

BARUCH COLLEGE, ZICKLIN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

MBA in Computer Information Systems
MS in Business Computer Information Systems

<http://cisnet.baruch.cuny.edu>

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The CIS programs at Zicklin provide a strong foundation in the business and managerial issues related to information technologies. Special interest is given to emerging technologies, and their role as facilitators of strategic advantage in the marketplace.

CIS is a business/technical discipline, and students receive formal training in finance and investment, accountancy, and management-- key areas where information technologies are applied. Our programs consider electronic-commerce, multimedia, object-oriented languages, networks and telecommunications, and many other state-of-the art technologies.

The **Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics** (BLS) projects a workforce of 1.8 million in the area of computer systems analysis and design by the year 2012! BLS reports the fastest occupations for U.S. employment growth are computer software publishers, computer systems designers, and Internet services. CIS at Baruch is proud to provide top-quality masters' education in these fields.

Q. What is the difference between the MS/BCIS and MBA/CIS programs?

A. *MBA program – 36 credits done in general business. The focus of an MBA is business breadth. Only 12-24 credits are done in your CIS major. Core curriculum is non-waivable regardless of prior background.*

MS program - a full 36 credits is done in CIS. A limited-scale general business core is waivable for people with prior course background. A more detailed audio track on this topic is available on our website at: <http://cisnet.baruch.cuny.edu/cis/grad.htm>

Q. Why would I choose the MS/BCIS over the MBA/CIS?

A. *If you seek significant immersion (36 credits) of CIS courses, and want an abbreviated business core. This may be the better option for someone with business school background, since they could waive the preliminary business requirements, and take a shorter, and more CIS-focused program.*

Q. Why would I choose the MBA/CIS over the MS/BCIS?

A. *For students who do not have prior business background, and seek a well rounded and broad business education, the MBA degree is a well-known quantity in the job market.*

Q. Why would an MBA/Finance student **co-major in CIS?**

A. *Finance major would benefit greatly from a co-major in CIS. We are well aware of the extent that the financial markets are technology driven. CIS offers courses in IT in the Financial Markets, E-Commerce, Globalization and Technology and many other courses that are of interest to students intending a career in the financial markets. See “Wasserman Trading Floor” below.*

Q. What is the Wasserman Trading Floor?

A. *The CIS programs are partners with the Finance department in the Wasserman Trading Floor at the Subotnick Financial Services Center. The Center’s 42-workstation trading floor permits simulation of a complete set of investment analysis and trading operations activities. CIS majors are urged to take full advantage of these facilities. The facility’s director – Prof. Richard Holowczak (richard_holowczak@baruch.cuny.edu) – is a professor of Information Systems*

Q. What are some current trends in the area of CIS? What is the job outlook?

A. *Much has been said about the ‘offshoring’ of IT jobs. For its part, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov>) stands firm in its substantial growth estimates for IT jobs between now and 2012.*

It is clear that IT is a backbone discipline as companies fully depend on their IT and Internet based services. Decisions made regarding the deployment of these technologies are critical. A degree that emphasizes the leading edge technologies, and the decision-making processes in the deployment of these technologies positions the student to be in the middle of these critical management decisions.

Q. In the MS/BCIS program, can a student waive business courses if he/she has prior work experience or relevant undergraduate courses ?

A. *MS preliminary business requirements can be waived based on prior **coursework**. The Office of Graduate Academic Services does evaluation upon admission.*

Prior IT coursework & work experience can be used as a basis to modify program major requirements. The major is a minimum of 36 credits. But the specific courses taken in the major can be tailored to meet specific situations. Please contact the IS Masters’ Programs advisor – Prof. Michael Palley.

Q. How is the MS/BCIS program different from a masters in Computer Science?

A. *MS/BCIS has a business-organizational focus. Our focus is application of the technologies, utilization of IT for strategic organizational advantage. Comp Sci, on the other hand, is a science discipline, focused on the technology itself. Comp Sci is mathematical, rather than organizational, in orientation. A more detailed audio track on this topic is available on our website at: <http://cisnet.baruch.cuny.edu/cis/grad.htm>*

Q. What is CIS 9000?

A. *CIS 9000 is an MBA/MS core course that describes concepts, techniques and issues related to the adoption and deployment of information technologies for business strategy. Case studies reinforce the significance of management decisions regarding these strategic technologies. The course is of concern to majors in every discipline. Students who currently work in the IT industry will find the course equally relevant.*

- Q. When I graduate from the MS/BCIS program, will I be able to get a job as a programmer (e.g., Java or C++)? What about MBA/CIS?
- A. *MS students complete two semesters of C++ programming. The program currently runs a special-topics course in Java programming. These courses do not alone qualify you per se as an applications programmer. Students interested in becoming programmers are typically recruited by firms for their programmer trainee programs. MBA students are not required to take programming courses, but can select them as electives.*

Students who desire pure programmer training are directed to the Baruch School of Continuing and Professional Studies - <http://success.baruch.cuny.edu/programs/certs.htm> which offers several certification programs in the area of Information Systems.

- Q. Does a student need to own a computer to do well in (or get into) the CIS programs?
- A. *Very useful, but not required.*
- Q. I have a liberal arts degree from 10 years ago with little or no quantitative background. Will I have trouble in the CIS programs?
- A. *It's been done many times here, but your quantitative skills must be rigorous enough for the FIN 9770 core requirement. Programming is not quantitative as much as it is logical.*
- Q. I have NO computer experience aside from a little word processing. Will I have trouble in the MS/BCIS program?
- A. *We do not presume prior extensive computer background. Basic familiarity with general computer applications like spreadsheets (Excel), browsers, and email are certainly assumed.*
- Q. I have trouble speaking in front of groups. Will I have to do that in the CIS programs?
- A. *Many courses in the School of Business require group work and oral presentations. It is a foundation of business education. This is true of the CIS programs as well.*
- Q. What special events, seminars, etc. does the CIS program sponsor that students might attend?
- A. *The Department runs research seminars on a regular basis. The seminars are sponsored by the "ISRW" (Information Systems Research Workshop). Details can be found on the <http://cisnet.baruch.cuny.edu> website.*
- Q. What kinds of research is the faculty currently engaged in? What kinds of business consulting activities?
- A. *The faculty engages in a wide variety of research, including electronic and mobile commerce, organizational diffusion of information technologies, database management systems, internet security, and many others. Similarly, they consult in a variety of areas and for diverse organizations.*
- Q. What professional associations can students join?
- A. *They may join the ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) <http://www.acm.org>.*
- Q. What periodicals and journals should marketing majors read regularly?
- A. *Wall Street and Technology (<http://www.wallstreetandtech.com/>) and The Wall Street Journal would be of particular interest for students, as would other general business publications and a number of academic marketing journals (e.g., Communications of the ACM, Information Systems Research (ISR), MIS Quarterly).*