



**Carnegie Mellon University**

**Computer Science Department**

**2022 Open House**

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CONGRATULATIONS!

# You are part of a very elite group...

- Admission to our PhD program super-competitive
- You all have extremely impressive accomplishments and show immense promise
- Our faculty and students are looking forward to meeting with you and learning more about your interests and expectations over the next 2 days

# A TOUGH DECISION

- You must have several excellent options for graduate school
- They are all likely to do a strong job impressing you to try and get you to join their program
  - Probably no wrong choice amongst your top picks
- Our goal: Help you understand why CMU is awesome, how it is unique, convince you that you can really perform to your potential and do great work in a PhD here, and hopefully have you decide to come to CMU in Fall 2022!

# What to look for...

- Two days of meetings, talks and activities
- Some questions to answer:
  - Are there faculty and research that excite me?
  - Will the research opportunities fit my intellectual interests and career goals?
  - Does the CMU environment match my style?
  - Will I have the time of my life during graduate school?

# STUDENT OPTIMIZED

# CMU CS really cares about its students.

- Excellent faculty student ratio
  - More than 2 faculty per incoming student!
  - *Students* are the scarce resource
- You are our prized wealth, and we treat you thus
- Program structured in every way to maximize students' success and well being
  - Feedback *every* semester (Doctoral Student Review)
- Our students are a great, happy unit; they work hard and play hard
  - Don't take my word for it; gain firsthand info by talking to students



# Program designed to maximize student success

- Small groups and closer interaction with faculty
- Research from day (semester) one
- **No funding concerns**
- **No exams/hurdles** to distract from research
- Very collaborative and low/no walls environment
  - Students spread throughout building
  - Not clique'ish
  - Strong intellectual ties with students in one's area, and healthy social (and sometimes collaborative!) ties with broader group

# Minimal Non-research Requirements

- 6 classes (4 breadth)
- Speaking/Writing skills
- 2 x TA
  - **Not** tied to funding
- Thesis (proposal, dissertation, defense)
- NO written/oral exams
  - Cross-unit programs like ACO have slightly different requirements, but still optimized for efficient research & focused work in chosen field

# Looking for an advisor

- Incoming PhD students welcome with the ***Introduction Course*** (IC)
  - A week of talks + many social/informative events
- Student and faculty submit match forms in October, and formal student-advisor matches made soon afterwards
  - Many flexible options: co-advising, anyone in SCS can advise
- Quick, efficient start to research
  - “student optimized”

# ENORMOUS BREADTH

# Amazing breadth

- Top faculty in every area; no weak spots
- A very wide and inclusive view of CS and an ambitious vision of its role in addressing major challenges of our times
- CMU pioneered this vision and forged a School of Computer Science long long before it became the trendy thing today
- The breadth offers a vast array of choices if you are undecided on exact topic of interest.
  - Even if you more-or-less know your focus area, the environment offers unique collaboration opportunities and a rich perspective

# Unique features

- CS-centric university
  - School of Computer Science
  - Numerous collaborations across dept, school & beyond
- Unparalleled Breadth
  - this is what differentiates top/big schools
- Student optimized in numerous ways
  - Unique funding model (that students can be completely oblivious of)
  - Takes seriously the responsibility to ensure students perform to their potential & to care for their well-being
- Number of students (lower student:faculty ratio)
  - Smaller ratio than our competitors

# Unique features

- Reasonable person principle
- Research areas are mixed throughout the building

QUESTIONS?