Is Graduate School For You?

So many career options in computing!

- Software Engineer, Software QA Tester, Software Project Manager, Human-Factors Designer...
- Systems developer, application developer, web developer, game developer...
- Database administrator, network systems administrator ...
- IT sales professional, IT trainer, technical author...
- Teacher, Professor....
- Research scientist, entrepreneur...

So many contexts!

Why consider graduate school?

- You want to solve big and important problems
- You love to be creative and want a lot of independence and control over the choice of problems you address
- You want to make important and long-lasting contributions to the field
- You would enjoy being an expert on a particular area in computer science
- Starting salaries for Bachelor’s degrees are high; starting salaries for M.S. are often higher
- Your chosen career (e.g., professor or research scientist) requires it
How is graduate school different from college?

Activities: all CS classes vs. variety of classes in different subjects
Daily schedule: flexible hours & open-ended deadlines vs. all course deadlines
Deliverables: research contributions, papers, posters, presentations, proposal, & dissertation in addition to exams/class projects
Modes of working: innovating, experimenting, presenting, & writing vs. studying, absorbing, & solving known problems
Evaluation of success: research contributions & publications in addition to exam scores & project grades

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<th>Year 1</th>
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<td>Take Graduate Level Courses</td>
<td>Take More Graduate Level Courses</td>
<td>Identify Specific Ph.D. Topic</td>
<td>Defend Proposal</td>
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<td>Identify Research Advisor</td>
<td>Take Ph.D. Exams</td>
<td>Complete Preliminary Ph.D. Research &amp; Paper</td>
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Complete M.S. Degree

Complete Ph.D. Degree

For additional information, see our info sheets on:
- Master’s or Ph.D.?
- How Do I Successfully Apply to Graduate School?