



Department of Computer Science

Master's Programs Newsletter

Fall 2009

A Message from Benjamin F. Goldberg, Incoming Director of Graduate Studies

I am writing as the new Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for the MS program, taking over from Professor Chee Yap. I'd like to thank Professor Yap for his five years of service as DGS and wish him a happy and productive sabbatical.

A number of you may already know me, having taken my Programming Languages class, Compilers class, or any of the several other MS courses that I have taught. Others of you, especially our alumni, will have seen questions on the Core exam (or, prior to that, the Pragmatic exam) that I have written – although that may not be something that you want to be reminded of. In any case, I'm looking forward to being even more involved in the MS program. I hope that you will feel free to contact me with questions or suggestions about our MS program – or just to say hello. We're always looking for input from our students and alumni.

Speaking of the Core exam, the exam is actually being phased out of our MS curriculum. Instead, we are requiring that our MS students who are entering the program this fall take our foundational courses – Programming Languages, Operating Systems, and Fundamental Algorithms – early in their coursework here at NYU. Specifically, a full-time MSCS student must successfully complete at least one of the three foundational courses within the first three courses taken and must successfully complete all three foundational courses within the first six courses taken. A part-time MSCS student must successfully complete a foundational course as the first course taken and must successfully complete all three foundational courses within the first six courses taken. Students also must do well in the foundational courses, keeping a B- average in those courses (as well as the usual B average overall).

Unlike the Core exam, which was generally taken near the end the MS program, the foundational courses will allow us to identify students that are struggling with core concepts of CS and take corrective action early on. Additionally, near the end of their studies, students must complete a designated capstone course with a grade of B (3.0) or better. Capstone courses require a large programming project that brings together material from several areas that the students have studied while at NYU. Alternatively, subject to prior approval of the DGS, a student may complete a master's thesis or advanced lab.

To all of you, I wish you a happy and productive fall season.



Mark Your Calendar!

The NYU Computer Science Fall Showcase and Info Tech Projects Demo Show is an event showcasing projects that have been completed in various undergraduate and graduate computer science courses in the fall 2009 semester. It is a great opportunity to see the creativity and industry of NYU's CS Department. The event takes place on Thursday, December 17th from 5-9 pm in the 13th floor lounge of Warren Weaver Hall. Refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there!

Applying for Graduation

Starting in Summer 2009, students apply for graduation through Albert, instead of Torchtone. To apply, go to your Albert account via NYU Home. Under Academic Records, click on Graduation Application. Select your School/Level and Expected Term of Graduation. Then, click Submit.

In order to graduate in a specific semester, you must apply for graduation within the application deadline period. The deadline for January 2010 graduation is October 2, 2009. If you do not successfully complete all academic requirements by the end of the semester, you must reapply for graduation for the following cycle.



Alumni Spotlight: Saurav Kasera, MSIS and Math Finance alumnus

Saurav Kasera joined Courant in the fall of 2004. He excelled in his courses and, in three years, earned an MS in Information Systems, as well as an MS in Math Finance.

In addition to his achievements in the classroom, Saurav was an active member of the NYU community. He was a Research Assistant for the Higher Education Opportunity Programs (HEOP) in the Steinhardt School of Education from 2004 to 2007. Additionally, he was a GSAS representative in the Graduate Commission and served as Vice President of the Graduate Student Council in 2006, working closely with Dean Stimpson and Dean Slocum in that capacity.

During his time at Courant, Saurav interned twice at Morgan Stanley and joined the firm full-time upon graduation. He worked on the Macro Proprietary Trading desk, spending his first year rotating between the emerging markets, credit, fixed income, and foreign exchange groups, focusing on macro research and the correlation between various asset classes. Eventually, he narrowed his focus to commodities, helping to develop technical trading strategies.

In November of 2008, Saurav left Morgan Stanley, along with other members of his team, to form Jamison Capital Partners, a macro commodity hedge fund. He presently works as a Research and Trading analyst, with responsibility for commodity-based quantitative strategies. His experience also includes developing and implementing global macro strategies. He is the primary researcher for the sugar markets and is tasked with both fundamental supply/demand research and trade idea generation.

As a Courant alumnus, Saurav has been elected to serve as a member of the Graduate Internal Selection Committee for the Reynolds Program for 2009 and as a member of the Advisory Board for the NYU Master's College.

Based on his experience, Saurav offers the following advice to current students: "Never say anything is impossible until you have actually found out that it is." And in today's tough economic climate, he believes that students "should try to meet as many people as possible. 'Networking' is extremely important."

MACS Update

The Master's Association in Computer Science (MACS), founded in 2008, is committed to building a community for the master's students in the Computer Science Department. It serves as a resource to develop and to enrich an active and vibrant student community. To this end, MACS holds technology related events, procures student participation in department events, builds strong ties with industry, and fosters a sense of belonging to the multicultural city of New York.



In the previous academic year, MACS organized many events, including a MACS logo design competition with prizes (the winning design can be seen on their new T-shirts!), a summer volleyball tournament, numerous social activities, a MSIS networking event, and a Corporate Technology Panel with representatives from Goldman Sachs, Bloomberg, Blackrock, and Deloitte Consulting.

MACS is already busy planning events for the 2009-2010 academic year. Upcoming events will include social activities, company visits, a technology job panel, a checkers programming tournament, and meetings of the Club of Turing Machine Enthusiasts. Be sure to keep an eye out for e-mails with more event details. You can also visit the MACS website at: <http://cs.nyu.edu/~macsweb/>

If interested in becoming involved with MACS or have an idea to share, please contact: macs@cs.nyu.edu

The Computer Science Master's Programs at Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences
<http://cs.nyu.edu/web/Academic/Graduate/index.html#MS>

Comments or suggestions for this newsletter can be addressed to Jennifer Conlan at conlan@cs.nyu.edu