

School of Computer Science
Human-Computer Interaction
Master's Student Handbook



Degree Programs Covered by This Handbook:
MHCI: Master of Human-Computer Interaction
AMHCI: Accelerated Master of Human-Computer Interaction

AY 2025 - 2026

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SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction

Director's Welcome

Welcome to the Master of HCI program, the HCI Institute, Carnegie Mellon University and the city of Pittsburgh! We are all very excited to have you join us as part of our 31st entering class of MHCI students. You are joining a vibrant, collaborative, and multidisciplinary community with over 400 faculty, staff, students, post-doctoral fellows, and visitors whose focus is HCI. The HCI Institute was founded in 1993 and graduated its first class of master's students in the spring of 1994. Since then, the program has graduated over 1350 students who have gone on to impactful careers in industry and academia, at places both large and small, and everything in between.

The MHCI program is a vital component of the HCII's educational mandate and has helped the HCII become the center of HCI education and research worldwide, thanks to its unique interdisciplinary culture, rigorous capstone project, and an enriching combination of theory and practice. Our students work very hard in leveraging all these strengths during their time here and leave with the skills to design, develop, study, and manage the use of novel systems and interfaces that we will all be using in the years to come. We are thrilled to welcome you into our family and look forward to getting to know you!

~Brad A. Myers, Charles M. Geschke Director and Professor, Human-Computer Interaction Institute

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

[University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook](#) (Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs)

[The Word Student Handbook](#)

If this handbook is needed in a different format to address accessibility needs, the student should contact the MHCI team at mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu.

SECTION 2: Program Vision, Mission, and Values

Our Vision

At the HCI Institute, we are dedicated to connecting thought leaders in computer science, design, behavioral, and social sciences to develop human-centered software, services, and systems that improve people's lives through technology.

Our collaborative and interdisciplinary nature connects us with faculty and students in the [School of Computer Science](#), [Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#), [Tepper School of Business](#), [College of Fine Arts](#), [College of Engineering](#) and the [Software Engineering Institute](#).

Our Mission Is To...

Apply rigor and creativity consistently and pervasively

Infuse HCI methods appropriately across CMU and beyond

Push the boundaries of problems HCI addresses

Expand the tools and methods we use to address those problems

Deliver artifacts, services, and systems that improve people's lives

Always remember that people are at the heart of our work

Our Values

There is more to computer science than just the machines, which is why we put the humans first.

SECTION 3: HCII Degrees Offered

Our Master's in HCI program was the first in the world dedicated to preparing professionals for careers in user-centered research and UX design. We are proud to have graduated more than 1,350 alumni who have gone on to make an impact in education and industry.

Today, we offer undergraduate, master's and Ph.D. programs in HCI that span a full cycle of knowledge creation. Students in the MHCI and AMHCI program will receive a degree that is titled “Master of Human-Computer Interaction” upon completion of the program.

SECTION 4: MHCI and HCII Personnel

MHCI Contacts

Raelin Sawka Musuraca, MHCI Program Director, raelin@cmu.edu
Room 208 @ 300 S. Craig St.

Jennifer McPherson, MHCI Program Manager, jmcpherson@cs.cmu.edu
Room 206 @ 300 S. Craig St.
Phone: 412-268-5903

Brittani Mckenna, MHCI Senior Academic Coordinator, bmck@cmu.edu
Room 206 @ 300 S. Craig St.

Nicole Willis, HCII Associate Director of Academic Programs, nicolewi@cs.cmu.edu
Room 209 @ 300 S. Craig St.
Phone: 412-268-7971

HCII Director's Office Contacts

Brad Myers, Charles M. Geschke Director and Professor, HCII, bam@cs.cmu.edu

Carolyn Buzzelli-Stumpf, Assistant to Director, HCII, cbstumpf@andrew.cmu.edu

HCII Faculty: See complete listing at <http://hcii.cmu.edu/people/faculty>

SECTION 5: Department Resources

Bulletin Boards: Shared bulletin boards are in the MHCI area. See Jenn McPherson about posting.

Mailboxes: MHCI/AMHCI students are assigned shared mailbox space at 300 S. Craig Street in the MHCI space on the 2nd Floor.

Printer/ Copy Machine Availability: 300 S. Craig Street, MHCI 2nd Floor space. Accessible with MHCI access and CMU ID card for SCS printing/copying purposes. Please add paper from the communal paper storage area as needed. During business hours, contact Jenn McPherson with issues or problems with the printer. After hours, please follow the posted instructions next to the printer.

MHCI Lab/ Office Space: Random assignments are made in the fall for shared office space; spring/summer offices are assigned based on the capstone team assignment. MHCI/AMHCI students have 24/7 access to the space and their assigned office location.

Key/ Access Card Distribution: All students assigned to office space receive a key. There is a \$50 lost key fee if you lose your key. Keys are exchanged for new keys in January when capstone team assignments are announced. Access card management is handled by Jenn McPherson. If you have any issues, please email them directly for assistance.

Purchasing and Reimbursement Procedures and Policies: Details for MHCI Capstone purchasing and reimbursement procedures and policies will be provided at the start of the spring term.

Department Office/ Building Security, Repairs and Services: Please contact MHCI Program Manager, Jennifer McPherson, with any issues.

Departmental/College Graduate Student Organizations/Advisory Committee/ Graduate Representatives: MHCI has two Graduate Student Assembly seats available annually. These are decided during MHCI Orientation in August. Duties and responsibilities [here](#).

Department Approach to Press and Media Relations: If you are invited for an interview by a media representative and would like to consult with our in-house team, contact Aaron Aupperlee, CMU School of Computer Science Senior Director of Media Relations (aaupperlee@cmu.edu; 412-268-9068). For HCII media tracking purposes, please notify Karen Harlan, HCII Communications Specialist (kharlan@andrew.cmu.edu) of any pieces that mention you and your work.

Department/ College/ University Brands and Logos: For guidelines on the use of department, college, or university brands and logos, please contact Karen Harlan, HCII Communications Specialist (kharlan@andrew.cmu.edu)

SECTION 6: Advising

Role of an Advisor and Advisor Assignments

The Senior Academic Coordinator, with assistance from the Associate Director of HCII Academic Programs serves as the Academic Advisor for the MHCI and AMHCI students.

Advising appointments may be scheduled via <https://calendar.app.google/MaPVPDuGZA7W9oZ19>

Midterm semester grades are reviewed each semester for progress check and QPA check. Notifications will be sent via email the week following mid-semester grades posting if there is inadequate progress toward the degree.

Final semester grades are reviewed for progress check and QPA check. Notifications will be sent prior to the next semester start date if there is inadequate progress toward a degree or if there is academic probation action being taken.

Advisor/ Advisee Collaboration

The role of an advisor changes over the lifecycle of a graduate student. The role includes advising on classes, elective selection, professional development matters, job searching process, networking, and alumni opportunities.

Attending conferences

Presentations at conferences are a critical aspect of graduate students' academic and professional development. Conference funding is available for students who are presenting scholarly work related to their degree pursuits and is inclusive to all scholarship areas. Conference funding is available for individual graduate students, a group of graduate students attending the same conference and/or a group of members from a registered club or organization attending the same conference.

Graduate student conference funding is provided by the [Graduate Student Assembly](#) and the [Office of the Provost](#), and is managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. If you are attending a conference but not presenting, you may apply for [Professional Engagement Funding](#). Students can apply for either type of funding, but not both types. If a student does not receive funding, they are free to apply again for either type of funding in the next cycle(s). Students who have applied for funding in past cycles but have not been selected in the lottery will be prioritized.

Information on the lottery and deadlines: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/conference.html>

Students should coordinate with their faculty about missing classes; while still following the individual faculty's absence policy.

Respect and confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality of research projects and publications, respect of confidentiality among and between group members.

Communication

Maintain open lines of communication, respond to one another in a timely fashion, address conflicts respectfully and seek guidance when needed, and clearly define timelines and expectations.

Review/Redress of Academic Conflicts

MHCI Path of Escalation for appeals, issues, and/ or conflicts

This is provided for further clarity on how to move through difficult situations during your time here at the MHCI. These examples are for illustrative purposes and are not to be taken as the only possible situations in which escalations apply. In any of these cases, reach out to the MHCI team via mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu, to consult on a course of action or who to go to for further assistance.

Personal Issue:

Student -> Director of MHCI Student Affairs -> with referral to other appropriate resources

Examples:

A student will be absent due to a death in the family or a family member's illness. A student has a physical or mental health issue that may impact their attendance and/or participation in a class and/or the program.

Grade/ Faculty/ Course Issue:

Student -> Faculty of course -> MHCI Director/MHCI Senior Academic Coordinator -> Department Head -> Dean

Examples:

A student has an issue with the grade or assignment in a course they are enrolled in. A student has an issue with a team in a course assignment.

Team or Peer Issue/ Conflict in Capstone:

Student/Team → MHCI Director → Student Affairs Liaison → Grad Ed Office

Examples:

A student feels that a Capstone team member(s) isn't fulfilling their responsibilities and are "slacking." A student feels that s/he is being discriminated against or harassed by another student(s).

Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures

Students can also refer to the Summary of [Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures](#) for connection to University policy and procedures.

SECTION 7: Master's Degree Requirements

Residency Requirements

MHCI and AMHCI requirements for degree completion are as follows. All coursework completed toward the master's degree must be completed in-person at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA.

MHCI and AMHCI do not accept transfer coursework for the master's degree.

U.S. government regulations require F-1 and J-1 international students to be enrolled in an in-person degree program, with in-person expectation coursework. Even though this immigration requirement is specifically for international students, residency requirements in a degree program must be consistent for both international and domestic students.

Registration Process

Registration is handled through Student Information Online (SIO). Students are responsible for enrolling themselves in required courses and electives.

Students should review the appropriate MHCII curriculum in this handbook and on the HCII webpages. Additional course guidance is provided in the

 [HCII Industry Career and Course Guides - Fall 2025.pdf](#) For electives in the semester for which the student wishes to register, they must confer with the academic advisor team to determine an appropriate course. The academic advisor team will make recommendations to the Program Director who considers exceptions to the curriculum only after consultation.

Once students have decided on a course schedule, they can then access SIO, using any computer, by visiting the website at: <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/registration/steps/index.html>

MHCI students may consult with the academic advisor team to discuss planning for each semester's course selection.

Students may make an appointment via <https://calendar.app.google/MaPVPDuGZA7W9oZ19>

Required Units for Degree Attainment

MHCI Standard Curriculum: 156-168

Accelerated MHCI Program: 90-102

Core Courses

All students are required to take the following core courses and pass with a B or higher:

05-600 MHCI Professional Seminar (Pro Sem)

05-610 User-Centered Research & Evaluation (UCRE)

05-635 Programming Interactive Experiences (PIX) or 05-631 Software Structures for User Interfaces (SSUI)

05-660 Interaction Design Fundamentals* (IxDF)

05-661 Advanced Interaction Design** (Advanced IxD)

05-671 MHCI Capstone 1

05-672 MHCI Capstone 2

More details can be reviewed here <https://hcii.cmu.edu/academics/mhci/curriculum>

*May be placed out of, and another course substituted for the requirement

**Depending on placement, this or another HCI design course may be used for the 2nd design course requirement

Electives

More details can be reviewed here <https://hcii.cmu.edu/academics/mhci/electives>

MHCI and AMHCI students are required to take 4 electives, totaling 36–48 units.

Electives can be approved by the academic advising team every semester per student request via email to mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu.

Elective Grades: A failing grade for an elective is C- or lower. If a grade of C- or lower is earned, that course cannot be counted towards the degree, and the student must either retake the course and earn a C or better or take another course in its place. Students must have a 3.0 QPA and are not able to graduate with all C's in elective courses. Please speak with your academic advisor for more information.

For a course to count toward the degree, it must be taken for a letter grade.

Department Policy on Double Counting Courses

Double counting is not accepted in the MHCI.

Department Policy for Courses Outside the Department/College

Electives can be approved by the academic advising team for each semester per student request via email to mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu

Course Exemptions

The HCII offers a placement process for the design course sequence. Details are shared at the time of admissions for the specific process and requirements. Students are still required to complete the same number of courses and units, even if they are placed out of a course. The placement process must be completed prior to the start of the semester and will not be available once classes start.

Protocol for Evaluation of Transfer Credit

MHCI does not accept transfer credit. AMHCI may have transfer courses accepted on their undergraduate degrees if they are not core HCI course requirements. Please see your undergraduate academic advisor for more information if you are an AMHCI student.

Teaching Requirements/ Opportunities

MHCI does not have a teaching requirement. TA opportunities are generally not available to MHCI students. AMHCI students may have the opportunity to work as graders for various HCII courses in the fall semester following the completion of MHCI capstone.

Research Requirements/ Opportunities

MHCI does not require research.

Opportunities are available for research via an Independent Study for course credit or for volunteering in a research lab/group. If you have questions about this and other opportunities please contact the MHCI team at mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu.

Internship/ Co-op Requirements and Opportunities

MHCI does not offer or have an internship or co-op requirement or opportunity.

Thesis Requirement

MHCI does not require a thesis.

Requirements for Application/ Consideration for Entry into PhD Program

The MHCI is not a viable path into the PhD Program in HCI. To learn more about the PhD program in HCII, please visit <https://hcii.cmu.edu/academics/phd-hci/admissions>.

Requirements for the Accelerated Master of Human-Computer Interaction Program

In order to be eligible for consideration for the Accelerated Master of Human-Computer Interaction Program, students must:

Be a CMU undergraduate in the primary HCI major (BS degree) or HCI additional major (HCI minors and HCI concentrations are not eligible) and have completed the following appropriate courses:

- 1) three HCI Core courses (05-410: UCRE; 05-360: IXDF; and 05-391: DHCS*)
- 2) an HCI elective in the 400-level or above
- 3) have completed the online application by the fall deadline of their senior year.

*05-431 SSUI or 05-380 PAX are accepted in place of 05-391 DHCS

Note: This academic regulation will be effective for first- and second-year students starting in the 2024-25 Academic Year and can offer helpful guidance and insights for third- and fourth-year students, as well as fifth-year architecture students.

The integration of bachelor's and master's degree programs ("IBM" programs) benefits CMU students who elect to maximize their use of time and academic energy to blend their undergraduate studies with master's-level study in close combination, in an integrated program of study at CMU. Some CMU departments and programs have developed integrated options for students in response to student desires for such opportunities and to enliven their graduate programs with students who are well-acclimated to the rigor and demands of the CMU educational experience.

General Information for AMHCI

Carnegie Mellon students in the integrated bachelor-master's programs are expected to complete their degree requirements within a standard length of time for their full-time program of study as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog and relevant Graduate Student Handbook.

Early completion of the graduate degree requirements. *Graduate students who consider the completion of all degree requirements in less than the standard length of time for their program of study must consult with their degree-granting program or department to determine if early degree certification is allowed academically and under what circumstances. *Not a common allowance in AMHCI or MHCI.

Incomplete graduate degree requirements. In some cases, students in an IBM program may withdraw from the graduate component of the program of study and, therefore, will not be certified or awarded the graduate degree. Any such withdrawal decision also may require close consultation with the undergraduate advisor to determine eligibility for undergraduate degree completion and certification if the undergraduate degree is not already certified.

Extended or longer-than-standard graduate degree completion. Longer-than-standard degree completion may occur due to academic interruptions in making progress toward the degree as defined by the academic program, interruptions of full-time study or progress toward the degree due to serious, documented medical issues, or other unusual or unforeseen circumstances.

IBM students who require longer than the standard time to complete their graduate degree requirements are expected to remain in close contact with their graduate program and will be certified at the end of the semester in which they have completed their degree requirements. Students shall reference CMU Policy on [Master's Student Statute of Limitations](#) regarding guidelines and restrictions which place an upper limit on the maximum length of time allowable for master's degree completion and certification.

Additional Guidance for Students Program of study. Students seeking guidance about their program of study and degree requirements should consult with their academic advisor and/ or appropriate associate dean.

Financial aid and student account. Students are expected to make normal progress toward their degree to graduate within the standard timeframe for their program of study. Under U.S. Federal Title IV regulations, student eligibility for federal financial aid is contingent upon enrollment in and successful completion of courses that are counted as credit toward their current degree program. To receive the maximum amount of federal and state financial aid for which they may be eligible, students must enroll each semester in at least 36 units that count toward their current degree

level. CMU institutional undergraduate grants support undergraduate degree completion and on-time graduation; institutional undergraduate grants for students in undergraduate programs and in IBM programs are renewable for eight semesters (and 10 for B.Arch.).

Students should consult with their designated college liaison in The HUB regarding billing and financial aid, particularly for early completion, longer-than-standard completion, or integrated bachelor's and master's degree programs.

International students. Immigration status for students in F-1 and J-1 non-immigrant status is tied to making normal progress toward completing degree requirements. Therefore, F-1 and J-1 students who are considering completing their degree requirements early, anticipating longer-than-standard completion, or moving from an undergraduate to a graduate student classification (integrated undergraduate-graduate study), should consult with their designated advisor in the Office of International Education (OIE) to ensure compliance with immigration regulations.

SECTION 8: Department Policies & Protocols

Petition Procedures

Auditing: Not permitted in the MHCI program.

Department Policy for Withdrawing from a Course

Students enrolled in undergraduate and master's level courses must follow the procedures and deadlines for adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses as outlined in the academic calendar. Information can be found at <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/course-changes/index.html>

Requirements for Those Without a Bachelor's Degree in Discipline

MHCI requires that a student hold an accredited bachelor's degree to be admitted to the program. There is no required discipline to be admitted to the degree program.

New Policies / "Grandfather" Policy

Commencement at CMU. CMU offers one commencement ceremony annually. MHCI students "walk" in the ceremony in May of the year of attendance if the student is on track for an August graduation. Meaning, students "walk" a semester before their degree is complete.

AMHCI attends the commencement ceremony in May following their December degree completion of the MHCI degree. They do not "walk" before they become graduate students for their MHCI degree, they will walk in May for their bachelors.

Graduation Requirements. It is ultimately the responsibility of the students to ensure that all courses necessary for graduation have been successfully completed. Faculty and staff are available to assist students, and the Program Director will attempt to advise students individually each semester, but only students can be held responsible for their failure to complete graduation requirements.

All students must be in good standing and have a combined gpa of 3.0 or higher to graduate.

Failure to meet the requirements of each semester will result in a student being placed on academic probation. Failure to meet the degree requirements prevents a student from receiving their diploma

and may also prevent them from graduating.

While the MHCI curriculum is subject to change, the curriculum in effect at the time of a student's matriculation will be the one that dictates their graduation requirements. Exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the Program Director.

Graduate Students. Carnegie Mellon graduate students are expected to complete their degree requirements within the standard length of time for their program of study as outlined in the relevant Graduate Student Handbook. Standard program lengths for graduate students vary significantly – ranging from two semesters for some full-time master's programs to several or more years for doctoral programs. Upon completion of the graduate program degree requirements, the degree will be certified by the student's academic program in the semester in which the student completes the requirements.

Early Completion. Graduate students who consider the completion of all degree requirements in less than the standard length of time for their program of study may consult with their degree-granting program or department to determine if early degree certification is allowed and under what circumstances.

Extended or Longer-than-Standard Completion. Longer-than-standard degree completion may occur due to academic interruptions in making progress toward the degree as defined by the academic program, interruptions of full-time study or progress towards the degree due to serious, documented medical issues, or other unusual or unforeseen circumstances.

Master's students who require longer than the standard time to complete their degree requirements are expected to remain in close contact with their graduate program and will be certified at the end of the semester in which they have completed their degree requirements. Students shall reference CMU Policy on [Master's Student Statute of Limitations](#) regarding guidelines and restrictions that place an upper limit on the maximum length of time allowable for master's degree completion and certification.

Time Away from Academic Responsibilities

Absences and Tardiness

The HCII views attendance as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend classes, project team meetings, presentations, seminars, and so forth. For meetings where the student's absence could hinder the performance of the group, such as team meetings and group presentations, it is the student's responsibility to provide satisfactory evidence to the faculty of the course, and the MHCI team via mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu and/or the Program Director to substantiate the reason for the absence. Among the reasons

absences are considered excused by the program are the following:

- 1) Death or major illness in a student's immediate family. Immediate family refers to: mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, spouse, child. If unclear, check with the MHCI team via mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu in advance of your absence.
- 2) Illness of a dependent family member. A dependent family member is one who lives with the student and relies on them.
- 3) Illness too severe or contagious for the student to attend (to be determined by the Health Center or off-campus physician).
- 4) Pre-approved conference attendance. Approval must be obtained from the advising team and affected faculty members.

Students in HCI Project I & II should not make any travel plans or plan to be absent without prior approval by faculty mentors and program directors. For other classes, arrangements should also be made in advance of absence and communicated with the instructor. Individual courses have specific attendance policies on course syllabi, please check with faculty/ course syllabi for specifics.

Time Off

MHCI students are expected to attend all classes and participate in all program activities throughout the program. This excludes any defined academic break periods, and the official University holidays as listed below. For the most up-to-date University calendar, please refer to the HUB at <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/calendar/index.html>

Official University Holidays

- ☐ New Year's Day
- ☐ Martin Luther King Jr Day
- ☐ Memorial Day
- ☐ Juneteenth
- ☐ Independence Day
- ☐ Labor Day
- ☐ Thanksgiving Day
- ☐ Day After Thanksgiving
- ☐ Day Before Christmas
- ☐ Christmas Day
- ☐ Day Before New Year's Day

SECTION 9: Grading & Evaluation

Grading Scale/System

All courses offered by the MHCI program are graded on the 4.3 Graduate Student Grading Standard described in full at <https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/grading.html>. Undergraduate courses taken as electives or place out courses will be graded on the Undergraduate Grading policy as described on the same website.

Graduate courses are subject to the +/- grades, while undergraduate courses receive only a letter grade, and all grades will be factored into the student's QPA accordingly.

Department Policy on Grades for Retaking a Course

Generally, not applicable to the program. Contact the MHCI team via mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu.

Department Policy on Pass/ Fail, Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory

Except for 05-600 HCI Professional Seminar, all other courses are required to be taken for a letter grade only. Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grades are not permitted on degree requirements.

Department Policy for Incompletes

Incomplete grades may be issued at the discretion of the course instructor. Receiving an incomplete in a core course could put you in jeopardy of not moving forward in a course sequence. Please meet with the MHCI academic advisor and/or Program Director to discuss your situation.

Independent Study/Small Group Study: MHCI & AMHCI

An Independent Study course is when one student enters into an agreement with an HCII faculty to work on a specific project. Small Group Study is a course where a group of students enter into an agreement with an HCII faculty to work on a specific project.

Applications and opportunities are found here: <https://hcii.cmu.edu/academics/independent-study>

Students will work with HCII Faculty for the 05-689 or 05-688 courses.

An application with a faculty signature and supporting documentation of project description and detailed timeline, including deliverables and milestones, must be turned in before the end of the registration period at the beginning of the semester. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the MHCI team via mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu.

Working in an Independent Study or Small Group Study is available during the Fall, Spring and the first mini of Summer.

No more than two (2) Independent Study courses may be approved/used as electives. To count towards the degree, the independent study course must be taken for a letter grade.

GPA Requirements and QPA Requirements for Graduation

All students must maintain an overall QPA of 3.0 or above to remain in good standing (see below) and graduate from the program.

The minimum passing grade for core courses (including HCI Project I & II) is a B.

- If a grade of B- or lower is earned in a core course, the student must retake the course and achieve a B or better.
- You will not be permitted to continue into HCI Project I if you do not pass any of the Fall Core Courses.
- Additionally, courses in a sequence (e.g., HCI Project I & II) must have a B in HCI Project I to continue to HCI Project II.

The minimum passing grade for electives is a C.

- If a grade of C- or lower is earned in an elective course, the course cannot be counted toward the 4 electives; the student must either retake the course and earn a C or better or take another approved elective.

Satisfactory Academic Standing

Good Standing:

A student is in good standing if they have achieved a grade of B or higher in their core courses, maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher, and are making good progress towards their degree, as evidenced by meeting the academic and community expectations of the program (see above section including Academic Review).

Not in Good Standing:

A student is not in good standing if they receive a B- or lower on any of their core courses, receive a C or lower in an elective, their overall QPA is below 3.0, or they receive two negative Academic Reviews. Students who are not in good standing are placed on Academic Probation for the following semester.

Any student on Academic Probation must maintain a grade of B or above in *all* their courses, have an overall QPA of 3.0 or above, and receive a positive Academic Review. Students who maintain the minimum grades and receive a positive Academic Review are released from probation. Students on Academic Probation who don't maintain these minimum grades or receive a third negative Academic Review will be dropped from the program.

Students on Academic Probation in their final semester of study in the program can only graduate if they meet the graduation requirements of having a QPA of at least 3.0 and receive a final positive Academic Review.

Students who do not make adequate academic progress may be asked to leave the program due to not meeting probation requirements.

Students may review the [Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures](#) to learn more about the appeal process.

Regular Reviews and Evaluations by Department & Community Expectations of the Program

Code of Conduct

Students at Carnegie Mellon, because they are members of an academic community dedicated to the achievement of excellence, are expected to meet the highest standards of personal, ethical and moral conduct possible. These standards require personal integrity, a commitment to honesty without compromise, as well as truth without equivocation and a willingness to place the good of the community above the good of the self. The full Carnegie Mellon Code can also be found online at: <https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/code/index.html>

Academic Integrity

Please review the University Policy on Academic Integrity:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html>. The policy includes the University expectations around academic integrity and provides definitions of cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized assistance. A review of the University's Academic Integrity Actions Procedures (<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/academic-integrity-actions/index.html>) is also

recommended. These procedures outline the process for investigating, reporting, and adjudicating violations of the University Policy on Academic Integrity. The procedures also outline the appeal process.

Professional Standards

As a member of the MHCI, and as a member of a project group, students should consider themselves a professional representing our department, our school, and themselves. Professional behavior is the consistent demonstration of respect, integrity, and accountability in the workplace through words, actions, and attitudes, including how we communicate with teammates. This means speaking with clarity and courtesy, listening actively, offering constructive feedback, being mindful of tone and timing to build collaboration and trust, and reliably completing one's fair share of the work to support the team's success. Please behave as a professional, with your project teams and especially when meeting with clients. For client meetings and when making departmental presentations, professional behavior including business casual dress, is expected.

Academic Review

The MHCI evaluates students above and beyond the normal grading procedures. Around finals of the first and second semesters, core course faculty meet to review each student's overall performance for the previous semester. This assessment is led by the Program Director.

This is not a grading evaluation, but is an academic review used to assess the overall professionalism and performance of the student during their time at the HCII. The goal of this assessment is to identify individuals who are performing poorly and provide additional guidance on how to improve their performance as HCI professionals and succeed in their studies. If students receive either a remedial or negative academic review, they are expected to improve their performance by the next review.

This individual assessment is not directly related solely to a student's grades, though it could be. It is possible, however, that a student could pass their courses or projects, but still be assessed as needing further advising and academic action regarding their performance. This academic performance assessment is a subjective process based on the faculty's shared perceptions of a student's performance and influenced by the above statements on the Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity, and Professional Standards. It is designed to provide students with essential feedback and offer an opportunity for improvement. This review process is designed to help students improve their academic and professional performance, enabling them to remain and succeed in the MHCI program.

Students who have two negative Academic Reviews entering the summer Project II course will be placed on academic probation and are expected to remediate their behavior. During early summer (Mini 5), students on academic probation under two consecutive negative academic reviews will be evaluated mid-summer. If they receive a third negative academic review at mid-summer, they will be asked to leave the program and they will not graduate.

SECTION 10: Funding & Financial Support

Statement of Department Financial Support

MHCI does not provide funding.

Stipend

MHCI does not provide funding.

Department Fees

MHCI does not have additional fees for students.

Travel/Conference and Research Funding

- Support from the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs available here:
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/index.html>

Funding Payment Schedule

MHCI and HCII do not provide funding.

Additional Sources of Internal & External Financial Support

MHCI and AMCHI students may find external financial support for their program.

Department Policy on Outside Employment

Due to the time commitment necessary to complete the program, the MHCI does not allow students to work outside the department for more than 10 hours per week. If outside employment of more than 10 hours per week is desired (no more than 20 hours per week), the student must obtain written permission from the Program Director and Senior Academic Coordinator to take a practicum and independent study focused on their professional work for a required elective that semester. If this is requested during Project I or II, the student must notify their project teammates and faculty mentors. Outside employment of any kind does not constitute an excused absence from HCII classes, or from the completion of any project assignments. International students are required to consult with the Office of International Education (OIE) for eligibility before seeking an internship/co-op or signing an offer/contract. Students on academic probation are not eligible for outside work.

SECTION 11: Additional Departmental Information

Program Learning Outcomes

The core courses and electives in the HCII are designed to ensure that you effectively accomplish the following learning outcomes:

- Collaborate on interdisciplinary teams to solve complex problems by applying human-centered research, design prototyping, and testing methods.
- Use rigorous research methods to interpret qualitative and quantitative data, apply different forms of reasoning to see problems differently, reframe them, and generate concepts and models that inform new design approaches and innovative solutions.
- Envision how emerging technologies—such as natural language processing, machine learning, sensing, predictive analytics, and the Internet of Things—can be integrated to engage all human senses and contexts, moving beyond traditional visual presentation on a screen.
- Rapidly prototype designs that can be experienced by users and other stakeholders by selecting appropriate methods and <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/sio/access.html> tools to give form to the preferred future state—at suitable levels of fidelity and functionality.
- Evaluate responses to prototypes and identify those most likely to create strategic value by addressing unmet or underserved customer needs.
- Construct narratives that describe how HCI methods create business value and strategic significance.
- Communicate professionally within the context of an HCI team, as well as with clients and stakeholders.

Overload Policy

Overload is at the discretion of the Academic Advisor, with a pathway to escalate to the Program Director.

Overloads are permitted in Fall and Spring semesters, as long as a student is in good standing and has completed the overload request process. The maximum number of units for an MHCI overload is 69 units. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Summer semester is not available for overload due the nature of the MHCI Capstone final semester.

Overload requests can be emailed to mhciadmin@andrew.cmu.edu following the instructions shared via email.