What can I do with a degree in...

COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS?

Why study **COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS?**

Our Information Systems program offers a dynamic and hands-on learning experience designed to prepare you for the future of technology. By combining a Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) model with access to our modern labs and dedicated CIS servers, students gain practical experience using their own devices and enterprise network systems.

In our program you will:

- Learn network and data communications concepts from experienced faculty.
- Get hands-on practice in installing and managing local data networks.
- Develop dynamic web applications.
- Analyze, design, and build comprehensive business applications.

Our dedicated CIS servers provide a robust and secure environment for your coursework, ensuring you have access to the resources you need to succeed. The curriculum also integrates essential cybersecurity knowledge, preparing you to protect and secure informaiton in today's digital world. The holistic approach ensures you are equipped for a wide range of careers in technology and informaiton systems. Join us and become part of a forward-thinking community where technology, innovation, and security intersect.

What is the **DEGREE OPTION?**

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (B.S.B.A.) in Computer Information Systems
NOTE: Complementary minors include Cybersecurity and Visual Analytics for Decision Making.

What is the **UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION PROCESS?**

Any currently enrolled student at WCU may declare Computer Information Systems as an undergraduate major. Please make an appointment with your advisor via your MyWCU student portal.

What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Our Business Ready® graduates are prepared to become a variety of professionals including computer information and computer support specialists, security analysts, network administrators and specialists, computer scientists, systems administrators, systems analyst project managers, back-end and front-end developers, network architects, software developers, web developers, computer programmers, software managers, database administrators, help desk associates, and business intelligence analysts. *NOTE: Advanced degrees may be required for some of the above careers. Please speak with an advisor or career counselor for more information.*

Who employs **COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS** graduates?

Our graduates work for a variety of employers including computer systems design services, non-profit organizations, federal, state, and local government agencies, businesses and industries, tax preparation companies, hospitals and healthcare organizations, banks and other financial organizations, management enterprises, software companies, insurance companies, consulting services, information services, and educational institutions.

MAJOR MAP

How to use this map: Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

	1st YEAR	2nd YEAR
EXCEL IN ACADEMICS	Coursework your first year will focus on foundational classes within the liberal studies catalog as well as introductory business courses including accounting and economics. Check out the **8-semester plan** and make an appointment with your advisor.	The second year continues with additional liberal studies requirements as well as introductory courses in CIS, Law, and Accounting. Check out the **8-semester plan** and make an appointment with your advisor.
GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE	Check out **WCU's DegreePlus program** and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness. See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU student portal.	If you are thinking about attending a graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions. Engage deeper with **DegreePlus;** choose an additional competency to complete Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer or work Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.
BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY	Connect with the **Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning** and ask about the **Spark Award,** a program aimed to encourage and recognize students who are connected with their community.	Consider joining clubs or organizations on campus to develop a sense of community. If you want to **study abroad,** this is a good year to have that experience. The Study Abroad Office has excellent suggestions on places to go to your major specifically.
PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE	Further explore your career options or career interests using the **Center for Career and Professional Development's** online resources, **Focus 2,** and **O*net Online.** Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.	Check out **CCPD's list of career-building activities** and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus. Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools you wish to apply to in a few years; label your spreadsheet with each school's admission requirements and application materials so that you are aware of the expectations.

Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Business Administration and Law
Entrepreneurship
Finance
Management
Mathematics

3rd YEAR

Courses in your third year will focus heavily on upper-level CIS courses as well as program electives and required business core classes. Check out the **8-semester plan** and make an appointment with your advisor.

Complete an internship that will give you practical hands-on experience in your field. Contact the CCPD for help in your internship search.

Consider networking with professionals in your field during networking events or conferences such as the **International Association for Computer Information Systems annual conference** or the **Association for Information Science and Technology networking events.**

Volunteer with nonprofits that focus on your ideal career path.

Connect with alumni in your field through **LinkedIn.**

Consider joining Beta Gamma, the international honorary society for business students (by invite only).

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter (Make an appointment through MyWCU)

Utilize the **Writing and Learning Commons** for GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Take the GRE, etc. Use **Big Interview** to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour graduate schools of your choice, if applicable.

4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will continue to focus on upper-level CIS classes and any remaining liberal studies requirements. Check out the **8-semester plan,** make an appointment with your advisor, and complete your degree audit, and **apply for graduation!**

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs or graduate school admissions. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Join professional organizations such as the **Information Systems Security Association** or **ISACA**

Network with employers and non-profits at any of CCPD's events such as **Career Fair Plus.**

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by vising the **CCPD.**

DID YOU KNOW? Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 50,000 employers)

MORE INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP Information

There are numerous internship opportunities for students. In some cases internships are established through a faculty member in the student's major. Oftentimes students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic advisor the possibility of receiving college credit. Generally, three hours of general elective credit can be earned for a minimum of 200 hours of experience.

SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- information handling and organization
- decision making
- oral and written communication
- numerical computation
- analytical and quantitative abilities
- problem solving
- technical skills
- teamwork
- leadership

KNOWLEDGE Base

This program will prepare students to:

- Effectively communicate with team members while problem-solving today's information technology challenges.
- Apply ethical principles in real-world scenarios.
- identify needed actions or presented problems, find and use appropriate information to address the action or problem, identify alternative solutions, and make decisions.

Professional **RESOURCES**

- Association for Information Science and Technology: asist.org
- Association for Information Systems: aisnet.org
- Information Systems Security Association: issa.org
- International Associations for Computer Information Systems: www.iacis.org
- ISACA: isaca.org

QUESTIONS?

For questions, please call the Computer Information Systems program at 828-227-7412 or visit cis.wcu.edu.

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or careerservices@wcu.edu.

Western Carolina University