Graduate Student Handbook
This packet contains some abbreviated highlights of information that is contained in the Graduate Student Handbook. If you need additional information, the best place to look first would be the complete Graduate Student Handbook, which is available online at: [www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/documents/handbooks/2015gradstudenthandbook.pdf](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/documents/handbooks/2015gradstudenthandbook.pdf)

SIS Intranet
- Find information about SIS policies and procedures, your plan of study, and more by thoroughly reviewing our intranet: [www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/)
- Take the initiative in finding answers to questions. For example, instead of asking your advisor “What electives should I take,” first research courses that match your interests and then ask “I am thinking of taking this course as an elective because my interests include…do you think this is a good choice?”
- Be cautious about relying on other students for information about deadlines, rules, requirements, etc. These rules can vary by program, specialty area, residency, citizenship, etc. See: [www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/) for more information on these topics and more

Student Services
- Admissions, registration, graduation procedures/questions
- Policy issues
- Resource information
- Social, educational, and professional development events outside of the classroom sponsored by Student Services

Your faculty advisor
- A faculty directory is available at: [www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/faculty.php](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/people/faculty.php)
- Which classes would be best/sequencing of classes
- Mentorship, outside the classroom skill development, attending professional conferences, etc.
- See elements of good advising for further details: [www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html)

University Registrar – [www.registrar.pitt.edu/](http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/)
- Legal proof that you are a student at the University of Pittsburgh
- Legal proof of your grades/academic performance
- Legal proof of graduation

Office of International Services – [www.ois.pitt.edu/](http://www.ois.pitt.edu/) (for international students)
- Immigration document issues
- Permission to work while in school (CPT and OPT)
- Guidance on other requirements/needs (health insurance, housing, etc.)

Other University Resources
- Mental health services (stress management, anxiety, depression, etc.):
  - The University Counseling Center: [www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/ccabout](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/ccabout)
  - Accommodations for short and long-term documented medical issues:
  - Disability Resources and Services: [www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drswelcome](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drswelcome)
- Federal, state, and school-based financial aid/support :
  - The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid (OFA): [www.oafa.pitt.edu/fahome.aspx](http://www.oafa.pitt.edu/fahome.aspx)
  - Financial assistance from SIS: [www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/studentservices/finances.html](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu/sisint/studentservices/finances.html)
Below is a list of things to consider and actions to take either before or shortly after the semester begins. Each section lists important information resources to bookmark and/or check regularly.

**Social Media & Email Lists** – Used to communicate important iSchool-related dates, news, and more.
- Official iSchool Facebook Page - open to everyone
  - School-wide events, colloquia, interesting articles, etc. ([facebook.com/ischoolpitt](http://facebook.com/ischoolpitt))
- iSchool Facebook Groups (“Library & Information Sciences - iSchool at Pitt” & “Info Sci and Tele - iSchool at Pitt”)
  - Program-specific announcements, deadlines, events, etc.
  - Students are encouraged to post to these groups ~ this is your tool!
- Official iSchool LinkedIn Group: iSchool at Pitt (School of Information Sciences) - open to students & alumni
  - Interesting discussions, alumni networking, professional job postings
- Email Listservs (Students are automatically at the end of the Add/Drop period.)
  - School-wide events, internship/volunteer openings, scholarship/award opportunities, deadlines, etc.

**Intranet** – Hosts information specific to iSchool policies, procedures, resources, and services ([ischool.pitt.edu/sisint](http://ischool.pitt.edu/sisint)).
- Academic Programs
  - Grading Policy: Make sure you remain in good academic standing
  - Review course requirements and discuss these with your academic advisor
- Academic Policies & Procedures
  - Academic Integrity: Review and understand academic integrity
  - Courses/Registration: Review the instructions for obtaining permission codes and registering for courses
  - University Policies: View the student code of conduct
- Technology@the iSchool
  - Get your PITT computer account
  - Know the iSchool computer lab hours
- Student Services
  - Get your PITT photo ID card
  - All things student life - feedback surveys, public transportation, parking, networking, etc.

**Pitt Portal** – The Pitt Portal aggregates various University-wide systems, resources, and services ([my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu)).
- University Services & Information
  - Make sure you have health insurance
  - Pay your student bill and sign up for direct deposit
  - Access Pitt’s Career Development info and sign up for the career/internship database - FutureLinks
- Visit Student Center
  - Find and know your PeopleSoft ID number, which is your University-wide identification number!!!
  - Register online for courses, review your schedule, verify class meeting rooms and times
  - Update your contact information in the University’s PeopleSoft system.
- My Resources
  - Learn how to access e-books or electronic journal articles from off-campus sites
- Academic Resources
  - Review the Academic Calendars and know the academic deadlines
- CourseWeb Login
  - Familiarize yourself with CourseWeb - the online management system for syllabi, homework, etc.
  - Individual courses will become visible as instructors activate them (usually after the first class)
- Webmail
  - Check your Pitt email account & set up email forwarding service at [technology.pitt.edu](http://technology.pitt.edu/)

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**Contact Us**
Student Services Team
sisinq@sis.pitt.edu
1-800-672-9435
[www.ischool.pitt.edu](http://www.ischool.pitt.edu)

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The drop/add period typically = the first two weeks of the semester (less in Summer) = your chance to take classes out for a test drive.

my.pitt.edu > Student Center Login (aka PeopleSoft) is the place to search for courses to tell how many openings are left, but our School’s website has a schedule of courses that is easier to browse to see what courses are offered at-a-glance.

Courseweb & PeopleSoft! PeopleSoft is the system that tracks your official enrollment and final class grades. Courseweb is used by many instructors as a course delivery system but it is NOT an official record of enrollment or grades.

Some classes are only offered in the Fall or the Spring, others are offered every semester. If you have a doubt about this for a specific class, check with your advisor.

If you find your interests in a specific specialization change after taking a few classes, you can change your specialization and/or your advisor.

You can, with some restrictions, take courses at other universities as part of your degree at Pitt.

Monitored withdrawal = a safety valve if a class becomes too much. This typically can happen up to 11 weeks into the semester (less in Summer).

Full time is between 9-15 credits at the graduate level, 12-18 credits at the undergraduate level. You pay a flat fee for full-time in Fall and Spring semesters, but you pay by the credit in Summer semesters.

Each program has minimum grade requirements, both per class and for your overall grade point average (GPA).

If your degree has electives, you typically will have a list of suggested electives provided by your program, but other options relevant to your degree (in other Schools at Pitt, at other local colleges/universities) would be possible, if your advisor approves. Make sure you document exceptions!

Professional conferences and travel funds – the School has limited funds to assist students, so does GPSG. Doctoral students typically also leverage funds of their faculty advisor. You may also appeal to student organizations for travel assistance.

When we invite employers to the IS Building for sessions, please attend as many of these sessions as you can, even if you are not sure if the particular employer is relevant to your degree; employers are often looking for people with varied skill sets, and you may just fit with what they are looking for.

When you are ready to graduate, you actually have to submit an application to graduate, so don’t forget to do that!

If you do not make satisfactory academic progress (calculated with several factors; for more information see: https://oafa.pitt.edu/learn-about-aid/satisfactory-academic-progress/), your federal loans and aid will be terminated. This may also negatively impact your student status (probation or dismissal from program).