to reflect on your own progress and to share your thoughts in writing with your advisor. Your advisor as well as possibly other faculty will then meet with you in person to discuss your self-review and your progress. Finally, you will receive a written letter from your advisor and the department summarizing your overall progress in the previous academic year.

Internships

Summer Months

Students are encouraged to pursue full-time internship opportunities during the summer months (between the last day of exams spring semester and the start of fall semester classes.) If a student is hired into an internship, they are required to inform PhD academic program staff of the start and end dates so that payroll can be temporarily paused and overpayments can be avoided. International students must apply for and be approved for full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) if their internship is located in the United States.

Academic Semester

During an academic semester, students may do a part-time internship (working up to 19.99 hours per week; international students must apply for part-time CPT), but should seek the approval of their CS research advisor before doing so. Should a student, with the approval of their CS research advisor, pursue a full-time internship during an academic semester, they MUST apply for a change in student status from full-time residential to non-resident status. Final approval of this status change must come from the Dean. International students will need OIS approval for full-time CPT. The WSE non-resident application can be found here. During non-resident status students are responsible for non-resident tuition (10% of full tuition) and health insurance costs unless their advisor volunteers to cover them. During non-resident status, students don't receive their PhD stipend unless they fall under the study away category.

Students must notify the Academic Program Manager a minimum of 4 weeks prior to their internship start date in order to adjust payroll and prevent overpayment. They must also notify the Academic Program Manager of their internship end date as soon as it is known to prompt adjustments to payroll and their PhD Appointment Letter.

Health and Wellbeing

The Student Health and Wellness Center on the Homewood campus is open six days per week to address student health concerns, free of charge. Certified health care professionals provide primary care, including injury and illness treatment, routine gynecologic cares, immunizations, and travel consultation.

Student mental health is as important as physical health, and representatives from the Counseling Center are available for consultations, individual and group therapy, or psychiatric evaluations.

For other non-academic wellness concerns that may be disrupting your success as a student, reach out to CS Graduate Student Student Support & Advocacy Case Manager Hannah Nelson for issues related to physical or mental health, family emergencies, financial difficulties, housing issues, concern or worry about a friend, and questions or concerns related to your PhD advisor.

The JHU Sexual Assault helpline (410-516-7333) gives students free access to trained professional counselors 24/7. More information can be found on response and prevention on the Sexual Misconduct website.

The O'Connor Recreation Center is accessible to students on the Homewood campus and features an indoor track and pool, a $2,500 square-food weight room and fitness center, group fitness classes, intramural programs.

ONLINE RESOURCES

CS PhD students are beholden to the JHU WSE academic policies listed below, unless the CS Department has a differing internal policy stated. Please contact either the Academic Program Manager or the Director of Graduate Studies if you need clarification regarding if and/or how a policy may apply to you.

- Graduate Academic Catalog Policies
- Graduate Academic Policies and Procedures
- Policy on Mentoring Commitments for PhD Students and Faculty Advisors
- Policy on Annual Academic & Professional Development Discussions for PhD Students and Faculty Advisors
    - Annual Discussion and Planning Form
- Graduation Guide Deadlines
- Doctoral Life Design Studio
- Computer Science PhD Forms
- PhD Union Information
- Ombuds Office
- Office of Institutional Equity
    - Visit the Sexual Misconduct website to learn more about the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures.
    - Visit the Discrimination and Harassment website to learn more about the University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures.
    - Visit the ADA Compliance and Disability Accommodations website for more information about how to request disability accommodations.
    - Click here to read the University's Equal Opportunity Statement.
    - Click here for the University's Title IX and Equal Opportunity Notice for Students, Faculty and Staff.