University of Pretoria Yearbook 2018

BScHons Computer Science (12244001)

Minimum duration of study	1 year
Total credits	120

Programme information

This degree programme is offered in English only. The degree is conferred on a student who successfully completes at least 120 credits of coursework in Computer Science at honours level. Consult G Regulations G.16 to G.29

Admission requirements

A BSc degree, majoring in Computer Science from a South African university (or equivalent) with an average of 60% over all third-year computer science modules, is required for admission to this degree programme. Students from outside South Africa need to obtain a certificate from the South Afican Qualifications Authority (SAQA) before admission will be considered. The Head of Department may prescribe additional conditions for admission.

Other programme-specific information

The Dean, on the recommendation of the Head of Department, may approve a stipulated limited extension of the prescribed period of study.

Details regarding postgraduate modules are available at www.cs.up.ac.za.

Note that some of the elective modules might not be presented each year. Consult the departmental website for the list of modules presented in the current year.

One elective module can be selected from outside the Department of Computer Science, subject to the approval of the programme manager, and provided that there are no lecture and exam clashes with Computer Science modules.

Examinations and pass requirements

In calculating marks, G Regulation G.12.2 is applicable. However, a student is required to obtain at least 50% in an examination in a module where no semester or year mark is required. In those cases where a year mark or semester mark is available, a subminimum of 40% must be obtained in the examination.
The Dean may, on the recommendation of the admissions committee, cancel the studies of a student who fails more than one module in an academic year. A module may only be repeated once. No supplementary examinations are granted at postgraduate level.

Pass with distinction

The BScHons degree is awarded with distinction to a candidate who obtains a weighted average of at least 75% in all the prescribed modules and who did not fail any module.

Curriculum: Final year

Minimum credits: 120

Core modules

Research report 700 (COS 700)

Module credits	30.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Year

Module content

This module requires the student to conduct independent research under supervision of a staff member on a topic agreed upon by the student and staff member. The module consists of two parts: Research methods and the project. During the first semester, formal lectures will be presented on best research practices (counting 10 credits). The project (counting 20 credits) involves application of the taught research methods to complete a research project. The project serves as an opportunity for the student to explore one of the department's areas of research in greater depth. The end product may be a new piece of software, a model or an algorithm, or an extension of these. It could be an experimental, or theoretical piece of reasoning. The final outcome of the project is a technical report.

Elective modules

Artificial intelligence (I) 710 (COS 710)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module focuses on two Computational Intelligence paradigms, namely Evolutionary Computation and Swarm Intelligence. Within the Evolutionary Computation paradigm, algorithmic models of Darwinian evolution will be studied, including genetic algorithms, genetic programming, evolutionary strategies, evolutionary programming, differential evolution, cultural algorithms and co-evolution. Within the Swarm Intelligence paradigm algorithm models of social organisms found in nature will be studied, including ant algorithms and particle swarm optimisation. These algorithms will mostly be studied in the context of complex optimisation problems, including multi-objective optimisation, dynamic environments, constraints, and finding multiple solutions. Prior knowledge assumed include good programming skills and an undergraduate module in calculus.

Artificial Intelligence (II) 711 (COS 711)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module focuses on three Computational Intelligence paradigms, namely Artificial Neural Networks, Artificial Immune Systems, and Fuzzy Systems. Within the Artificial Neural Networks paradigm algorithmic models of neural learning will be studied, including supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning. Aspects that influence the performance of artificial neural networks will be studied in depth. Within the Artificial Immune Systems paradigm algorithm models of different views of the human biological immune system will be studied, including negative selection, clonal selection, network theory and danger theory models. The Fuzzy Systems paradigm include models of reasoning with uncertainty, specifically fuzzy logic and rough sets. Prior knowledge assumed include good programming skills and an undergraduate module in calculus.

Computer and information security (I) 720 (COS 720)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module focuses on state-of-the-art security topics that are current and relevant to industry. The curriculum for the module is determined annually to reflect the current research directions as pursued by the information and Computer Security Architectures (ICSA) research group. The main topics include, but are not limited to: Applied security, including operating system security, secure coding, and cryptography; Trust and trust management systems; Privacy and privacy-enhanced technologies; Social Engineering. Students will be challenged to contribute innovative research ideas in the field of Computer Security by completing a number of mini projects such as writing research papers and writing software programs.

Computer and information security (II) 721 (COS 721)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science

Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module focuses on state-of-the-art information security topics that are current and relevant to industry. The curriculum for this module is annually determined to reflect the current research directions as pursued by the Information and Computer Security Architectures (ICSA) research group. The main topics include, but are not limited to: Information security management, including policies, standards and procedures; Risk management; Privacy; Ethics; Legal issues in Information Security; Information security services and technologies. Students will be challenged to contribute innovative research ideas in the field of Information Security Management by completing a number of mini projects such as writing research papers and writing software programs.

Software engineering (I) 730 (COS 730)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module covers various perspectives of Software Engineering theory and practices. It provides an overview both of the challenges in contemporary software engineering (such as scale, complexity and urgency) and of the recommended practices for overcoming these challenges. It will familiarise students with both the historical and current theories about activities for the design, development, deployment and ongoing operation of software. It will show how these activities aim to be predictable, repeatable, robust, value-producing, and how they aim to meet the specified requirements for the intended system users. It will also emphasise that standardisation and reuse can be important factors in successfully engineering software. The module assumes prior knowledge about Software Engineering at the level of an introductory/undergraduate module.

Software engineering (II) 731 (COS 731)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module discusses software architecture, including the representation of designs, definitions, styles and patterns of architecture. Its themes include model-driven architecture, formal modelling and analysis, and architectural description languages. The module will show that the architecture of a software system is determined by the collection of significant design decisions made early on in the development of that system – decisions concerning the components comprising the system, repeating-patterns of system-wide aspects, and the platforms on which the system will be built. It will discuss how, once these decisions are made and subsequently followed, they end up profoundly affecting the development, deployment, use and ongoing enhancement of that system. The module assumes that the student is familiar with software development lifecycle concepts, and that she/he has been part of at least one significant software development effort. Those who have not completed COS730 will be provided additional background.

Formal aspects of computing (I) 740 (COS 740)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

The focus of this module is on a formal approach to deriving algorithms, known as “correctness by construction”. It relies on Dijkstra's guarded command language (GCL) for specifying the derived algorithms. The requirements of an algorithm are initially stated in terms of a pre- and a post-condition, specified in first order predicate logic. Strategies are given for progressively refining these specifications to GCL notation which can, in turn, easily be translated into a conventional programming language. The surprising power of the method will be demonstrated. Not only are algorithms guaranteed to be correct (in the same sense that the proof of a mathematical theorem is guaranteed to be correct); they frequently turn out to be remarkably efficient. In the early part of the module, a number of well-known algorithms (such as linear and binary search, raising a number to an integer power, finding the approximate log of a number, etc) will be derived in order to become thoroughly familiar with the approach. Later various intermediate level algorithms will be derived (such as simple raster drawing algorithms, pattern matching algorithms, finding the longest string of a certain type, an algorithm to solve the majority voting problem, etc). Finally, the method will be used to derive state-of-the-art algorithms to minimize finite automata and to construct formal concept lattices. The theory necessary to understand these topics will be provided. The value-objectives of the module are: to develop an appreciation that theory can be effectively deployed to solve practical problems; to value the elegance of the algorithmic solutions; and to value a correctness-by-construction mindset over one that is content with debugging into correctness. A basic understanding is assumed of first order predicate logic, as well as competency in mathematical reasoning.

Formal aspects of computing (II) 741 (COS 741)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week

Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

The status of Computer Science, including software science, as a proper “science” is closely related with our ability to construct accurate and precise models of the structures and processes of computational systems. The precision of these models is closely related with our ability to express them in formal notations with mathematical rigour, such that it also becomes possible to reason formally about relevant and interesting properties of these models. Examples of such interesting properties are logical consistency (i.e. absence of inherent contradictions), or safety properties such as deadlock freeness. This modules focuses on formal languages and techniques which are suitable for such purposes. Of particular importance are process algebras with which systems of parallel and concurrent computation can be formally described. Other suitable formalisms may be discussed as well, such that the contents of this module may slightly vary from year to year.

Educational software development 750 (COS 750)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module provides the foundation to evaluate and develop educational software. It will introduce didactic principles applicable to the discipline of Computer Science. Using these principles, educational software, such as tools for teaching programming, on-line testing software, and adaptive software to name a few, can be evaluated and developed. Computer Science topics of interest are: programming environments, persistence of information and knowledge, knowledge representation etc.

Data mining 781 (COS 781)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

Data mining is the extraction of novel knowledge, or hidden patterns, from large data bases. The focus of this course is on how the computational intelligence techniques (such as evolutionary algorithms, swarm algorithms and neural networks) can be used for knowledge extraction. In addition, traditional machine learning techniques (such as decision trees and rule induction) will be covered. The pre-processing of data in preparation for data mining algorithms, as well as the post-processing of results after data mining, will be discussed. Exploratory data analysis and statistical data mining methods are also investigated. Finally, some attention will be given to more modern problems, such as the extraction of hidden knowledge from unstructured data, such as text and images. It is highly recommended that students do COS710 and COS711, as knowledge of these modules are assumed.

Generic programming 782 (COS 782)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module introduces the concepts of generic programming in order to generate code at compile-time. Of particular interest is the automatic generation of design pattern implementations at compile-time for use at run-time. To this end, design patterns and compile-time programming techniques such as: basic compile-time programming constructs, object allocation, generalised functors, smart pointer and multi-methods are discussed in detail and applied to design patterns.

Digital forensics and investigations 783 (COS 783)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module will teach the basic theoretical concepts of digital forensic investigations. This module is designed to prepare a student for a wide range of people including, but not limited to, law enforcers, crime investigators and people responsible for internal incident investigations in larger organisations. Digital forensics is a relatively new and upcoming field. It is a field that is not well known by most organisations and therefore, such organisations are ill informed about the digital forensic processes required to conduct a successful digital forensic investigation. The large number of digital devices used to commit crimes or other related incidents, such as fraud and corruption, proved motivation for this module in order to investigate and combat these incidents successfully. The main topics covered, but not limited to, include: An introduction to Digital Forensics; Digital forensic processes; Hardware forensics; Digital forensics tools (software forensics); Forensic readiness; A digital forensics laboratory/facility; Network forensics; Live forensics; Professionalism and ethics in digital forensics; Cyber forensics; Cyber law. Students will be challenged to contribute innovative research ideas in the field of Digital Forensics by completing a number of mini projects such as writing research papers and writing software programs.

Computer networks 784 (COS 784)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module covers computer networking principles and the operation of the TCP/IP protocol suite. The module includes studying the operation of relevant protocols, administration of network services, troubleshooting, as well as network design issues and challenges. Prior knowledge is assumed on basic data communications principles, the ISO OSI reference model, and the basic operation of protocols in the TCP/IP protocol suite.

Computer graphics 785 (COS 785)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module is intended as an advanced module in real-time computer graphics and shader programming. The module includes the following topics: Advanced texture mapping, curves and curved surfaces, shadow mapping, skeletal animation, particle systems, ray tracing and collision detection. The module assumes prior knowledge of introductory graphics as presented in an undergraduate module and a working knowledge of linear algebra and calculus.

Parallel and distributed computing 786 (COS 786)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

Computational science relies on the analysis of often complex models, for its empirical data and analyses typically involve an enormous amount of calculations. Parallel computing is one means of reducing the time needed to complete such calculations. This module will examine the kinds of problems that lend themselves to parallel computation and the methods for implementing programs to solve such problems. The aim of the module is to provide a background for parallel and distributed computing as well as practical knowledge of the implementation of computational experiments.

Spatial databases 787 (COS 787)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Geography Geoinformatics and Meteorology
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This module covers the major themes of spatial databases with application to geographic information systems (GIS), i.e. systems concerning data with an implicit or explicit reference to a location relative to the earth. Topics covered include an introduction to spatial databases and spatial data management systems, representation of geographic data, spatial data modelling, computational geometry, spatial data indexing, query processing and spatial data standards. For Computer Science students the module is an introduction to the ever increasing application field of geographics information systems (GIS), and for Geoinformatics students the module provides insight into the Computer Science foundations of the field.

Information hiding 788 (COS 788)

Module credits	15.00

Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

Information hiding is a category of computer security that focuses on embedding information in digital objects. Information, such as digital signatures, are sometimes embedded in objects to indicate ownership or origin – a technology that is called watermarking. Alternatively information is sometimes hidden in digital objects to facilitate invisible or inaudible communication – called steganography. Steganography focuses on the confidentiality of information, while watermarking is used to protect intellectual property. This module covers the techniques and algorithms used in both technologies to embed information in objects with minimal perceptual and audible changes to the objects. The module also provides a brief overview of different multimedia formats, such as image, audio and video, in order to understand their potential and limitations in the field of information hiding. Potential attacks on information hiding systems are also investigated.

Special topics (I) 790 (COS 790)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	2 lectures per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

From time to time, the department presents lectures on special topics within Computer Science. This module will be used to present such special topics.

Special topics (II) 791 (COS 791)

Module credits	15.00
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Computer Science
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

From time to time, the department presents lectures on special topics within Computer Science. This module will be used to present such special topics.

The information published here is subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information. The General Regulations (G Regulations) apply to all faculties of the University of Pretoria. It is expected of students to familiarise themselves well with these regulations as well as with the information contained in the General Rules section. Ignorance concerning these regulations and rules will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression.