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Information School  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

# Master of Science *in* Information Management

[ischool.uw.edu/msim](http://ischool.uw.edu/msim)



# overview

## The MSIM Degree

**Preparing to lead organizations in our knowledge economy can be difficult when information relevance is measured not in months or days but in seconds.**

The University of Washington Information School's Master of Science in Information Management (MSIM) program develops leaders that know how to manage information and build information systems to meet organizational needs. Graduates can be found at industry leaders in the Puget Sound and around the globe turning today's information and technology resources into tomorrow's sources of change, growth and innovation.

The MSIM curriculum integrates the areas of:

- › Strategic planning
- › Systems design
- › Organizational leadership
- › Information management
- › Information technology

Throughout the program you will learn to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of any organization by organizing information and information systems. Our alumni are embracing the mission-critical challenges in areas like knowledge management and transfer, business intelligence, information assurance and security, and information system design and implementation.

## The Case for Information Management

In today's knowledge economy, organizations that can't leverage their information assets underperform and eventually fail. Information management is an emerging field that is concerned with information; the infrastructure used to collect, store and deliver it; and the organizational and social contexts in which it exists.

To empower information managers to deploy information as a competitive tool, the iSchool will help you develop a deep understanding of the users of information and the organizational and social goals information management serves. Desirable outcomes of sound information management practices include:

- › Sustainable excellence among peer organizations
- › Innovation in products and services
- › Improved organizational processes
- › Measurable progress against organizational goals
- › More efficient and effective deployment of resources

# preparing information leaders

## The MSIM Approach

The MSIM program features a highly interdisciplinary approach to the study of information management. Strong practitioners in the field learn to use information to set organizational strategy and improve productivity, and to help individuals make better use and sense of the information they encounter in their everyday lives.

Faculty in the MSIM program come from both academia and the private sector. Their broad and diverse expertise allows them to incorporate into their instruction and research the on-the-ground realities of organizational structure and behavior. Graduates find that the ability to apply their growing theoretical understanding to practical business challenges is seen as a highly valuable asset.

Graduates of the program often see immediate professional benefits from their experiences in the program, either in the form of promotion or larger leadership roles in their organizations. Typical roles for graduates immediately following degree completion include:

- › Value Specialist
- › User Experience Designer
- › Systems Analyst
- › Applications Manager
- › Developer
- › Functional Analyst
- › Information Architect
- › Principal Consultant, Strategy Management

## Competencies

MSIM graduates possess a diverse set of skills, with competencies in all of the following areas:

### Knowledge Organization

Learn to organize knowledge assets for more effective use and retrieval

### Systems Analysis, Development and Integration

Develop and manage information systems that are directed by the needs of users and organizations

### Leadership and Change Management

Use techniques for initiating and leading change, communicating effectively, and supporting collaboration across teams

### Strategic Alignment of IT and Organizational Goals

Learn to make IT decisions with an awareness of the broader competitive and regulatory environments

# spotlight *on* innovation



**Geoff Froh '06**  
**CIO, Health Alliance International**

Reflecting on the MSIM program, the coursework was excellent and very relevant to what I was doing at the time — which was more technical — and to what I am doing now, which is management. The

planning and strategy part of the curriculum are absolutely critical. In addition, information management practices, such as taxonomy construction and metadata, are new tools I've been able to introduce to the organization that came directly out of the MSIM program.

**“My role is new, so I am building the idea of a CIO and an information services function in an organization that is in the midst of tremendous growth and change.”**

Through the cohort experience, I was able to interact with classmates from a large number of industries with varied backgrounds. In our group work we applied the skills we were learning in class, and the projects provided a mechanism for sharing our professional perspectives. I still consider my cohort as colleagues even now, and we exchange information and advice and contacts all the time.

We are a global nongovernmental organization that supports governments in strengthening health systems and providing health care for all. As CIO I get to use my knowledge of information management and IT to further the goals and strategy of the organization. The role is new, so I am building the idea of a CIO and an information services function in an organization that is in the midst of tremendous growth and change. As our country operations have expanded, it has become critical for HQ to take an increasingly proactive role in setting the overall policy framework and global enterprise architecture for IT and information management. The size of programs varies and we

have to be flexible in ways those operations function across resource-limited environments. I've also been involved with business process management, examining procedures and workflows, with the aim of identifying the contexts where automation may help and, more importantly, may hinder our staff in doing their important work.

The MSIM program is not a strictly technical IT program, but not solely business-oriented either. It straddles these and adds the crucial element of thinking about information as a value proposition.



# MSIM program

## Full-Time Option

The Full-Time MSIM program option complements a bachelor's degree in business, arts or sciences by opening new doors for career possibilities. MSIM classes are offered during the traditional Monday through Friday schedule. Additional electives and an internship are required for completion of this degree program, providing both in-depth knowledge and practical experience in areas of student interest.

Enrollment in the MSIM program is open to domestic and international applicants: applicants to this program need not have prior experience in the information field. The Full-Time MSIM option requires a minimum of 65 credits and is designed to be completed in two years.

Curriculum for the MSIM program is typically delivered in the classroom setting. However, note that some electives may only be offered online during a given year, and it is likely that you will take some courses in a virtual mode at some point during your degree program. Students in an online course can realize the benefit of diversifying their ability to learn in various modes, engage in group work both face-to-face and online, and utilize technologies that will enhance their ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with others.

## Mid-Career Option

Working professionals with five or more years of industry experience may want to consider the MSIM Mid-Career option. This course of study enables you to maintain your current job while you pursue the graduate education needed to advance your career. The MSIM Mid-Career option recognizes your experience in the field by waiving the internship requirement and some elective credits required of full-time, entry level students.

One section of each MSIM core class will be held on either a Friday or Saturday each quarter to enable working professionals to take classes (Mid-Career students are also welcome to attend course sections offered weekdays).

Students in the Mid-Career MSIM option have come from companies such as Boeing, Microsoft, the Seattle Times, AOL, Washington State Department of Transportation, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and Starbucks, among many others. The Mid-Career MSIM option requires a minimum of 47 credits and is designed to be completed in two years.

# courses *and* electives

Students in both the Day and Mid-Career MSIM program are free to construct degree paths based on their career and personal interests. Core courses and pre-approved specializations to choose from include:

technology	information	management	
IMT500 The Information Management Framework			
<b>core courses</b>			
<b>Technology pre-Core</b> INFX501-504 <b>Technology Core (2)</b> IMT540 + 1 INFX IMT540 <b>Design</b> INFX542 <b>XML</b> INFX543 <b>Databases</b>	<b>Information Core (3)</b> IMT510 <b>Human Information Behavior</b> IMT520 <b>Information Services &amp; Resources</b> IMT530 <b>Organization of Information</b>	<b>Management Core (3)</b> IMT550 <b>Information Policy</b> IMT580 <b>Management of Information Organizations</b> IMT581 <b>Information &amp; the Management of Change</b>	
<b>specializations</b>			
<b>Technology Specialization (3)</b> INFX544 <b>Information Retrieval</b> INFX546 <b>Data Communication &amp; Networks</b> IMT548 <b>Information Systems Design</b> INFX 562 <b>Advanced XML</b> INFX 563 <b>Advanced Databases</b> IMT588 <b>Project Management</b>	<b>Information Security Specialization (3)</b> IMT546 <b>Data Communication &amp; Networks</b> IMT551 <b>Organization Information Assurance</b> IMT552 <b>Risk Management</b> IMT553 <b>Information Assurance Strategies</b>	<b>Information Organization Specialization (3)</b> INFX531 <b>Metadata</b> INFX532 <b>Ontologies</b> INFX538 <b>Metadata Design Studio</b> IMT586 <b>Information Dynamics</b> IMT589 <b>Information Architecture</b>	<b>Management Specialization (3)</b> IMT582 <b>Strategic Information Initiatives</b> IMT583 <b>Finance</b> IMT584 <b>Marketing</b> IMT585 <b>Human Resources</b> IMT586 <b>Information Dynamics</b> IMT588 <b>Project Management</b>
Internship IMT590 (Full-Time MSIM only)			
Capstone INFX595/INFX596 Information, Technology, Stakeholders			



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# information

“Having had the benefit of exposure to students from the iSchool and the MSIM program, I’ve witnessed firsthand the contributions they are prepared to make to an organization. Technology and knowledge workers from the MSIM program share an uncommon ability to identify and develop solutions to the information challenges any organization faces. While this may sound simple, it is a powerful technical and theoretical lens through which to view organizational objectives. MSIM graduates are able to integrate their knowledge of technology with the ‘big picture’ and develop information solutions with a keen awareness of strategy and practicality.”

—Frank E. Coker, President, Information Systems Management, Inc.

# student & alumni profiles



Braun, Ramani and Mitchell

## David Braun '10

Exploring master's programs, I found the MSIM program was technical without being too far into the programming area, and the core concepts seemed tangible yet robust.

After four months I could create a user-centered communication system for different user groups at work. I also

possessed the vocabulary to express my goals for the system, which helped get buy-in and participation. After six months, I was able to apply everything I'd learned to some work projects that I would have never imagined doing before. I was also able to execute effectively and efficiently. These actions

got me noticed at work and I was able to get a new job at the company directly related to the MSIM program, working with and managing an information system inside of the supply-chain department. I look forward to what is in store for me and seeing what else I can apply to the new job.

## Lokesh Ramani '08

School location and reputation were a huge factor for me – Seattle is known for corporations such as Microsoft, Amazon and T-Mobile, and for start-up companies. Coupled with the UW's growing global reputation, I made up my mind.

MSIM classes blend management and technical perspectives. The user

experience class was a great introduction to new industry standards for writing requirements, building products and testing them. I used this knowledge in an internship with KPMG when we were consulting at Microsoft. I gained insights from an executive management stakeholder in the industry and learned how to pitch, manage and run projects. I'm also

in a position to benefit now because of my contacts in the industry.

Socially, my cohort had great diversity and unique individuals. I miss working in the TE lab late nights, socializing with fellow students about academic and non-academic pursuits.

## Cindy Mitchell '06

As director, strategic execution in the strategy management office for Alaska Airlines and Horizon Air, I'm responsible for the development, definition and execution of the key initiative program. As part of that effort, I identify opportunities within the organization where information can move the business forward.

The skills and tools that I learned in the MSIM program are directly related to what I'm able to achieve for the business. For example, MSIM graduates understand the value of information-based decision making. I learned early in the program to ask "So what?" You've accumulated a lot of information and

implemented systems, so what? I can show my work leading design and implementation of Jenn, alaskaair.com's virtual assistant, was successful in part because almost a third of her responses would have generated calls to call centers previously. That's powerful, in particular with senior leadership.

# spotlight on entrepreneurship

Robert Wilkes' marketing communications firm Wilkes Creative has been launching businesses and getting products to market for 25 years. So when a friend and pear farmer in Wapato, Washington described the problems fruit growers have earning profits while being dependent on costly middleman services, in true entrepreneurial fashion Wilkes saw an opportunity.

"Growers consign crops to packers, who process it and sell it," said Wilkes. "Growers have ups and downs depending on yield and demand. Packers make money on throughput, and are not market-price sensitive. Because there tends to be a one-to-one relationship between the grower and the packer, the grower usually lacks the information he might use to find a more competitive packer or negotiate a better deal."

Wilkes and his friend, who got to know each other when Wilkes worked with him as a client, decided to set up an information exchange and sell memberships to growers. Wilkes went to MSIM program chair Mike Crandall, explained his potential business, and asked Crandall if the project would fit the requirements of the internship program. Crandall thought it would and connected him with two students from the 2010 MSIM cohort, Grace Chang and Hong Wei. Chang worked on the project for several months and when she accepted another position she was replaced by Josh Lin. Hong has been on the project throughout and is now Senior Intern acting as IT Manager for the business.

The MSIM interns developed the database and ecommerce website Wilkes needed to get the business off the

ground. "Our service, PackerData.com, collects information about the grower's experience with a packer, including costs of processing the crop and the prices the fruit was sold for. By sharing their individual experiences, the growers are able to make comparisons and see reports. These include sophisticated business analysis tools that Hong and Josh helped us create."

"We are just now open for business and getting subscribers," said Wilkes. "Hong had experience in database development, and Grace and Josh had skills we needed in ASP.net, C# and Microsoft SQL. Their technical skills were very impressive, and they enjoyed the chance to practice them in an actual business setting." Wilkes and the interns have been meeting once a week for two hours for nearly a year. In January they took a beta version to several pear farmers in Yakima Valley. "The farmers liked it. The site lets them compare prices with packers in their area, from right nearby to a hundred miles away or more. We're going to be signing up members all around Washington, in other states and possibly in other countries."

**"In my internship I've learned about marketing strategy from Robert, and how to support marketing strategy using technology."**  
—Josh Lin

"My classes in systems analysis and design, and my class in project management helped me manage the project and design the front-end interface," said Lin. "I applied my classes on information services and taxonomy to make navigation

intuitive. In the internship I've also learned about marketing strategy from Robert," added Lin, "and how to support marketing strategy using technology."

"I'm extremely proud of the work of the interns," said Wilkes. "They took every challenge and met it. In my experience there is no problem they can't solve. They are hard working and resourceful, and a credit to the MSIM Program and the University of Washington."

# faculty profiles



## Kevin C. Desouza, Assistant Professor

What keeps Assistant Professor Kevin C. Desouza energized – and the frequent flyer miles accumulating – is participating in a global community of researchers and practitioners sworn to oppose business as usual. In his travels he uncovers what’s really working in knowledge management, change management and organizational innovation. Between travels, Desouza has authored seven books and innumerable journal articles. Keeping a foot in both academia and industry allows him to objectively speak to emerging opportunities.

“I want to give my students hands-on, practical knowledge about the topics they are learning in class. I’ve been able to accomplish this by making students’ work publicly available and giving them opportunities to contribute to the field through publication, electronically and in journal articles. A primary goal of my teaching is to help students move from being knowledge consumers to knowledge creators.”

## Hazel Taylor, Assistant Professor

Assistant Professor Hazel Taylor draws on 20 years of experience in project management to encourage students to examine their preconceptions and assumptions. She helps them conduct an honest appraisal of how they can become effective collaborators and facilitators on global teams that span borders, time zones, languages and cultures.

“I try and bridge the gap between research and practice, in order to develop students’ ability to select and apply practical project management techniques that have a sound foundation in empirical research. Classes examine means companies can use to achieve long-term benefits from IT projects. It’s been rewarding to see students take these research ideas and introduce them into their own organizations. Similarly, we look at research that has developed links between types of IT project and project management methodologies, with an aim to tailoring the management approach according to the nature of the project.”

## Jacob O. Wobbrock, Assistant Professor

Jacob O. Wobbrock is part of a community of creative and driven iSchool faculty who are deeply impacting the field of human-computer interaction (HCI). He primarily works on designing, building, and evaluating new interactive techniques and technologies, often for mobile devices, surface computers, or people with disabilities. In addition to winning three Best Paper Awards at the premiere conference in HCI, he has been awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER award – the NSF’s prestigious honor in support of early career-development activities of teacher-scholars.

“As one of the faculty concerned most directly with accessibility, usability, and design, I bring a slightly different perspective to information management. I introduce students to user-experience design methods and principles, which enables them to shape the information systems that they create, modify, and maintain. It’s been gratifying to witness the impact on students’ career trajectories and see them bring design thinking into their other projects.”

# professional preparation

## Internships

The MSIM program is designed to offer educational opportunities that extend beyond the formal classroom. To this end, an internship component is included in the program requirements. During the internship placement, the student works to meet meaningful learning objectives that have been mutually defined by the student and a site supervisor. The academic advisor assists students in identifying an appropriate internship site and ensures the placement provides an optimal experience for both the student and site supervisor.

MSIM internships offer students the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a real-world environment. Internships also allow students to build professional experience and their professional network prior to graduation, often resulting in offers for permanent employment.

## Capstone Projects

The Capstone is a required individual or team project during which students identify and investigate a research or an interactive design problem. For more information and examples, see page 13.

## Student Professional Organizations

Students at the iSchool are fortunate to have a number of quality

professional organizations with student chapters and student membership. Students are encouraged to become active in at least one of these organizations.

The Association for Information Management Students (AIMS) is the official student government for the MSIM program. The organization and its student-elected leadership work to ensure that the MSIM student experience is rich and fulfilling – academically, by giving a voice to curriculum and instructional concerns; professionally, by facilitating networking activities with alumni and local industry; and socially, by lending support to student get-togethers and other events. AIMS ensures that communication between students, faculty and administration is mutually rewarding and beneficial.

## Career Advising

One of the goals of the major is to develop your potential as a professional. There are several resources available through the iSchool and through the UW’s Career Center.

The Career Center at the UW helps you maximize your graduate education, strengthen your network, enhance your level of professionalism, and prepare for your career. They offer services like résumé critique, job search advice and interviewing tips. The iSchool encourages students to take advantage of these and other career advising services.

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# technology

# capstone projects

In their Capstone projects students synthesize the knowledge and skills they have acquired while in the MSIM program. Capstone projects are student-directed – students take responsibility for identifying and defining a problem to work on, developing the approach and methods needed to address the problem, carrying out the investigation, and presenting findings in both oral and written forms.

## Urban Orchards

### Bringing Local Information Ecology to Food

Sonja Rogneby, Monica Wynn

City Fruit is a coalition of Seattle non-profits whose mission is to promote “the cultivation of fruit in urban landscapes in order to nourish people, build community and protect the climate.” The goal of this project is to build a tool that will aid City Fruit in documenting and mapping Seattle’s geographically dispersed urban orchards which are harvested and cared for by the coalition’s staff and volunteers.

The project focuses on the visual display of tree information to serve needs of various stakeholders: tree owners, harvest coordinators, pickers, scientists, policy makers and generally concerned constituents. The City Fruit Tree Mapping Tool will enable City Fruit to efficiently catalog the inventory of fruit trees in Seattle neighborhoods and improve donation, harvesting and delivery activities by utilizing location-based geospatial information. The tool provides the ability to map trees, either in the field via a mobile handset client, or on the coalition’s website.

## The Map Gap

### A Cross Jurisdictional Standard for Road Closure Data

Frank Chiachiere, Tamara Davis

When King County Department of Transportation (KC DOT) moved from displaying road closures on their website in a text-based format to a map, new problems emerged. Suddenly it became obvious that King County had no knowledge of — and no ability to display — road closures on city, state, or federal roads within its borders. Constituents complained. To solve the problem, the team facilitated an initiative between KC DOT and Washington State DOT to develop a common data format for road closures, based on national standards, using standard data formats such as XML. The team initiated conversations with city transportation departments to further extend the reach of the system, thus giving constituents, truckers and emergency response personnel a complete view of county-wide road incident information.



## Neutralizing Terrorist Networks

Jared Keller

The ongoing threat posed by terrorist networks must be addressed. Due to the nature and complexity of such networks, detailed investigations of their weaknesses are impossible to conduct. Through understanding the elementary behavior of these groups and the individuals that comprise them, it is possible to represent these networks through a computer generated model.

The goal of this model is to evaluate the efficiency of different attempts to disrupt or destroy these networks. This provides a cheap but effective theoretical base for developing actionable strategies. A functional prototype can easily be translated to represent various other “dark networks”; human trafficking rings, bot-nets, and the illegal drug and weapons trade, among others.

# applying

## Requirements

All applicants to the MSIM program must meet the following basic requirements:

- › bachelor’s degree or higher from an accredited institution
- › grade point average of 3.0 or higher

Applicants to the Mid-Career MSIM program option must meet this additional requirement:

- › professional experience with information technology or management (five years minimum)

To be considered for admission, prospective students must submit: a CV or résumé, personal statement of educational and professional goals, names and contact information for three recommendations, official transcripts, and either a GRE or GMAT score. International students must also submit a TOEFL score.

## International Students

An international student is defined as any person who is not a U.S. citizen and does not hold a U.S. Permanent Resident Visa. This includes those who hold F-1 student visas, exchange visitors and other non-immigrant classifications.

## Information Sessions

The iSchool hosts information sessions about the MSIM program. Topics include program curriculum and requirements, career options open to graduates, application procedures, and course descriptions. Information sessions are held both online and face-to-face.

# autumn application deadlines:

## Full-Time Option

**U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents:**  
January 15

**International Applicants:**  
November 1

## Mid-Career MSIM Option

**U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents:**  
January 15 — Priority Deadline

Applicants received after this date are reviewed on a space available basis.

**International Applicants:**  
November 1

13  
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# contact us

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