



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Digital Forensics MS Graduate Program Handbook

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Articulation	1
Curriculum	1
Thesis Requirements.....	2
University Dissertation Requirements	2
Financial Support.....	2
Funding Requirements	3
Graduate Student Associations	3
Professional Development.....	3
Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL).....	3
Pathways to Success Workshops	4
Graduate Research Forum	4
Graduate Excellence Awards	4
Other	4
Job Search.....	4
Forms.....	5
Useful Links	5
Grad Faculty	6
Contact Info	6

Digital Forensics MS

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

Introduction

The Digital Forensics MS degree is comprised of 30 hours of study beyond the bachelor's degree with required, intensive specialization in topics related to digital forensics. The degree program prepares students, including working professionals, who will pursue the degree on a part-time basis to gain the knowledge and skills required to work as an examiner in the field. The program may also be taken by those who have an interest in scientific applications and research in the field, and who would like to continue to a doctoral degree program or law school after completion.

The program requires the completion of 30 credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree and offers either a thesis option (6 credit hours) or an opportunity to complete an internship (6 credit hours) in the field. At least one half of the credit hours must be at the 6000 level.

Articulation

Undergraduate articulation courses may be required for students with BS and/or MS degrees in fields other than a computer-related field. The articulation courses will be determined by the graduate program director. Students without a computer-related degree must be versed in basic computing and networking knowledge and skills, including computer (PC) hardware, computer operating systems, and computer networking. Appropriate job- or training-related experience may be a suitable substitution, the suitability of which will be determined by the admissions committee. Courses taken to correct deficiencies cannot be used to satisfy minimum degree requirements. Some advanced elective courses require a programming background, specifically in C and C++, computer architecture, and parallel programming.

Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

Thesis Requirements

The College of Engineering and Computer Science requires that all thesis defense announcements are approved by the student's advisor and posted on the college's website and on the Events Calendar at the College of Graduate Studies website at least two weeks before the defense date.

University Dissertation Requirements

A thesis is optional for this program; the following information is intended for those choosing to complete a thesis.

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) Site.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at editor@ucf.edu.

Financial Support

Financial support is a major concern for graduate students, especially since many rely on financial support from the university to pursue graduate study. In combination, the college, the university, and the department provide financial assistance to graduate students in several ways:

- **Fellowships and Scholarships** - Available to academically outstanding students.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistantships** – GTAs are available for grading, recitation instruction, or laboratory teaching.
- **Graduate Research Assistantships** – GRAs (for participating in sponsored faculty directed research) are available depending on the current funding levels of the faculty.

Graduate students may also receive financial assistance through loans. For more information, see [UCF Funding Information](#), which describes the types of financial assistance available at UCF and provides general guidance in planning your graduate finances. The [Financial Information](#) section of the Graduate Catalog is another key resource.

Funding Requirements

- All students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their Plan of Study, as well as overall courses taken since entering the program. They must not receive more than two grades below B (3.0), and those must be balanced to maintain the 3.0 overall. Students on assistantship agreements are expected to work 10 to 20 hours per week on their assigned tasks (whether it be grading, teaching, or research), while they are maintaining satisfactory progress in completing their academic courses. Note that satisfactory progress for a supported student is not the same as maintaining the minimum grades, or just barely performing at research. Financial support is a privilege not a right.
- Students must meet their obligations and maintain satisfactory work as defined by their supervisor to continue to receive financial support. Also, students must register for the proper number of credit hours in a timely manner to allow the processing of tuition remission.
- The duration of financial support may vary from one semester to another.
- Mandatory training requirements must be met for a student to be hired in the position of Graduate Teaching Associate, Assistant or Grader. The training, offered by UCF's Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, covers course design, learning theories, ethics, and other topics relevant to preparing GTAs for their responsibilities. See graduate.ucf.edu/graduate-teaching/ for training requirements and registration instructions.
- Students who are non-native speakers of English and do not have a degree from a U.S. institution must pass the SPEAK test before they will be permitted to teach as Graduate Teaching Associates (position code 9183) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (position code 9184). The SPEAK test is not required for students who will be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Grader (position code 9187). Additional information including how to register for the test can be accessed through the [Graduate Teaching](#) section of the College of Graduate Studies student website.
- International students are expected to be here as full-time students, and may not work off campus except under certain strict conditions. For information about the types of employment available to international students and the requirements and restrictions based on visa type, see the International Services Center's website: global.ucf.edu/ > Students > Employment.

Graduate Student Associations

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/. For individual department or graduate program organizations, please see program advisor.

Professional Development

Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL)

FCTL promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. To that end, they offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

- **GTA Training** (mandatory for employment as a GTA)
This training provides information and resources for students who will be instructors in a two-day workshop. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.
- **Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program**
This certificate program (12-weeks) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided.

For more information fctl.ucf.edu/ > Events > GTA Programs or call 407-823-3544.

Pathways to Success Workshops

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the Pathways to Success program offers free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research. For more information and how to register, please visit graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/.

Graduate Research Forum

The Research Forum will feature poster displays representing UCF's diverse colleges and disciplines.

The Research Forum is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best poster presentation in each category will be given and all participants will receive recognition.

The College of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association invite all UCF students, community, and employers to attend the Graduate Research Forum. For more information graduate.ucf.edu/graduate-research-forum/ or researchweek@ucf.edu.

Graduate Excellence Awards

Each year, the College of Graduate Studies offers graduate students who strive for academic and professional excellence the opportunity to be recognized for their work. The award categories include the following:

Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant – This award is for students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (Not intended for students who are instructor of record)

Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching – This award is for students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.

Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis – It recognizes graduate students for excellence in the master's thesis. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the master's thesis may be demonstrated by evidence such as, but not limited to: publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field.

For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/.

Other

For grant-proposal writing resources: uwc.cah.ucf.edu/.

Job Search

UCF's Career Services department offers a wide range of programs and services designed to assist graduate students. These services include evaluation and exploration of career goals, preparation for the job search and job search resources. To learn more, visit their website at career.ucf.edu/.

Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

Useful Links

- [Digital Forensics](#)
- [College of Engineering and Computer Science](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

Grad Faculty

Asterisk = has previous committee experience, which qualifies the person to serve as vice chair

Ford, Robert

College: College of Community Innovation and Education

Disciplinary affiliations: Criminal Justice

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Fu, Xinwen *

College: College of Engineering and Computer Science

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Sigman, Michael *

College: College of Sciences

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Zou, Changchun *

College: College of Engineering and Computer Science

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Research interests: Computer security, networking, performance evaluation

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