Things to Know Before Starting the MCS

1. Utah Valley University's Master of Computer Science (MCS) has been developed as a part-time program to allow working professionals to continue working full-time while completing their degree. While theory and research are always a part of a graduate degree, - the UVU MCS focuses on relevant, practical learning. We designed the content of our courses and the scheduling of classes with working professionals in mind. As a result, MCS classes are always offered at 4:00 p.m. or later to give you the opportunity to work full-time and attend class at night.

2. Unless a scheduling issue occurs, you will find a block of 2 **Core Classes** offered back-to- back and 2 *Elective Classes* offered on the other days of the week. If the block of **Core Classes** is offered on Monday/Wednesday in Fall in one year, then you will find a block of **Core Classes** offered again on Monday/Wednesday in the Spring of that same year. If the block of **Core Classes** is offered on Monday/Wednesday in one year, then the next year the block of **Core Classes** will be on Tuesday/Thursday and the block of *Elective Classes* will be on Monday/Wednesday.

	Monday/Wednesday	Tuesday/Thursday
1st Year	Block of **Core Classes**	Block of *Elective Classes*
2nd Year	Block of *Elective Classes*	Block of **Core Classes**
3rd Year	Block of **Core Classes**	Block of *Elective Classes*
4th Year	Block of *Elective Classes*	Block of **Core Classes**

This schedule, if you choose to follow it, allows you to take 2 classes per semester on the same days of the week until you graduate.

If you desire to take the MCS full-time, we offer 5 rather than 4 classes per semester to accommodate full-time status. However, we will not be able to teach all 5 classes unless each class has the minimum number of students enrolled as required by the University.

3. The MCS has imposed very few prerequisites on classes to allow you more flexibility in setting your schedules. However, you are **<u>strongly</u>** encouraged to take **Core Classes** before taking *Elective Classes*. If you take *Elective Classes* before you complete the **Core Classes,** you may find you are missing some fundamental knowledge that the instructor expects you to know. This doesn't mean you will fail the class, but it can make the class more difficult to complete.

4. Because most of our students are already working professionally in the high-tech industry, we do not focus on offering scholarships or running funded research projects.

The University has requested that graduate programs focus their scholarships on being merit based. However, our highest performing students are often the same students who excel at their current positions in industry and are earning an above-average wage. If you

are struggling to meet the financial burdens of the MCS, let us help you by excelling in the program. We want you to see it as a path to knowledge and future career success.

Some faculty members may have research money, but this is not guaranteed, and typically MCS students are already working full-time and are therefore not available to work as a student researcher. However, if you are interested in such a position, please talk to the Graduate Director or faculty.

5. If your GPA drops below **3.0** the Graduate School will place you on academic probation. This is University Graduate School policy, not an MCS policy. Please consult with the Graduate School if you are placed on probation.

6. The MCS degree requires completion of all courses with a grade of B- or better and completion of all required courses and elective courses for a total of 30 credit hours with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher.

7. The MCS requires a Graduate Project with the following guidelines:
    - Graduate project proposal presented to and accepted by the student's Advisory Committee.
    - Completion and defense of graduate project (CS 6600 Graduate Project I and CS 6610 Graduate Project II must be taken consecutively; they **cannot** be taken concurrently); defense must be accepted by the student's Advisory Committee.