Log of Changes to
Computer Science Graduate Degree Requirements*

Duke University
Department of Computer Science

June 10, 2014
1. Changed Qual requirement to incorporate elective courses.
2. Changed the Qual course requirement to reflect new elective courses.

July 9, 2013
1. Changed Preliminary Exam part to reflect the fact that exam must be completed by end of third year. Also deleted requirement that prelim document must be a dissertation proposal.
2. Changed MS Program requirements to incorporate course only option, as well as new credit requirements for the project/thesis option.
3. Merged General Requirements with Ph.D. Program, since these requirements don’t apply to the MS Program for the most part.

April 18, 2012
1. The document is updated to reflect changes to the course numbering scheme, which will become effective starting Fall 2012.
2. Starting Fall 2012, CPS 430 (formerly offered as CPS 229 in Spring 2012) will no longer be considered as an algorithms quals course alternative. Only PhD students who took CPS 229 in Spring 2012 can still use it as an algorithms quals course alternative. A footnote has been added to Table 1 to explain this exception.
3. For the MS course requirement, CPS 430 can be used to satisfy the first restriction.
4. The document is updated to reflect that Intent to Receive Degree form is no longer in use; instead, students apply to graduate in ACES.

August 19, 2011
1. In Table 1 (Quals exams and courses), rows for “Algorithms” and “Artificial Intelligence” are updated to reflect the following changes:

*This document can be found at http://www.cs.duke.edu/education/graduate/requirements/.
(a) A new course, CPS 229, to be introduced in Spring 2012 (and offered every Spring), will serve as a graduate-level algorithms course intended for MS students, PhD students not specializing in algorithms, and graduate students from non-CS programs. Meanwhile, CPS 230 will be taught in every Fall with more rigor and advanced materials suitable for PhD student who are interesting in algorithms. Either course can be used to earn the quals credit for algorithms.

(b) Starting Fall 2011, an artificial intelligence quals exam will be offered regardless of whether CPS 270 or CPS 271 is offered in that semester. Prior to this change, the contents of this exam used to alternate between artificial intelligence and machine learning depending on whether CPS 270 or CPS 271 was offered. The old practice was confusing to students, and difficult for those who failed to earn the quals credit by course, as the exam on that topic would not be offered the next year. Furthermore, having a machine learning quals exam at the level of an advanced undergraduate course made little sense when there is no undergraduate course in machine learning.

2. In Section 3.5, paragraph 2, there is a minor wording change to remove the possibility of misinterpreting the statement to mean that passing a single quals exam could count as taking all alternative corresponding quals courses (e.g., in the case of algorithms or artificial intelligence).

   - Old: “earning a quals credit by exam counts as satisfactorily completing the corresponding quals course”
   - New: “earning a quals credit by exam counts as satisfactorily completing one corresponding quals course”

3. In Appendix B, bullet 6 is updated to reflect the fact that in every Spring, there will be a quals course (CPS 229) offered for algorithms but no quals exam; both a quals course (CPS 230) and the quals exam for algorithms are offered every Fall.

   - Old: “The faculty member offering a quals course in a given semester must be prepared to administer the corresponding quals exam either during the week before or in the first week of that semester.”
   - New: “Each quals exam should be offered according to a regular schedule, at least once every other year, during the week before or in the first week of a semester when a corresponding quals course is also offered. The faculty member offering the course is responsible for preparing and administering the quals exam. Changes or deviations from the regular offering schedule must be approved by the Chair, and should be announced to the students one year in advance.”

August 2010

Approved March 17, 2010; effective August 2010. This version can be found at http://www.cs.duke.edu/education/assets_documents/archive/grad-req-2010-08.pdf.

Earlier Versions

Earlier versions can be found at http://www.cs.duke.edu/education/graduate/requirements/.