

JOINT BA/MA IN DIGITAL STUDIES OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND HISTORY

Department Website: <https://digitalstudies.uchicago.edu/bama> (<https://digitalstudies.uchicago.edu/bama/>)

ABOUT

The four-year joint BA/MA in Digital Studies of Language, Culture, and History allows students in the College of the University of Chicago to combine a BA program with the MA in Digital Studies (<https://digitalstudies.uchicago.edu/overview-timeline/>). The Digital Studies curriculum allows students flexibility to explore their interests in areas such as digital texts, digital art and archaeology, digital media, and computational linguistics.

Undergraduate students pursuing this option are in “concurrent residence” beginning in the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year at the University and remain in this status for three consecutive quarters.

WHERE TO BEGIN

Qualified students in the College who wish to pursue a joint BA/MA in Digital Studies should consult with their College adviser and/or the College BA/MA Adviser, followed by conversations with the Director of Digital Studies and the Dean of Students Office in the Division of the Humanities. Interested students are advised to begin these discussions by the end of their **second year** in the College.

Potential applicants should meet with their College adviser during the **Autumn Quarter of their third year** to confirm that they are far enough along in their College program to complete the course requirements for both degrees within four years.

ELIGIBILITY

Permission to receive concurrent BA/MA degrees in Digital Studies is a privilege extended only to those undergraduate students who have demonstrated a record of uncommon excellence and who are sufficiently advanced in the fulfillment of the undergraduate degree requirements. The academic demands on these students are significant, and applicants are carefully reviewed in the context of both their undergraduate major and the Digital Studies degree requirements.

- Applicants should have a GPA of 3.55 or higher for their undergraduate work and are expected to have entered their major.
- Applicants are expected to have completed 39 of the 42 courses required for graduation, including all general education requirements (exceptions must be approved by the Digital Studies academic director), before entering concurrent residence status for the three quarters preceding the anticipated quarter of graduation.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested students should apply through the Humanities online graduate application at humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions/apply-now (<https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions/apply-now/>). The application must be submitted by **February 1** in order for the student to be informed of the admission decision before the end of the Winter Quarter.

Applicants must submit the following items:

- MA application
- Statement of academic purpose
- Two letters of recommendation
- Official transcript(s)

Applicants are not required to pay the application fee nor are they required to sit for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

Applicants will be interviewed by the Digital Studies academic director. These conversations will focus on the program's requirements and the applicant's qualifications and objectives.

The application is evaluated by the admissions committee of the MA program on the basis of the student's academic record, letters of recommendation, and personal statement of intellectual and academic goals. Admission to the MA program is highly competitive and subject to approval by the College.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Course Requirements

- Students pursuing the joint BA/MA in Digital Studies are required to complete the six core courses and three elective courses prescribed for the MA in Digital Studies. Students may also complete a thesis project, but this is optional and not required for the MA degree.
- One of the three elective courses must have a digital component. All electives are subject to approval by the Digital Studies academic director. A list of approved electives can be found on the Digital Studies (<https://digitalstudies.uchicago.edu>) website. Courses taken prior to entry into the MA program may be counted as electives to fulfill this requirement.
- Courses taken to fulfill the requirements of other programs may be counted toward the Digital Studies course requirements, subject to approval by the Director of Digital Studies. However, no more than 300 units of course credit (typically three 100-unit courses) may be double-counted in this way.
- Two of the core courses required for the MA in Digital Studies are DIGS 20001 Introduction to Computer Programming Using Python, in which students learn the Python programming language, and DIGS 20002 Introduction to Statistics Using Python, which covers basic statistics. Both of these courses are taught annually in the Autumn Quarter and are open to all undergraduate and graduate students. However, undergraduates who plan to do the BA/MA in Digital Studies are encouraged to take the equivalent courses in the Departments of Computer Science and Statistics, listed below:
 - CMSC 12100 Computer Science with Applications I, CMSC 14100 Introduction to Computer Science I, CMSC 15100 Introduction to Computer Science I, or CMSC 16100 Honors Introduction to Computer Science I. Note that CMSC 15100 and CMSC 16100 will no longer be offered as of the academic year 2022–2023, and CMSC 14100 will henceforth be the introductory course offered by the Department of Computer Science.
 - STAT 22000 Statistical Methods and Applications or a more advanced STAT course may be taken in lieu of DIGS 20002 Introduction to Statistics Using Python. Note that STAT 20000 Elementary Statistics is not accepted as a substitute for DIGS 20002.

Course Sequence

The elective course may be taken in any quarter, subject to its own prerequisites.

The Fourth Year (or the final year before graduation)

Autumn Quarter

- DIGS 30001 Introduction to Computer Programming Using Python
 - CMSC 12100, CMSC 14100, CMSC 15100, CMSC 16100, or an equivalent course may be taken in lieu of DIGS 30001.
 - DIGS 10000 (a remote-only course taught during the Summer Session) may be taken in lieu of DIGS 30001.
- DIGS 30002 Introduction to Statistics Using Python
 - STAT 22000 or an equivalent or more advanced statistics course (but not STAT 20000) may be taken in lieu of DIGS 30002.
- DIGS 30003 Data Management for the Humanities

Winter Quarter

- DIGS 30007 History and Theory of Computing for the Humanities
- DIGS 30004 Data Visualization for the Humanities
- An approved elective course (for the general MA), or NEAA 30061 Ancient Landscapes I (for the MA in Digital Archaeology), or a CMST course on digital media (for the MA in Digital Media), or DIGS 30031 Digital Texts I: Corpus Building and Corpus Statistics

Spring Quarter

- DIGS 30005 Data Publication for the Humanities
- Two approved elective courses
- Students who choose to do an optional thesis project must submit the completed thesis to their thesis adviser no later than **May 15**.

Note that a passing grade in both DIGS 30001 and DIGS 30002 in the Autumn Quarter (or in equivalent courses taken in another department) is a requirement for continuing in the MA program, because these courses are prerequisites for required core courses in the Winter and Spring Quarters. Students who fail to obtain a passing grade in either DIGS 30001 or DIGS 30002 must withdraw from the MA program.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Students who begin work toward the MA in Digital Studies and then leave the University without completing the program will not be allowed to complete the MA program at a later date.

- A leave of absence is not normally possible after a student has begun to pursue both the BA degree and the MA in Digital Studies. Students who find that they must take a leave of absence for a medical or family emergency during this period must obtain the approval of the Dean of Students in the Division of the Humanities as well as the Dean of Students in the College.
- Admissions decisions are usually not released before College preregistration for the following year takes place. Admissions committees often wish to see Winter Quarter grades before making decisions. Thus, applicants should preregister for the coming academic year as usual.
- For each of the three quarters in which students are registered in the Digital Studies MA program, they pay tuition at the graduate tuition rate, which is somewhat higher than the undergraduate tuition rate. Students are not eligible for financial assistance from the Humanities Division. However, any awards a student receives from College Aid will continue in the MA year.

