**Computer Information Systems**

**at Texas State University**

The CIS program at Texas State University offers students a variety of opportunities to get involved and to set themselves apart. Few schools offer the complete range of academic options and experiential learning activities that Texas State does.

**Academics:**

To begin, the McCoy College of Business Administration, where the CIS program is based, is AACSB accredited. This is the highest level of business accreditation available in the world. Less than 5% of all schools in the world have this accreditation.

The CIS program at Texas State is a combination of business and technology courses. The business courses cover the range of business disciplines including accounting, economics, finance, marketing and management. Many students chose to double major in a business discipline and CIS because of the importance that technology plays in each business discipline.

The technology courses offered in our CIS program build on a foundation of four courses.

CIS 2324 Visual Programming I

CIS 3325 Visual Programming II

CIS 3374 Systems Analysis and Design

CIS 3382 Computer Database Systems

These courses for the foundation on which the remaining elective courses allow the student to specialize in the area of their preference. These elective courses cover a broad range of topics and are continually evolving as the IT field evolves.

Current elective tracks support careers in Systems Development, Database Administration, Network Administration, Network Security, Web Development, Systems Analysts, and Enterprise Application Development. But there are even more areas that our graduates have found themselves in, for example, our graduates have been hired in the area of Business Intelligence a new and growing area.

Software and Technology Course:

A unique opportunity for those students looking to excel is the selected SWAT class. This class is open to 10 students by invitation only. The focus of the class is to help prepare students as they compete in a variety of IT competitions. These competitions include the Regional and National Association of Information Technology Professional Collegiate Conferences, IBM’s Master the Mainframe, and Microsoft’s Imagine Cup. Part of the student’s grade is determined by their placements at these competitions. This class works closely with departmental faculty and sponsors.

**Student Activities:**

Student success in the work place is based on more than just academic performance. Oftentimes it is the student activities that tell the true capabilities of a student. Whether it be through participation in a student organization or selection to an honors program or select group, employers are constantly looking for insight into a student’s true work ethic.

The CIS program at Texas State offers a wide variety of activities for students to get involved and set themselves apart.

Student Chapter of the Association of Information Technology Professionals. (AITP)

This organization is part of a national professional organization. By joining and participating in this group students have the ability to network with faculty and other students. They have opportunities to participate as chapter officers, work on special projects, and even participate in regional and national competitions.

As a chapter officer, students get to work closely with faculty and help to determine the activities and direction of the student chapter. This provides the ability for the student to display leadership and organization skills to potential employers.

As a member of AITP, students have the opportunity to get involved in putting on our annual High School Symposium which brings high schools from across the state to the Texas State campus to listen to IT speakers and compete in IT competitions designed and run by the AITP student members.

Additionally, AITP members have the opportunity to participate in regional and national technology competitions. Texas State has consistently placed in the top schools in the areas of systems analysis, database and application development.

Finally, members are offered opportunity and encouraged to attend the professional association chapter meetings in Austin and/or San Antonio. These meetings provide students with an opportunity to directly interact with IT professionals. This interaction allows students to find out about the responsibilities and activities from people in the workplace. Through these networking efforts many students have found internship and full time job opportunities.

Internships

Internships are one of the most important opportunities that students have to get real world experience while still in school. At Texas State the CIS department is continually building relationships with world class companies to create internship opportunities for our students. It has been shown that internship experience can increase a student’s starting salary by as much as $5,000, and that often times, internships can and do lead to full time employment after graduation. At Texas State we have both formal and informal relationships with employers for internships. Some of the companies that our students have worked for as interns include: USAA, Exxon/Mobil, Whole Foods, Phillips, Southwest Airlines, and many others.

Mentoring

Another opportunity for students to gain insight into the IT field is through our I-connect mentoring program. This program matches up Junior and Senior CIS students with recent graduates and other CIS alumni and professionals for the purpose of advice and direction. The ability for a student to have someone to ask questions about what to expect in the work place, how to find a job, how to prepare for an interview, what courses to take, or what opportunities are there once I graduate, is invaluable. The IT professionals that have volunteered to act as mentors are eager to share their knowledge and wisdom.

**Other reasons**

Other reasons that help to set the CIS program at Texas State apart include others that play a large role in the success of our program.

CIS Faculty

The faculty in the CIS department are second to none. We have a diverse and knowledgeable group of faculty members. 15 of our 17 full time faculty have PhDs. Half of our faculty have had some real world work experience. They are all active in researching current topics that they bring into the classroom and also help to develop new courses. For example Dr. Mayur Mehta is taking a leave of absence this semester to work with a company in helping them develop software applications for mobile devices. Upon his return we will introduce a mobile application development course that will build on his experience.

Advisory Board

Helping to guide and direct the department is our advisory board. This board is made up of professionals and alumni that have volunteered to help provide guidance and feedback on the content of the CIS program and its direction. It serves to provide support in a variety of areas to help keep the CIS program on the cutting edge of technology content while meeting the academic and business curriculum needs of prospective employers. Our advisory board is composed of many of the most well known and sought after IT corporations in the world. They include: IBM, Microsoft, USAA, Computer Sciences Corp., Exxon/Mobil, Samsung Austin Semiconductor, Accenture, Whole Foods, and many others.

Job Placement

Finally the thing that matters most to students is that of finding a job after graduation. What I have discovered is that the success of a student finding a job after graduation is directly proportional to the amount of effort they put into their overall education. That means for students that have a full resume upon graduation, which includes good grades, student organization activity, internship experience, and other activities, they have no problems finding a job. Thos students who fail to build a complete resume or focus on a single element have more difficulty finding employment. Employers that speak with me and speak to our students consistently point out that they are looking for ‘well rounded’ students that who are not afraid to take changes. Students that just get by or put in the minimum effort typically have the hardest time finding work.

There are a host of other reasons for studying CIS at Texas State. Texas State is a growing dynamic and evolving school of 32,000 students. Recently we joined the division 1 WAC. We have one of, if not the, best location in the state of Texas. In addition to the CIS student activities, the campus has almost 300 other student organizations.

Texas State offers the full college experience in an atmosphere that is safe and off the beaten path. Close enough to all the big city attractions without being in the big city or dealing with big city hassles.

The CIS program at Texas State offers you everything. Take a moment to visit the Texas State web site ([www.txstate.edu](http://www.txstate.edu)) and find out more about both Texas State and the CIS program (<http://www.cis.txstate.edu/>). If you have any questions or want more information all you have to do is ask.



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