Contents

1. Introduction

2. Getting Started

3. Financial Support

4. The CAAM Graduate Curriculum

5. The Masters Thesis and Qualifying Examination for Admission to PhD Candidacy

6. CAAM Policy on Student Computing
Chapter 1

Introduction

This guide to graduate study in the Department of Computational and Applied Mathematics (CAAM) contains information about exams, monetary support, required and recommended courses, and regulations and rules for the various degree programs. It is intended to supplement the General Announcements by providing a more detailed description of the CAAM graduate program.

This handbook is the result of an ongoing attempt by the faculty to codify and make readily available to students the rules, requirements, and general approach to the graduate education of our department. Please do not hesitate to notify the faculty about areas that need clarification or strengthening.

—The Graduate Committee
Department of Computational and Applied Mathematics, 2011-12

Matthias Heinkenschloß, Chair

Faculty:

Liliana Borcea  borcea@rice  - ext. 5723
Steven J. Cox  cox@rice  - ext. 5192
Yuri Dabaghian  dabaghian@rice  - ext. 6073
Mark Embree  embree@rice  - ext. 6160
Matthias Heinkenschloß  heinken@rice  - ext. 5176
Illya V. Hicks  illya.hicks@rice  - ext. 5667
Paul E. Pfeiffer (Emeritus)  pep@rice  - ext. 5665
Beatrice M. Riviere  riviere@rice  - ext. 4094
Danny C. Sorensen  sorensen@rice  - ext. 5193
William W. Symes  symes@rice  - ext. 5997
Richard A. Tapia  rat@rice  - ext. 4049
Tim Warburton  timwar@rice  - ext. 5666
Wotao Yin  wotao.yin@rice  - ext. 5368
Yin Zhang  yzhang@rice  - ext. 5744

Other Research & Teaching Staff:

Alonso, Ricardo  Ricardo.J.Alonso@  - ext. 3336
Arai, Mamiko  mamiko.arai@
Callaghan, Thomas  Thomas.Callaghan@  - ext. 5724
Carden, Russell  russell.l.carden@rice  - ext. 6113
Hardey, Sean  hardey@  -ext. 2290
Wang, Yunjiao
Young, Jennifer  Jennifer.J.Young@  - ext. 2049
Administrative Staff:

Fran Moshiri, Senior Department Administrator  fran@rice  - ext. 5627
Daria Lawrence, Department & Graduate Coordinator  dari@rice  - ext. 4657
Ivy Gonzalez, Academic & Web Coordinator  ivyip@rice  - ext. 6310
Brenda Aune, Accounting Assistant  brenda7@rice  - ext. 5722
Jennifer Trevino, Staff Assistant  jalopez@rice  - ext. 4805
Eric Aune, Information Systems Liaison  eric14@rice  - ext. 5244

Staff Assignments:

Fran Moshiri is responsible for the overall administration of the Department. Her office is in 2112 Duncan Hall.

Daria Lawrence is the Department and Graduate Coordinator. She handles graduate matters such as registration, payroll, announcing and administering exams, and providing information on policy, procedure, and required paperwork for PhD candidacy and graduation. Her office is in 2110 Duncan Hall.

Ivy Gonzalez is our Webmaster. In addition to departmental document production and maintenance, she provides general clerical support to department faculty in academic matters. Her office is in 2109 Duncan Hall.

Brenda Aune is the accounting assistant and handles all expense reports and reimbursements. Her office is in 2111 Duncan Hall.

Jennifer Trevino is our front-office staff member who provides the department with basic clerical support. Her office location is in 2117.

Eric Aune is the information systems administrator assigned to CAAM and STAT. His domain includes the CAAM research network (mostly workstations running SUN Solaris and Linux) and the office computing equipment. Any hardware and/or software problems with the departmental computer system should be reported to Eric forthwith.
CAAM Committees:

Computing Committee:
- Tim Warburton, Chair

Graduate Committee:
- Béatrice Rivière, Chair
- Illya V. Hicks
- William Symes
- Wotao Yin
- Jeffrey Hokanson
- Kathryn Ward

Undergraduate Committee:
- Mark Embree, Chair
- Steven J. Cox
- Illya V. Hicks

Other Departmental Services:

- Colloquium: Wotao Yin
- Library Liaison: Mark Embree

Graduate Management:

Grad Representatives:
- Jeffrey Hokanson
- Kathryn Ward

GSA Representative:
- Meagan Whaley

SIAM Chapter Officers:
- President: TBA
- Vice-President: TBA
- Treasurer: TBA
- Secretary: TBA
Chapter 2

Getting Started

**Arrival:** The first thing to do upon arriving on campus is to see Daria Lawrence, the Department Coordinator. Her office is in 2110 Duncan Hall. She will explain the process of obtaining an ID card and a parking sticker, establish a paycheck schedule, and otherwise smooth the student’s adjustment to campus life.

**The Monitor System:** The graduate committee assigns a faculty member to each individual to act as his or her *monitor*. Each student will meet with his/her monitor early in each semester to discuss curriculum choices, examinations, and so forth. A faculty monitor will be present throughout a student’s graduate career. After a thesis advisor has been acquired, the advisor will take over the monitor’s role. In addition, at the beginning of the second semester of the first year of study, all students will meet with the Graduate Committee Chair and/or the Departmental Chair to assess their academic progress.

Graduate students normally register during the first week of classes. Registration is performed using the Rice University student and faculty self-service system called ESTHER. ESTHER can be accessed by all students and faculty via the web at [http://esther.rice.edu](http://esther.rice.edu). Access information for ESTHER will be provided to beginning graduate students prior to arrival at Rice. *Students are required to discuss their curriculum choices with their monitor* to help ensure that the student’s choices and plans are in tune with the various requirements for his or her degree program.

Note that courses can be added after the first week - a course can be added for free until the end of the 2nd week. The student will not be able to add classes after the 2nd week. Classes can be dropped until the 7th week of the semester; **consult the academic calendar for EXACT dates**. Therefore, the schedule established in the first week is not
chiseled in stone and can be adjusted for quite a while. The semester is only 15 weeks long, so it is encouraged not to take too long in the selection process. The student’s monitor and the course instructor should approve any drop or add.

**The Entrance Interviews:** The first semester is special – students and faculty members are getting acquainted with each other. To speed this process along, interviews are scheduled for each student with a committee of professors. This takes place the Thursday or the Friday of orientation week (the week before classes begin). This committee will discuss the student’s background in mathematical and numerical analysis and in computing. Based on what they learn from the interviews, the committee will recommend initial coursework; this recommendation will be passed on to the student’s monitor. Particularly well-prepared entering students may be advised to try one or both qualifying examinations (see Chapter 5 for more on this). Most importantly, some of the faculty will have the opportunity to chat with the student and learn a bit more than was possible during the admission process about what the student has learned and their ideas about their course of study at Rice.

**Coursework:** CAAM has a system of required courses and distribution courses to which students must conform. The course system is described in Chapter 4. The Department also encourages students to take graduate-level courses in other departments such as the Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics Departments. Outside courses (at the graduate level) will count toward the semester hour requirement of the degree. The only restriction applies to non-thesis (“professional”) Masters in Computational and Applied Mathematics candidates, who may count only two courses outside the department toward the degree. See the *General Announcements* for more details.

Some entering students have acquired enough background that they have no need for CAAM’s introductory courses. For most students, however, the introductory courses are worthwhile. An even deeper background coursework is advisable for some students.

**Computers:** Access to computers is essential for graduate study in CAAM. Every graduate student is provided with a fully networked desktop workstation. In addition, graduate students have access to the various research computing facilities at Rice University.

On arrival at Rice, every graduate student is assigned an account on the departmental computing system. The CAAM system consists of several desktop workstations and file servers in offices and in the Pearlman lab (3132 Duncan Hall); administrative computers (PC’s); and peripherals (printers), linked by Ethernet and to the outside world through the campus fiber optic backbone. Wireless connections are also readily available. Software includes Matlab, Maple, Web browsers, \TeX{} in various forms, alternative compilers (eg. GNU), and much more.
CAAM graduate students have access to various campus wide research computing facilities (see Research Computing at http://www.rice.edu/it/). Access to these facilities is typically provided in connection with a faculty sponsored research project.

**English proficiency and technical writing:** Ability to write and speak English competently is *essential* for successful academic work at Rice, and in fact has become essential for scientific careers worldwide. The Department reinforces its commitment to fostering speaking and writing skills in the following three ways:

1. It is required that all non-native English speakers whose TOEFL scores are near or below the official admission criterion (currently 600) should 1) retake the TOEFL and 2) enroll in an ESL class for at least one semester. If the student is required to take these steps, they *must* do so to receive their stipend.

2. All students must participate in the CAAM 600 Thesis writing course.

3. The Rice Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) [http://oiss.rice.edu/](http://oiss.rice.edu/) offers a number of free English and Culture classes. Additionally, Rice’s ESL (English as a Second Language) Program [http://esl.rice.edu/](http://esl.rice.edu/) offers non-native speakers of English the opportunity to improve their language skills. Foreign students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

**And So On…** Other helpful information on life as a graduate student can be found in the Graduate Student Association (GSA) yellow pages. The URL for GSA is:

[http://gsa.rice.edu/guide/consumer](http://gsa.rice.edu/guide/consumer)

The student will also want to check out the library (Fondren Hall) and Valhalla, the graduate student pub. The Rice University Student Handbook also contains a wealth of useful information.
Chapter 3

Financial Support

Rice is somewhat unusual in that relatively few graduate students support themselves by teaching. Almost all CAAM graduate students receive stipends and tuition waivers – either from the university, or from an external research grant awarded to a CAAM faculty member, or from Graduate Fellowships awarded to the student. As a result, the chief business of graduate school, for most of our students, is preparing for and learning to carry out research in computational and applied mathematics.

The Office of Graduate Studies supports most incoming PhD students during the first year of studies and a few individuals in later years. This support includes a stipend and tuition. At the beginning of each year additional payments for fees, health insurance, and parking to name a few are required.

A limited number of teaching assistantships are available to those who wish to acquire teaching experience. Since some evidence of teaching competence is a prerequisite for entry-level academic positions, CAAM graduate students who wish to eventually become professors should take advantage of this opportunity to enhance their vitas in this important way. The TA program has grown considerably in the last few years. Under the NSF VIGRE Program, each year several graduate students serve as classroom instructors for small sections of introductory courses – such as CAAM 210 (Introduction to Engineering Computation), CAAM 335 (Matrix Analysis), and CAAM336 (Differential Equations in Science and Engineering). TAs must participate in one of the teaching workshop organized by George R. Brown School of Engineering around the beginning of every fall semester. All CAAM graduate students in the PhD program are required to participate in this teaching workshop at the beginning of their second year.

The National Science Foundation, many Government Agencies and Foundations offer Scholarships, Fellowships, and other funding opportunities for graduate students. Some of these opportunities are listed on the CAAM web-page http://www.caam.rice.edu/ (go to “Departmental Use” and click on “Grad Students”) and on the George R. Brown School of Engineering web-page http://engr.rice.edu (go to STUDENTS and then OPPORTUNITIES). Graduate students are strongly encouraged to seek out these
opportunities. The application process is a valuable learning experience. Being awarded one of these prestigious fellowships is a great enhancement to the student’s vitae, and many of these fellowships carry a higher stipend level than that offered by the CAAM department. Faculty members, especially monitors and advisors, will provide guidance and help in the selection of appropriate opportunities and in the application process.

The CAAM department asks students to perform some service – usually in the form of grading homework and exams for courses. At the beginning of each semester, the graduate committee assigns most graduate students as graders to various courses. Grading is an important responsibility and is not to be taken lightly. Grading is not only a service, but also an important learning experience for graduate students. Failure to perform grading duties adequately may jeopardize future support. If for some reason a student feels unable to grade in the assigned course, they should inform the graduate chair so that the chair can attempt to reassign the student.

Stipends for first year students cover their entire first year, from August 16 to August 15 of the following year. In virtually all cases, stipends funded by research grants also cover the full year and not just the academic year. Graduate study in CAAM is usually a full-time year-round activity! Summers are extremely valuable work time, because there is the opportunity to perform research without the distractions of coursework, grading, etc.

If a student wishes to absent themselves from Rice during the summer, either to take on an internship or for another activity, please inform the Department Coordinator as early as possible so that good use can be made of the stipend funds that are not needed.

Some university funds may be available to support students in subsequent years of graduate study. However, in general, students in the CAAM department obtain their support from research grants after the first year. The opportunity to do research is an integral part of graduate training. Each student is responsible for identifying this opportunity, deciding which of the faculty to work with, and approaching him/her about support (and a project!). While the department is not in a position to guarantee a research assistantship with one of the faculty, CAAM has been very successful in placing students with professors throughout its 30+ year history. The professors always have projects underway; therefore, more often than not, they are looking for research assistants. Since our faculty has been vastly more successful than the average math department in raising research money, very few students have had any trouble finding an intellectual berth with a stipend. The coursework over the first two or three years will help familiarize the students with the professors and vice versa. Enthusiastic participation in a student’s early classes is by far the best way to find a faculty member (or to have him/her find you) who will direct the student’s initiation as a scientist to the mutual benefit of everyone.

As a matter of University policy, Rice does not offer financial support to non-thesis (“professional” or MCAM) students. Accordingly, transfer from the PhD program to the non-thesis master’s program implies repayment of any financial aid received from Rice. This restriction does not apply in case of transfer to the thesis master’s program (MA degree). In years past, a small number of these students have chosen to make such a transfer as a way of leaving the PhD program without a PhD but with a master’s degree.
Students who choose to transfer from the PhD program to the MA (master’s with thesis) program will not be subject to repayment of previous financial aid.

If financial aid, beyond what the department has arranged, is needed, the student may contact the Financial Aid office for information about loan programs for graduate students.
Chapter 4

The CAAM Graduate Curriculum

Computational and Applied Mathematics is a rapidly evolving and essentially interdisciplinary field. The most fascinating work in CAAM often involves surprising combinations of ideas from various parts of mathematics, statistics, computer science, physical sciences, engineering, as well as many other disciplines.

CAAM faculty members established a core curriculum designed to ensure breadth of exposure to all areas of computational and applied mathematics, as represented by the Rice faculty and depth of preparation in a disciplinary area. Both the core and the disciplinary curricula evolve as faculty and student interests change.

The current curriculum consists of (i) seven required courses, also called introductory courses, which every CAAM PhD student must complete; (ii) distribution courses of which CAAM PhD students must complete six courses, one out of each group; and (iii) elective courses. Both the seven introductory courses and the six distribution courses must be completed before a student advances to PhD candidacy status. The introductory courses and the distribution courses should not be taken as Pass/Fail.

These requirements apply to students admitted to the PhD program in Fall 2008 or later. Students admitted earlier than Fall 2008 will complete the requirements described in the handbook for their entrance year.

In some cases, these requirements may not be appropriate, because of prior, equivalent course work. The graduate committee will consider such exceptions as they arise. Our intent is not to construct rigid constraints, but rather to ensure that every CAAM PhD has a broad grounding in applied mathematics. The course of study described here should accomplish this goal for almost all CAAM students, insofar as it can be accomplished at Rice.
**Introductory Courses**

**Purpose:** To expose each CAAM student to the range of computational and applied mathematics as represented by the faculty and to serve as the foundation for all further work.

**Timing:** Students should attempt to complete the introductory courses within the first year of graduate study, except for the thesis writing course, which should be taken in the second year. All introductory courses must be completed prior to advancement to PhD candidacy.

**Exceptions:** In some cases, an alternative selection of courses might suit a student’s needs better than the required list. An example is a result of previous study. A student may develop an alternative program of coursework with the help of a faculty member and present it to the Graduate Committee for its approval. The alternative course of study should respect the intent of the required list by achieving comparable breadth. An approved copy of the student’s curriculum should go in their graduate student file.

**Introductory Courses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 501</td>
<td>Analysis I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 502</td>
<td>Analysis II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 420</td>
<td>Computational Science I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 553</td>
<td>Numerical Analysis I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 554</td>
<td>Numerical Analysis II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 571</td>
<td>Introduction to Linear and Integer Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAM 600</td>
<td>Thesis Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Distribution Courses**

**Purpose:** To provide further exposure to a wide range of topics and ideas and to guide the beginning of concentration on a specialty.

**Timing:** Six distribution courses, one from each group, should be completed during graduate study. Four out of the six courses should be completed during the first three years. All six courses must be completed before advancement to PhD candidacy.

**Exceptions:** Same as for the required courses.

**Distribution Courses:** Students must take six courses, one course from each of the following six groups.
The list of current courses on the CAAM web-page specifies which of the CAAM courses taught in the respective semester belongs to which group. The assignment of CAAM courses to the distribution course groups may change from semester to semester depending on course content. A course may be assigned to more than one group. Such a course can only be used to satisfy the distribution course requirement for one group. Courses offered outside the CAAM department can be used to satisfy the distribution course requirement if approved by the graduate committee. Students who wish to use non-CAAM courses to satisfy the distribution course requirement should seek approval by the graduate committee in writing before taking this class!

In the Fall 2007, Spring 2008, and Fall 2008 semester, the following courses were assigned to the six distribution course groups. This list serves as an illustration only, as the assignment of courses to groups may vary from semester to semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Applied Analysis</td>
<td>CAAM 435, CAAM 440, CAAM 523, CAAM 540, CAAM 552, CAAM 560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Continuous Optimization</td>
<td>CAAM 560, CAAM 564, CAAM 565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Mathematical Physics and Biology</td>
<td>CAAM 415, CAAM 423, CAAM 436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDE</td>
<td>Numerical Differential Equations</td>
<td>CAAM 452, CAAM 552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLA</td>
<td>Numerical Linear Algebra/Computational Sciences</td>
<td>CAAM 520, CAAM 551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Probability and Statistics</td>
<td>STAT 431, STAT 532, STAT 533, STAT 581, STAT 582, STAT 650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elective Courses**

**Purpose:** Complete preparation for research in one of the CAAM disciplines.

**Timing:** Throughout graduate study, but concentrated in the first three years.
Preparation and Exceptions: Enrollment in these courses requires completion of one or more required or distribution courses, or the equivalent. A program for each student will be developed in consultation with advisor(s). Some courses in other departments require preparation beyond what is outlined here.

Satisfactory Course Performance

For a satisfactory performance in their course work, students enrolled in the CAAM PhD program are expected to maintain a B (3.00) average in the CAAM required introductory and distribution courses. In addition, Rice’s rules specified in the General Announcements apply.

Colloquia and Seminars

In addition to the program of course work detailed above, department colloquia and seminars form an essential part of graduate education. All students are expected to attend the regular department colloquia. These talks, generally given by speakers from outside Rice, describe current research at the frontiers of applied and computational mathematics. Therefore, they give graduate students an overview of the breadth of the field’s discipline. Interested students are encouraged to meet individually with the visiting speakers.

CAAM students are also expected to attend the Graduate Research Seminar. These talks, generally given by fellow students and CAAM faculty, are both less formal and more introductory than the department colloquia. They also provide opportunities for new students to identify potential faculty advisors.

Rice has a student chapter of the Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) http://www.caam.rice.edu/~siamchapter. The Rice SIAM Student Chapter organizes a lecture series in which speakers from academia, industry, government labs, or other institutions give talks on a variety of topics of interest to researchers and practitioners in Industrial and Applied Mathematics. These talks provide a good window into life after graduate school and excellent networking opportunities. All students are strongly encouraged to attend these lectures.

TA Workshop

The George R. Brown School of Engineering conducts teaching workshops around the beginning of every fall semester. These are typically one-day workshops. All CAAM graduate students in the PhD program are required to participate in this teaching workshop at the beginning of their second year.

Rice Responsible Conduct of Research

All graduate students are required to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training
Initiative (CITI) online Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training course before their first semester at Rice. See http://osr.rice.edu/template.cfm?pageid=1014 and http://osr.rice.edu/rcr/citiinstructions.cfm.

Incoming students who do not meet this requirement may not receive payments from Rice.
Chapter 5

Qualifying Examinations, the Masters Thesis, and Admission to PhD Candidacy

Advancing to PhD candidacy requires:

- satisfactory performance on two Qualifying Examinations 1) Analysis and Linear Algebra and 2) Computational Methods,
- completion and defense of a Masters Thesis with the grade “satisfactory, PhD” given by the Masters Thesis Committee,
- completion and defense of a PhD proposal, and
- completion of required course work.

The Qualifying Exams: The Analysis and Linear Algebra exam is based on material taught in CAAM 501/502. The Computational Methods exam is based on material taught in CAAM 553/554/571 and students have to answer questions from two of the three courses -- CAAM 553, 554, and 571. These three-hour exams will be administered during a three-day period after the end of classes in the spring term, usually at the end of the final exam period. Depending on demand, the exams may also be given during a three-day period after the end of classes in the fall term, usually at the end of the final exam period. Students should attempt to complete the introductory courses within the first year of graduate study, except for the thesis writing course, which should be taken in the second year.

A guideline for selecting two courses out of the three (CAAM 553, 554 and 571) is the following. If you are inclined to choosing a continuous mathematics research direction (e.g., PDEs, numerical linear algebra and PDE-based optimization) and the materials in CAAM 553 (or 554) are largely new to you, then CAAM 553 (or 554) should take priority over CAAM 571. On the other hand, students who are inclined to choose discrete optimization as their research direction should generally consider taking CAAM 571 as a priority. Students are encouraged to consider this decision seriously and to seek the counsel of faculty members reflected in both options.
Students have to select which two courses they want to include in their Computational Methods qualifying exam during their second semester, by April 1st.

Students take the Qualifying Examinations immediately after the end of classes of the spring semester of their first year. Only one retake is permitted. This typically takes place after the end of classes in the fall term. The retake is also a three-hour written exam. The course selection made by a student for the first time he/she takes the Computational Methods qualifying exam has to be used in the retake.

Well-prepared students may be invited by their entrance interview committees to attempt one or both exams at the end of their first semester. Failure to pass either exam, when invited, will be without penalty; a fail result will simply be discarded. The student will then be required to take the corresponding course sequence (501/502 and/or 553/554/571) and take the exam again in the spring, as if for the first time.

These exams will have the same scope and nature as final exams in the respective courses. However, they will be administered only to CAAM graduate students and will have no bearing on the course grades. The exams are open to both CAAM graduate students who have entered with a declaration that the PhD is the degree sought and to others who wish to enter the PhD program.

The Committees: Each of the two basic graduate sequences (501/502 and 553/554/571) will be overseen by a committee of present, former, and possibly future instructors, who will author the respective exams. The current course instructors will participate in the design of the exams, but the end product will be the work of course committees.

Students facing the Qualifying Exams are strongly encouraged to form study groups to present course material to each other, to tackle homework problems as well as unassigned problems and old exams, and in general, take an active role in making this fundamental material their own.

Masters Thesis: A student should complete and defend his/her Masters Thesis by the end of the spring semester of their second year. A committee headed by a thesis advisor will supervise the thesis. The student should take the CAAM 600 (Masters) Thesis Writing course in the spring semester of the second year. Thesis topics and scope will be agreed upon between the student and his/her thesis advisor. It will usually be chosen to make the likelihood of completion in the suggested time frame as high as possible. By the end of the fall semester in the second year, the committee should be constituted and the topic chosen. These choices are to be reported to the Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Graduate Coordinator.

The thesis committee will assign to the defense one of three grades: (1) satisfactory, PhD (2) satisfactory, MA or (3) fail. These grades, like the pass/fail in the Qualifying Exams, represent the judgment of the committee as to the suitability of the student to continue in the PhD program.

For the approval to petition for PhD candidacy an MA Thesis grade of “satisfactory, PhD” is required.
Students who receive a grade of “satisfactory, PhD” or “satisfactory, MA” from the masters thesis committee and who have completed all coursework required for the MA degree, will receive the MA degree at the immediate following commencement. A failure in the MA thesis defense will result in no degree being awarded and no invitation to continue being issued.

A student who has previously completed a Master's thesis in another department or another university may petition the graduate committee to waive the Master's thesis requirement. A written request for a waiver, along with three copies of the thesis, should be submitted to the Graduate Committee after the student passes the written qualifying exams, but no later than the end of the first week in the second Fall semester. This petition should briefly explain the topic and contribution of the thesis; the student may be asked to give an oral presentation about this work. A waiver will be granted provided the Graduate Committee judges that the thesis meets the standard of the CAAM "Satisfactory, PhD" grade for MA theses; otherwise the student must write an MA thesis. Those who obtain waivers will still have the option to receive an MA degree later as an automatic MA at approval of PhD candidacy.

**The PhD Thesis Proposal:** The PhD Thesis Proposal may be an extension of the MA Thesis or may be completely independent. Ordinarily the proposal will be a separate document and its defense a separate exam. In exceptional cases, a student may petition to the Graduate Committee to have the Masters Thesis also count as the PhD Thesis Proposal. This petition needs to be filed well before the Masters Thesis defense. The petition has to document that all members of the masters thesis committee support the petition and have agreed to serve on the PhD thesis committee. The Masters Thesis will also be considered the PhD Thesis Proposal provided that the student’s petition is approved by the Graduate Committee and that the Masters Thesis Committee awards the grade “satisfactory, PhD” to the Masters Thesis defense.

**Exceptions:** Exceptions to these rules will be handled on an individual basis according to the grievance procedures outlined below. Amongst these exceptions is delay in the completion of the Masters Thesis. Such extensions should be requested in a letter to the Graduate Committee stating the reasons for the extension (beyond the second semester of the second year). The student’s MA thesis advisor will be asked for concurrence in this particular exception. For example, it may in some cases be reasonable to extend the date of the MA Thesis Defense if it has been agreed between student, MA thesis committee, and Graduate Committee that the MA Thesis will do double duty as a PhD Thesis Proposal. However, the student and thesis committee should take account of the risk that the added time and effort may not lead to PhD candidacy.

**Grievance:** All requests for exceptions or variances from the policies outlined above should be addressed to the Graduate Committee and delivered to the Chair of this committee. Grievance letters should state precisely what exception or variance is requested and detailed reasons given to support the request. Either the Graduate Committee or the full faculty will decide the issue, as appropriate.
Appendix

CAAM Policy on Student Computing*
*Updated October 2007

The CAAM department provides computing resources to students for the purposes of research and education. The acquisition, operation, and maintenance of the computing resources are supported by university and faculty research funds. This policy provides students with guidelines on proper usage of the computing resources. Any doubts about appropriate usage should be resolved by query to the System Administrator or the faculty Computer Committee.

1. All graduate students in the MA, MCAM, and PhD degree programs can have accounts on the CAAM system. New graduate students should fill out a form, available from the department coordinator and/or graduate secretary, to request the creation of new computer accounts.

A faculty sponsor can request accounts for undergraduate students or non-CAAM graduate students, who are involved in a faculty-sponsored research or educational project. To obtain such an account, a student must submit a request form with the signature of a faculty sponsor.

2. Students may use office desktop equipment to

- read and write email
- create and maintain a personal web page
- browse the Web for educational or research purposes
- log in to Owlnet for computational coursework
- perform teaching functions (grading, TA work, etc.)
- perform research on faculty-led projects (includes thesis research)

In all cases, research-related use has priority.
3. Students may use non-desktop departmental equipment (printers, scanners, computing and file servers...) to
   - perform research on faculty-led projects (includes thesis research)
   - perform teaching functions (grading, TA work, etc.)
   - store small amounts of information unrelated to their research projects, including email and a personal web page.

4. As long as it does not interfere with research and education use, printing and copying of personal material is permitted – for a fee (currently $0.08/page). Students will keep track of personal printing and copying, and pay any such charges periodically (preferably monthly) in the department office.

5. Students may not use departmental equipment to
   - play computer games, chat online, and things of similar nature unrelated to the educational and research missions of the university;
   - store, print, or process significant amounts of information of a purely personal nature or unrelated to the educational and research missions of the university, without reimbursing the department as outlined in item 4.

6. Termination of computer accounts: A CAAM graduate student's account will be terminated one year after the student's enrollment as a CAAM student has ended. Former students who continue their collaboration with the faculty after graduation can retain their accounts upon the request of a faculty member. The account for an undergraduate student or a non-CAAM graduate student will be terminated six months after the student's involvement in a faculty-sponsored project has ended.

7. In addition to the specific policies outlined above, students are bound by the Rice policy for Appropriate Use of Computer Resources, which can be found on the web at [http://www.rice.edu/vpit/policy.html](http://www.rice.edu/vpit/policy.html).

8. The system administrator will respond to infractions of these policies in consultation with the Computer Committee. Response to serious infraction may include closing of the guilty party's account.