

# MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY

VIRGINIA CAMPUS



## STUDENT GUIDELINES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2002 - 2003

## **MS-IST Program Office**

The George Washington University Virginia Campus – School of Business & Public Management  
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Welcome to the George Washington University's MS-IST Program at the Virginia Campus! The following is an informational guide for the Virginia Campus program. Please retain this material throughout the program and refer to it when you have questions.

The Information Systems Technology Program Office provides students and prospective students with assistance on admissions, new student orientation, academic advising, program coordination and evaluation, course/faculty scheduling, monitoring of academic performance and program requirement, and graduation clearance. Information on events, program or schedule changes, and other timely announcements will be posted in the Program Office as well as on the MS-IST Website.

### **Dr. John H. Carson, Program Director**

The Director's responsibility is to coordinate the academic aspects of the program. This does not mean the Program Director is a substitute advisor to every student. However, serious problems with courses, faculty, administration or other students should always be called to the Director's attention. He can be reached at (703) 726-8330.

### **Kim McDevitt, Administrative Director**

Kim works with the director to coordinate academic aspects of the program. She is responsible for conducting interviews with prospective students and acting as a liaison between students and faculty. If you have concerns or questions about the content of the program, feel free to contact Kim. She can be reached at (703) 726-8310.

### **Sarah Tate, Program Manager**

Sarah's responsibility is to coordinate the various administrative aspects of the program. Questions regarding admissions to the program, course scheduling, special events, program evaluations, and graduation requirements should be brought to her attention. She is also responsible for web content for the program, and welcomes suggestions for improving the usefulness of our site for both prospective and current students. She can be reached at (703) 726-8336.

### **Sergey Ivanov, Systems Specialist**

Sergey is responsible for maintaining all of the computer labs and systems. If you have questions about software or are experiencing technical difficulties feel free to contact Sergey. He can be reached at (703) 726-8314

### Faculty Advisors

You have been assigned a Faculty Advisor upon admission to the program. Please follow that assignment unless otherwise instructed. If you are having trouble contacting your advisor please contact the Program Office at (703) 726-8330.

<b>Virginia Campus Advisors:</b>	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>
Professor John Carson	<a href="mailto:carson@gwu.edu">carson@gwu.edu</a>	(703) 726-8330
Professor David Harris	<a href="mailto:harrisdr@alumni.ksg.harvard.edu">harrisdr@alumni.ksg.harvard.edu</a>	(703) 453-3004
Professor William Money	<a href="mailto:wmoney@gwu.edu">wmoney@gwu.edu</a>	(703) 726-8335
Professor Fred Sencindiver	<a href="mailto:freds@gwu.edu">freds@gwu.edu</a>	(703) 726-8273

**GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN THE**  
**MASTER OF SCIENCE**  
**IN**  
**INFORMATION SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM**

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**WELCOME**

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*Congratulations!* You are now a student in the M.S. in Information Systems Technology Program offered by the Management Science Department of the School of Business and Public Management at The George Washington University.

The GW MS-IST program offers you the opportunity to develop a strong foundation of current IS skills and to learn how to more effectively utilize information systems technology to solve the problems facing business and government organizations today and in the future. We encourage you to make the most of your academic experiences by challenging yourself to go beyond the faculty member's expectations. Graduate-level work is demanding, but we think you will find it rewarding both personally and professionally.

In addition to your course work, your faculty and fellow students represent an invaluable resource of practical field knowledge, international experiences, and industry-specific expertise. We encourage you to take the time to get to know your classmates as they have the potential of becoming your strongest professional colleagues. The Metropolitan DC/Northern Virginia technology community also represents a unique opportunity for you to become involved in special events, conferences, and social gatherings that can enhance your knowledge of the field.

We hope that you will take full advantage of all that is offered both inside and outside of the classroom to make the most of your GW MS-IST experience. If we can assist you along the way, please let us know.

John H. Carson, Ph.D.  
MS-IST Program Director

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## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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As a new student, we ask you to take a few moments to read through this entire document to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures for the program. Please keep in mind that the policies and procedures in effect at the time of your admission to the program will be applicable to you throughout your program.

**We strongly suggest you do the following:**

1. Save your admission letter and all correspondence from the University.
2. Send in your **Declaration of Intent Form** immediately! This form will guarantee your space in the program.
3. Please schedule an **advising session** with your faculty advisor **prior to the beginning of classes** to discuss an outline for your program of courses and to determine your prerequisite requirements.
4. **Register for classes!** You may register once you have met with your advisor. If you fail to register before the first day of class you will be charged an \$80 late fee.
5. Keep the University informed of any changes in your address, name, email, or daytime and home phone numbers. We need to have your current address and daytime phone number in order to mail you information or contact you in case of a problem or last minute schedule change.
6. **Subscribe to the email list!** To be kept informed of all important program information send an email to [vais@gwu.edu](mailto:vais@gwu.edu) with **Email List** as the subject. Make sure to include your name!

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## PROGRAM PLANNING

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### PROGRAM STATEMENT

**All MS-IST students are required to fill out a program statement before they begin attending classes.** This becomes an approved program of study between the student and the University that defines their requirements for graduation. Once the program statement is complete, changes in the course schedule or in the student's choice of elective can be accommodated. However, these changes should be approved by the faculty advisor and the program director in advance and must be noted on a revised program statement. It is the students' responsibility to insure that an accurate, current program statement is on file in the MS-IST office.

**Students who deviate from their current program statements on file in the MS-IST office may delay or prevent their graduation from the program.**

## COURSE SELECTION AND SCHEDULING

We recommend no more than three courses per semester for full time students and no more than two courses per semester for part-time students. If you need to satisfy the full set of prerequisites, it may not be possible to take more than two courses per semester for your first two semesters – even if you are a full-time student.

To aid you in course scheduling, a table is provided at the end of this manual indicating when courses will be offered. An additional chart shows the proper sequencing of the courses within the program.

## **PREREQUISITES**

Prerequisites are intended to insure that all students are sufficiently prepared for graduate level courses. Students are admitted to the degree program with diverse academic backgrounds and a variety of work and professional experience. The prerequisites serve to level the knowledge base for entering students and afford a richer classroom experience. It is valuable, but not a requirement, that prerequisites be satisfied prior to the beginning of formal graduate studies. If you require prerequisite courses, it is mandatory that you take as many of them per semester as possible until they are all completed. Your advisor will provide guidance on scheduling these prerequisites.

Prerequisite knowledge may be satisfied by academic course work, professional experience or a waiver examination. It is up to the faculty advisor to determine which prerequisite areas a student has satisfied and how the student may satisfy any remaining areas.

There are four prerequisite areas:

1. Programming
2. Systems Analysis
3. Database
4. Statistics (please note there is no waiver exam or workshop for this prerequisite)

### **PROGRAMMING**

The programming prerequisite can generally be satisfied by an introductory-level programming course in one of the preferred languages - provided a grade of "B" or better was obtained. Pascal, C, C++, or Visual Basic are the preferred programming languages. It is not intended that students become proficient programmers, although this is a valuable skill, but rather that the fundamental structure of software programs and the process of creating them be understood. Fundamental BASIC and database languages are not acceptable for fulfilling this prerequisite.

### **SYSTEMS ANALYSIS**

The systems analysis prerequisite deals with formal methods of analysis such as data flow diagrams, entity relationships and data dictionaries.

### **DATABASE**

This prerequisite covers computer-based information systems knowledge/experience beyond the two areas mentioned above. Most junior/senior level undergraduate courses in computer science or information systems will satisfy this requirement provided a grade of B or better was achieved. Also, significant career experience in the information systems area, such as network administrator, database administrator, programmer, and analyst will generally satisfy this requirement. However, computer user experience will not satisfy this requirement. Experience with word-processing, spreadsheet programs and other clerical activities, although valuable, are not acceptable for this prerequisite.

### **STATISTICS**

The statistics prerequisite is specified as the content of the course, MGT 202 or equivalent. Only an academic course (or courses) in the area of basic business statistics, with a grade of B or better may be used to satisfy this requirement. Please refer to the GWU Bulletin description for more detailed information.

## **SATISFYING PREREQUISITES**

Prerequisites not previously satisfied may be satisfied by completion of an approved academic course, a prerequisite workshop or a **waiver examination\***. Information about the workshops can be obtained from the program office or on the website.

**\* Please note there is no corresponding workshop or waiver exam for the Statistics requirement. Several Community Colleges offer acceptable courses. They are:**

**Strayer University:  
MATH 300 – Descriptive Statistics**

**NOVA:  
BUS 221 – Business Statistics I  
MATH 241 – Statistics I**

## **\* WAIVER EXAMS**

During the first semester of enrollment students may sign up to take **Waiver Exams** in three of the prerequisite areas. The student is given one hour to demonstrate their knowledge in the area. Waiver exams are available for the following prerequisites:

1. Database
2. Systems Analysis
3. Programming

Once the exam is submitted it will be graded by a qualified faculty member. If the student has passed the exam they will have satisfied the prerequisite.

Waiver exams at the Virginia Campus are scheduled by appointment. If your advisor determines that you should take a waiver exam, please call 703-726-8330 to make your appointment.

Academic courses, taken with a grade of B or better, from other institutions may be taken to satisfy prerequisite requirements, however such courses need to be approved in advance by the applicable Faculty Advisor.

## **ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT**

The SBPM faculty expects all students to be proficient in written and spoken English. International students coming from countries where English is not the official language must take the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) placement test prior to registering for classes. Only those students who have scored 600 or higher on written TOEFL or who graduated from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university will be exempt from this requirement. It is strongly recommended that International students requiring visa assistance or who are assigned to EFL course work select the Foggy Bottom/Main Campus as their home campus.

## MAJOR FIELDS

There are three major fields within the Master of Science in Information Systems Technology degree. Two of them are offered at the Virginia Campus:

- Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Information Systems Development (ISD)

Regardless of your major field, your degree is a Master of Science in Information Systems Technology. The major field does not currently appear on your diploma but is reflected in your transcript.

## DOUBLE MAJORS

Students may elect to major in two fields of the Master of Science in Information Systems Technology program. Students taking a double major are allowed to take courses in the second major as their electives to minimize the number of courses required for a double major. In the case of a double major, students are strongly encouraged to complete the requirements for one major before beginning the courses for the second. There are additional constraints on this special option - your Faculty Advisor will provide you guidance if you select this option.

## ELECTIVE COURSES

Some of the fields within the IS program contain elective courses to be selected by students. These electives should be selected with the guidance of your advisor.

## CAPSTONE COURSE

The capstone course, MGT 287 Design of On-Line Information Systems, is a required course in the curriculum. This course must be taken either as the last course in the program or concurrently with the last required course(s).

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## ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

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Students are advised to obtain and save a copy of the Graduate Bulletin effective upon their admissions into the MS-IST Program. The academic policies and regulations outlined in the Bulletin govern the rules for your degree program. **All work for the master's degree must be completed within five years of admission.**

**Some of the academic policies and regulations in effect for students admitted for the 2001 - 2002 academic year\* include:**

*\*Students admitted in a prior academic year should consult the appropriate Graduate Bulletin for applicable policies and regulations.*

## GRADING POLICY

The primary point of contact for all course-related grading issues is the faculty member. Grades for Graduate coursework are as follows:

A	Excellent	F	Fail	W	Authorized Withdraw
B	Good	I	Incomplete	Z	Unauthorized Withdraw
C	Minimum Pass	IPG	In Progress	CR	Credit

Grades of A-, B+, B-, C+ and C- may also be given.

An average of B or better is required for the master's degree. A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 is required for award of a graduate degree. All graduate courses and undergraduate course taken for graduate credit after matriculation as a degree candidate (except those audited or taken for a grade of CR) will be used in the calculation of the grade-point average.

#### **PROBATION**

A student whose grade-point average falls below 3.0 after completing a minimum of 9 credit hours will be placed on probation. This probation extends through the period in which the student next attempts 12 credit hours of work, including prescribed courses. A student's program may be further restricted by the MS-IST Program Director if deemed necessary. During this period the student's performance will be monitored to determine suitability for continued study. Please note that Incomplete grades are NOT ALLOWED during the probation period. A student who is subject to probation for a second time at any point during the program is automatically suspended.

#### **GRADE OF F**

A master's degree candidate who receives a grade of F is required to present cause, for consideration by the MS-IST Program Director, as to why continued study should be permitted. Once a grade of F is earned in a required or elective course, it remains part of the student's permanent record and is calculated into the grade-point average. A master's degree candidate who receives a grade of F in a core or required course, and who is permitted to continue graduate studies, must repeat the course and achieve at least the grade of B. (Such a repeat does not expunge the grade of F, which remains part of the student's record.) Should this level of performance not be obtained, the student will be denied further registration as a degree candidate.

#### **INCOMPLETE**

At the option of the instructor, the grade of **I** may be recorded if a student, for reasons beyond the student's control, is unable to complete the work of the course, and if the instructor is informed of, and approves, such reasons before the date when grades must be reported. Faculty members assigning a grade of I (Incomplete) must complete and provide the student with a "Contract for Incomplete Grade" outlining the work that must be completed and the date by which the work will be due to the instructor. The date agreed upon for completion must be no later than the last day of the examination period for the Fall or Spring semester immediately following the semester or summer session in which the grade of I was assigned. An Incomplete that is not changed within the period automatically becomes an F. In cases of well-documented circumstances, an instructor and a student may jointly petition the MS-IST Program Director for additional time to complete the course work. Such a petition should be submitted within the same period outlined above. The grade of I cannot be changed by reregistering for the course at GW or by taking its equivalent elsewhere. The grade of I remains on the student's permanent record even after the course has been successfully completed.

Students who are registered for a course that they have not attended and in which they have done no substantial graded work, will be assigned a grade of Z.

#### **WITHDRAWAL**

The last day for complete withdrawal without academic penalty is the fourth week after registration for the fall or spring semester, respectively. A course dropped in the fifth to eighth week is assigned a W grade

(authorized withdrawal). Rules governing timing of withdrawal from a summer session course are published in the summer session bulletin. A course may not be dropped without confirmation from the instructor that the student has received to date a passing grade. A student cannot drop a course that he or she is failing.

All charges for courses from which a student withdraws are subject to the refund policy listed under Fees and Financial Regulations in the Graduate Bulletin.

#### **SUSPENSION**

A graduate student who does not meet the conditions of probation (see above) will be suspended. A student who is suspended or withdraws under these conditions may apply for readmission after the lapse of one semester. An outstanding Incomplete grade at the time of suspension must be completed or will turn to an administrative F. To be readmitted the student must submit evidence that indicates academic success if readmitted. A student so readmitted will continue on academic probation and must achieve a minimum grade-point average of 3.50 in the next 12 credit hours of graduate study. Should the student fail to achieve this minimum grade-point average, a second suspension will result and subsequent readmission will be denied.

#### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A student who finds it necessary to interrupt active pursuit of his/her degree for a semester or more may petition the MS-IST Program Director for a leave of absence of up to one year. An MS-IST student who discontinues active enrollment in the MS-IST Program without being granted a leave of absence must apply for readmission and will be subject to the new regulations and requirements in force.

#### **CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT**

Once a student begins the MS-IST program, he/she is expected to be continuously enrolled and actively engaged in fulfilling requirements for the degree each semester of the academic year until the degree is conferred. A student who breaks continuous enrollment at the University without requesting and being granted a leave of absence must apply for readmission and, if readmitted, be subject to the new regulations and requirements in force. **If you miss a semester (excluding Summer) for any reason you MUST register for continuous enrollment.** Please contact the program office for further instructions.

#### **STUDENT PETITIONS**

Student petitions are designed as a vehicle to request special consideration on a particular area of the IST Program. Petitions are available from the MS-IST Program Office and must be accompanied by any supporting documentation before being considered. Petitions may be submitted for a variety of reasons including:

Leave of Absence (maximum two semesters)

Extending an Incomplete

F Grade – Request to Continue Studies

Program Adjustments – Adding or dropping a course beyond deadline

Changing Field of Concentration within the Program

Transfer Coursework

--Coursework completed prior to admission (not over 5 years old with a grade of B or better)

- Requesting to take coursework elsewhere while a current student
- Course substitution or waiver
- Withdrawing from a course (if have a passing grade)
- Exceeding 5-year limit to complete MS-IST Program

### CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic honesty is central to the mission of the GW School of Business and Public Management. Students are expected to commit themselves to high standards and to the promotion of academic integrity. Detailed information regarding the code is published in a brochure entitled *The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity*.

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### REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

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Registration for graduate courses is conducted via The George Washington University Gweb Registration System <http://gweb.gwu.edu>. After registering, a student may continue to adjust his/her schedule through the end of the priority registration period. Detailed registration information, along with information on late registration fees, tuition refunds, and withdrawals, can be found in the current semester's *Schedule of Classes*. In general, to avoid late fees or having less than 100% of tuition funds refunded, courses must be dropped or added **prior to the first day of the semester or session. However, because the dates and penalties incurred change each semester, students should always refer to the current Schedule of Classes.**

### CLOSED COURSES

If a course is full or you cannot register for a course at the Virginia Campus, please contact the MS-IST Program Office. The Office will often maintain a waiting list or make accommodations for additional students.

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### TRANSFERRING COURSES

*(including Non-degree courses at GW)*

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Students may transfer up to 6 credit hours of graduate study into the MS-IST Program. Courses taken prior to admission into the degree program may be transferred into a student's degree program either from other institutions, or from courses taken at George Washington University in a non-degree student status **provided that those courses were not used to satisfy the requirements of another degree program.** Students wishing to take courses at other institutions after admission to the degree program should get permission from their faculty advisor **before** taking the course. In either case, only the course credits transfer—not the grades. Also remember that you must be enrolled at GW each semester during your degree program. If you plan to take a course elsewhere, and will not be in attendance at GW for a given semester, **you must register for continuous enrollment.** The requirements for transfer are:

1. The course must have been taken within five years of the student's admission into the MS-IST program or while completing his/her degree.
2. The student must receive a grade of B or better for any transfer courses.
3. Courses taken in fulfillment of another degree (either from GW or another institution) may not be counted as transfer credits.
4. The student must file a petition with the MS-IST Program Office, along with a course syllabus, for approval of the transfer course.
5. Upon completion of the course to be transferred, the student must submit to the IST Program Office an official transcript from the school where the course(s) were taken. The course will then be added as an elective transfer to the student's permanent GW record and transcript.

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### **COURSES AT OTHER GWU LOCATIONS**

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Although variations of the MS-IST program are offered at other locations, students are required to take all their courses at their home campus. Any exemptions to this restriction must be requested by submitting a formal petition, signed by your advisor, to the program director.

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### **GRADUATION**

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Students must file an Application for Graduation prior to the following dates:

- February 1 – for students completing degree requirements in the Spring Semester
- July 1 – for students completing degree requirements in the Summer Sessions
- October 1 – for students completing degree requirements in the Fall Semester

These forms are obtained from the MS-IST Program Office. Your Program Statement on file in the MS-IST Program Office enables the Program Manager to determine whether it is possible for you to complete degree requirements by the end of the designated term. ***Students who do not have a current Program Statement on file with the Ms-IST Program Office may unnecessarily delay their graduation clearance.*** Students must have satisfactorily completed all curriculum requirements and be free from all indebtedness to the University in order to graduate.

Although degrees are conferred in September, February, and May, the graduation ceremony is held in May only. September and February graduates are eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony the May following their graduation dates. Students who are completing their program during the summer sessions and have six credit hours or less remaining are eligible to participate in the May graduation ceremony. While technically a September graduate, the student must submit his/her application by February 1 to participate in the ceremony.

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### **PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDELINES**

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The following attachments are provided to help you plan your program of study. The first attachment, the standard course schedule, shows when you can generally expect courses to be offered. The MS-IST

Sequence Guide shows the recommended sequence of prerequisites and courses. ***The guidelines are meant to supplement, not substitute a meeting with your faculty advisor to determine your individual program statement.***

*Please keep in mind:*

- The Statistics prerequisite must be met prior to enrolling in MGT 226.
- Programming, Database, and Systems Analysis prerequisites must be completed prior to enrolling in MGT 282 or MGT 280 and prior to many of the elective courses. THEREFORE, it is recommended that these prerequisites be satisfied very early in your program—prior to the third semester of study.
- MGT 287 is offered in the Fall and Spring and may be taken only after all other required course work is complete.
- Starting courses (those not requiring a prerequisite courses or workshop) are MGT 201, MGT 271, MGT 231.
- MGT 271 and MGT 280 should be taken early in the process because they serve as prerequisite courses for MGT 284.

It is recommended that part-time students take two courses each in the Fall and Spring and one course in the Summer Session to maximize their progress through the program. The program must be completed within 5 calendar years from the date of admission. However, it is recommended that students plan to finish within 2-3 years.

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**MS-IST PROGRAM STANDARD SCHEDULE FOR VIRGINIA CAMPUS COURSES**

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\*Other courses may be added on an as-needed basis.

<b>Course</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Required</b>			
Mgt 201	X		X
Mgt 226	X	X	
Mgt 231	X	X	X
Mgt 271	X	X	X
Mgt 280		X	X
Mgt 282	X		X
Mgt 284	X		X
Mgt 287	X	X	
<b>Elective</b>			
Mgt 241		X	
Mgt 283	X		
Mgt 285		X	
Mgt 289		X	
Mgt 290 (DM)			X
Mgt 290 (OO)			X

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## **MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS TRACK**

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The Management Information Systems Track consists of 30 credit hours of coursework including the following:

### **Four Courses of Technology Core**

MGT 280: Information Systems development and Applications

MGT 282: Telecommunications and Enterprise Networks

MGT 284: Database Systems

MGT 287: Design of On-Line Information Systems

### **Four Required Courses**

MGT 201: Organization and Management

MGT 226: Workshop in Computerized Decision Systems

MGT 231: Project Management

MGT 271: Principles of Management Information Systems

### **Two Elective Courses**

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## **INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT TRACK**

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The Information Systems Development Track consists of 30 credit hours of coursework including the following:

### **Four Courses of Technology Core**

MGT 280: Information Systems development and Applications

MGT 282: Telecommunications and Enterprise Networks

MGT 284: Database Systems

MGT 287: Design of On-Line Information Systems

### **Four Required Courses**

MGT 283: Topics in Higher Level Languages

MGT 285: Database and Intelligent Systems

MGT 289: Web Technologies

MGT 290: Special Topics

### **Two Elective Courses**