Comprehensive Program Review Report
Academic Program Name: MSIT
School:Computing
Department: Information Technology
CPR Review Schedule AY24-25
 Provosts Response:

The Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT) at Middle Georgia State University continues to demonstrate strong performance and alignment with institutional goals. The program has exhibited significant enrollment growth over the past five years, accompanied by consistent graduation success. Its curriculum is designed to equip students with advanced knowledge in IT leadership, systems integration, cybersecurity, and data-driven decision-making—positioning graduates for upward mobility in high-demand sectors.

The MSIT's flexible delivery model and career-relevant pathways make it especially attractive to working professionals across the region and beyond. The program's demonstrated success supports its ongoing investment and promotion, with further opportunities to expand employer partnerships, stackable credentials, and alumni engagement strategies that can fuel sustained growth. The institution remains confident in the MSIT program's long-term viability and its continued contribution to the university's mission and workforce development agenda.

Categorical Summation

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program.
☐ Program MEETS Institution's Criteria
X Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.
☐ Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing or a high demand field and thus will be enhanced.
☐ Program PARTIALLY MEETS Institution's Criteria and will be re-evaluated in
☐ Program DOES NOT MEET Institution's Criteria
☐ Program will be placed on a 1 year monitoring status.
☐ Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.
☐ Program will be deactivated.
☐ Program will be voluntarily terminated.
☐ Other (identify/add text):

Provost or VPAA Signature: Date:

9/18/25

Comprehensive Program Review

AY 2024 – 2025

Institution: Middle Georgia State University
Academic Program: Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT)
College or School: School of Computing
Department: Department of Information Technology
CIP Code: 11.1099
Date of Last Internal Review: Fall 2023
Faculty Completing Report: Jed Edge
Current Date: April 4, 2025

Contents

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[1] Data retrieved from MGA Dashboard

[2] National Center for O*NET Development. *O*NET OnLine*. Retrieved from https://www.onetonline.org/

[3] GDOL Labor Market Explore Website. Retrieved from https://explorer.gdol.ga.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx?plang=E

Executive Summary

The Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT) at Middle Georgia State University offers a flexible, fully online graduate program designed to prepare students for leadership roles in cybersecurity, software development, health informatics, and related IT fields. Aligned with the mission of the School of Computing and MGA's broader institutional goals, the MSIT supports student success, workforce alignment, and regional economic development.

Since the last program review, the MSIT has implemented several strategic updates. The Critical Infrastructure Management concentration was discontinued and replaced with a Homeland Security concentration in response to enrollment data and stakeholder feedback. The program also expanded access by offering select face-to-face courses on the Macon campus, while sustaining a fully online, accelerated delivery model. Faculty hiring and professional development efforts have strengthened instruction in high-demand areas such as cybersecurity, health informatics, software development, and data analytics.

Enrollment over the five-year period declined by 3.92%, though recent trends are positive, with a 14.84% increase in enrollment since Fall 2021. Graduation numbers dropped from 84 in AY 2020 to 70 in AY 2023. This drop likely reflects the slight enrollment dip and shorter cycle for completion. A provisional 26 degrees have been confirmed in AY 2024, with the final figure expected to rise once Spring and Summer conferrals are included. Despite these shifts, student outcomes remain strong: the average GPA is 3.91, and the average time to degree has decreased by 9.44%, improving both efficiency and affordability. Additionally, all assessed Student Learning Outcomes in Fall 2023 met or exceeded the 85% benchmark, affirming the program's academic quality and learning effectiveness.

Labor market data shows continued growth in roles such as information security analysts, software developers, and systems analysts, all of which are projected for double-digit growth and offer strong median salaries in Georgia. The MSIT program is well aligned with these trends through its specialized concentrations and technical competencies. Locally, the program supports workforce pipelines in Middle Georgia by preparing graduates to contribute in high-demand sectors such as healthcare IT, cybersecurity, and software development.

Looking ahead, the program will focus on three key priorities: (1) increasing enrollment through enhanced outreach and targeted marketing; (2) reviewing and refining concentrations to align with emerging technologies and workforce needs; and (3) improving retention and graduation rates through proactive student support and advising. These efforts will ensure the MSIT remains responsive to industry trends and continues to develop highly skilled professionals for Georgia and beyond.

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1. Program Purpose and Mission

The Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT) program at Middle Georgia State University prepares graduate students for advanced leadership and practitioner roles in the technology field. With an emphasis on critical thinking, applied research, and innovation, the MSIT builds on core IT competencies, such as cybersecurity, software development, data analytics, and health informatics, to help students meet evolving industry demands in both the public and private sectors.

Aligned with the mission of the Department of Information Technology and the broader School of Computing, the MSIT focuses on academic excellence, career readiness, and lifelong learning. It supports MGA's institutional mission to educate and graduate lifelong learners who contribute to regional and global communities through professional leadership and innovative partnerships. By offering flexible delivery options (100% online, 8-week sessions), the MSIT caters to working adults, full-time students, and professionals seeking to advance their careers. At the system level, the MSIT supports the University System of Georgia's commitment to student success through rigorous graduate-level coursework and proactive advising that accommodate diverse learners. It also advances economic competitiveness by cultivating a skilled workforce in high-demand IT sectors, which adds to Middle Georgia's economic and technological vitality.

2. Program Overview: Age, Tracks, Concentrations

The MSIT program launched in 2016, and over the years, it has evolved to feature multiple concentrations that allow students to specialize according to their career goals:

- Cybersecurity & Forensics

- Software Development

- Health Informatics

- Social Media

- Data Analytics

- Homeland Security

- General Track for students who prefer a broader selection of elective courses

The scope of specializations ensures that graduates acquire cutting-edge skills aligned with regional and national workforce needs. Since its inception, the MSIT has demonstrated robust enrollment, flexibility, and an accelerated path to degree completion, often achievable within one year for full-time students.

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3. Accreditation Information/Status

The MSIT program is institutionally accredited through MGA's SACSCOC accreditation. Importantly, in 2019, the MSIT received a special designation for its Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics concentration from the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense.

In alignment with graduate education best practices and the department's continuous improvement protocols, the MSIT program measures outcomes via designated courses and common assessment rubrics. Under the current assessment plan, a total of four SLOs are split into groups of two, which are assessed over a two-year cycle. Data are gathered from designated courses (e.g., ITEC 5100, 5120, 5140, and 6900) each semester to measure how well students meet or exceed established performance targets (set at 85% "Satisfactory" or higher). The most recent assessments ([Appendix](#)) focused on the following SLOs:

- **SLO 2**: "*Design, implement, and evaluate a computing-based solution to meet given requirements.*"
  ITEC 5100 (Fall 23) – Team Projects: 22 students were assessed, with a target of 85% with 100% achieving "Satisfactory" or higher exceeding expectations.

- **SLO 3**: "*Produce a literature review of scholarly sources covering a current or emerging IT topic.*"
  ITEC 5140 (Fall 23) – Literature Review: 26 students were assessed, with a target of 85% with 85% achieving "Satisfactory" or higher meeting expectations.

These outcomes underscore the program's commitment to rigorous standards in research, design, and communication. The MSIT also carries the NSA/DHS Center of Academic Excellence (CAE-CDE) designation for Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics through 2024.

4. Methods of Delivery

The MSIT is offered fully online in eight-week sessions, making it feasible for working professionals and full-time students to complete the program within one calendar year if they maintain a full course load. This accelerated format minimizes financial barriers, as students can take advantage of shorter sessions, reducing time-to-degree.

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5. Enrollment and Graduation Trends

5.1 Enrollment (Fall 2020 – Fall 2024)[1]

Campus	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	5 YR Growth	Fall 2020 compared to Fall 2024 only
Macon	1	1	0	4	8	700%	700%
Cochran	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warner Robins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dublin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Online	152	127	124	133	138	-9.21%	-9.21%
Off Campus	0	0	0	0	1	~	~
Total	153	128	124	137	147	-3.92%	-3.92%

Overall, MSIT enrollment declined slightly by 3.92% over five years, down from 153 in Fall 2020 to 147 in Fall 2024 a net loss of only 6 students. International students taking courses on the Macon campus, though small, grew from 1 to 8 students (+700%), while the online modality remains the largest portion (138 students). It should be noted that enrollment has continued to tread upward since Fall 2021. Over that time (Fall 2021 – Fall 2024), the program has experienced a 14.84% growth in enrollment.

5.2 Graduates (AY 2020 – AY 2024)[1]

AY 2020	AY 2021	AY 2022	AY 2023	AY 2024	5 YR Growth	AY2020 compared to AY2024 only*
84	78	71	70	26*	-16.67%	-16.67%

*Does not include Spring 2025 or Summer 2025

Graduates declined by 16.67% or 14 students overall (comparing AY 2020 to AY 2023). This drop likely reflects the program's slight enrollment dip and the shorter cycle for completion. Final AY 2024 numbers may improve once conferrals for spring and summer are included.

6. Changes Since Last Review

Since the last comprehensive program review, the MSIT program has made several strategic adjustments to maintain academic quality and ensure continued alignment with workforce demands. One curricular changes was the discontinuation of the Critical Infrastructure Management concentration, which was replaced by a new Homeland Security concentration. This new track offers students a broader, more relevant focus on cyber and physical threat mitigation,

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emergency response, and national security policy. The change was informed by stakeholder feedback and market analysis, reflecting a growing need for IT professionals with expertise in both cybersecurity and homeland security disciplines.

In addition to curricular updates, the program has taken steps to diversify its course delivery, introducing a small number of face-to-face sections on the Macon campus to complement its fully online format. This expansion supports increased access for students seeking more traditional or hybrid learning options and reflects broader institutional efforts to enhance graduate-level engagement on campus.

The MSIT program has also benefited from recent faculty hiring and professional development initiatives. New faculty members have been added to support high-demand areas such as cybersecurity, data analytics, software engineering, and health informatics bringing both academic expertise and industry experience. Existing faculty have continued to engage in professional development, including training in emerging technologies, online teaching best practices, and industry trends. These efforts ensure the program remains current, competitive, and well-positioned to deliver high-quality instruction across its evolving curriculum.

7. Benchmarks of Progress

The MSIT program continues to monitor and evaluate key performance indicators, including enrollment, graduation rates, academic achievement, and student learning outcomes. While the program experienced a modest overall enrollment decline of 3.92% over the five-year period from Fall 2020 to Fall 2024, it is important to note a 14.84% increase in enrollment since Fall 2021, signaling a positive upward trend in recent years. This growth is especially encouraging given national fluctuations in graduate program enrollment and reflects the program's adaptability and appeal to working professionals.

Graduation data show a decline of 14 students between AY 2020 and AY 2023, representing a 16.67% decrease. However, it is worth emphasizing that AY 2024 figures are partial and will likely increase with the addition of spring and summer conferrals. Despite this decline, academic performance among completers remains strong. The program reports an average GPA of 3.91[1], underscoring the rigor of the curriculum and the preparedness of MSIT graduates.

All Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) assessed in Fall 2023 met or exceeded the established benchmark of 85% of students achieving a rating of "Satisfactory" or higher. SLO 2, which evaluates students' ability to design, implement, and evaluate computing solutions, saw a 100% success rate. SLO 3, which assesses students' ability to conduct scholarly literature reviews, achieved an 85% success rate, meeting the benchmark. These results affirm the program's academic quality and its commitment to continuous improvement in student learning and achievement.

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MSIT Time to Completion and GPA Data[1]

Fiscal Year	Degree	Time to Completion	Avg. Inst. GPA	Avg. Overall GPA
FY20/21	Information Technology (MS)	1.80	3.93	3.93
FY24/25	**Information Technology (MS)**	**1.63**	**3.91**	**3.91**

Reviewing time to completion shows that the average time to complete the MSIT program has decreased to 1.63 years or 9.44% reduction in time which translates to a reduction in overall costs for the students. This was accomplished while still maintaining a high level of curriculum comprehension as evidenced by the retention of high average institutional and overall GPAs.

8. Plans for Action

In response to recent trends and institutional priorities, the MSIT program has identified three key initiatives that will guide its efforts over the next review cycle, all of which are designed to support enrollment growth either directly or indirectly. The first and most immediate priority is to increase enrollment across all delivery modalities, with a particular emphasis on promoting the program's fully online structure to working professionals and recent undergraduate IT graduates. This will involve enhanced marketing efforts which will be scaled in proportion to the availability of resources and expanded outreach to local employers and alumni networks who can serve as referral pipelines.

Second, the program will undertake a comprehensive review of its existing concentration offerings to ensure alignment with student interests, stakeholder expectations, and current labor market trends. Faculty will analyze enrollment data by track and consult with the program's advisory board and employer partners to identify opportunities for updating or expanding the curriculum. Any identified areas will be explored for concentration development.

The third initiative focuses on improving retention and graduation rates, recognizing that strong student outcomes are critical not only to institutional goals but also to the program's long-term viability. This effort will include closer monitoring of student progress, targeted academic support, and expanded use of early alert systems to identify at-risk students. By strengthening academic advising and integrating professional development resources into the curriculum, the program aims to help more students persist to completion and transition successfully into high-demand IT roles.

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9. Shifting Trends, Market Forces, and Workforce Alignment

Occupation	Outlook	Current Employment	% Growth	Average Salary	Future Earnings Potential
Information Security Analysts	Bright Outlook – This occupation is expected to grow rapidly.[2]	180,700 (US, 2023)[2] 4,490 (GA, 2020)[2]	33% (US, 2020-30)[2] 34% (GA, 2020-30)[2]	US Median = $120, 360[2] GA Median = $117.360[2] Warner Robins Median = $95,800[2]	$71,825 (GA-Entry)[3] $123,453 (GA – Exp.)[3]
Software Developer	Bright Outlook – This occupation is expected to grow rapidly.[2]	1,692,100 (US, 2023)[2] 52,710 (GA, 2020)[2]	18% (US, 2020-30)[2] 26% (GA, 2020-30)[2]	US Median = $132, 270[2] GA Median = $127,070[2] Macon Median = $112,660[2]	$74,427 (GA-Entry)[3] $130,156 (GA – Exp.)[3]
Computer Systems Analysts	Bright Outlook – This occupation is expected to grow rapidly.[2]	527,200 (US, 2023)[2] 17,210 (GA, 2020)[2]	11% (US, 2020-30)[2] 10% (GA, 2020-30)[2]	US Median = $103,800[2] GA Median = $100,120[2] Macon Median = $79,560[2]	$52,670 (GA-Entry)[3] $99,384 (GA – Exp.)[3]

9.1 Supply and Competitor Programs

Similar or Related Degrees/Programs	CIP Code	Supply* (Graduates/Completers)	Competitor Institutions**
MS in Computer Science	11.070100	19 (2022-23, IPEDS)	GA Southwestern St. Univ.

Supply = Number of program graduates last year within the study area
***Competitors = List other USG institutions that offer this program of a similar program in the area*

Close competitors include master's programs in Computer Science or Information Systems. One example is the MS in Computer Science at Georgia Southwestern State University which according to IPEDS data graduated 19 students in 2022-2023. However, the MSIT at MGA differentiates itself by focusing on multiple high-demand tracks that align with state, regional, and national workforce demands.

9.2 Labor Market Outlook

According to O*NET and other labor data, advanced IT roles (Information Security Analysts, IT Managers, Software Developers) project robust growth, often 10–30% in the coming decade, with median salaries exceeding $90,000. This demand underscores the MSIT's potential to continue producing graduates ready for leadership and specialized technology roles.

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9.3 Local & Regional Impact

The Middle Georgia region seeks more advanced IT professionals in healthcare systems, defense contracting, logistics, and public infrastructure. MSIT graduates, equipped with leadership, project management, and specialized technical skills, are well-positioned to fill these critical positions.

10. Conclusion

The MSIT program continues to deliver high-quality, workforce-aligned graduate education that supports the institution's mission and the strategic goals of the USG. Since the last review, the program has undergone meaningful enhancements, including the curriculum updates, which better reflect national workforce needs. Additionally, the introduction of face-to-face course offerings on the Macon campus has increased access and flexibility for graduate students seeking in-person learning options. While enrollment has declined slightly over the past five years, the program has seen a 14.84% increase since Fall 2021, suggesting a positive trajectory. Graduation numbers have dipped, though this is expected to improve with the completion of Spring and Summer 2025 conferrals. Despite these fluctuations, student success remains high, with an average GPA of 3.91 and all assessed SLOs in Fall 2023 meeting or exceeding the 85% benchmark. Over the review period, the time to completion has also decreased by 9.44%, resulting in reduces overall costs to students. These academic indicators reflect the program's ongoing rigor and the strength of its instructional faculty.

Looking ahead, the MSIT program is focused on three key priorities: increasing enrollment through expanded outreach, reviewing and refining concentrations based on labor market data and stakeholder input, and improving retention and graduation rates through enhanced student support and advising. Supported by recent faculty hiring and professional development, the program is well-positioned to build on its strengths and remain a vital contributor to the development of IT leaders across Georgia and beyond.

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Appendix

2023 Assessment Summary – Grad Programs

MSIT

SLO#	Course/Instructor	Term	Measure	#Assessed	Target	%Met/Exceed
SLO 2 - Design, implement, and evaluate a computing-based solution to meet a given set of computing requirements in the context of the program's discipline.	ITEC 5100 / Sandoval	Fall 23	Written Report (Team Project)	22 - Total	85%	100% (Total)
SLO 3 - Produce a literature review of scholarly sources covering a current or emerging topic in the field of information technology	ITEC 5140 / Rigole	Fall 23	Lit Review Assignment	26 – Total	85%	85% (Total) – This continues to be an area where students struggle and an opportunity for improvement- Continue to encourage students to use the writing center and other writing resources

¹ Data retrieved from MGA Dashboard
² National Center for O*NET Development. *O*NET OnLine*. Retrieved from https://www.onetonline.org/
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IEB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation

Date Reviewed:

Program Reviewed: MS in Information Technology

Contextual Notes: Summarize any demographic or environmental factors described in the introduction that might significantly impact assessment of the program
Enrollment overall may be down 3.9% over the review period but has been trending up recently (14.84) from 2021-2024 Academic outcomes have been strong (average GPA at graduation 3.91), completion time has fallen by 9.44% All SLOs have been at or above the 85% benchmark

Area of Focus	Exemplary Area	Satisfactory Area	Area of Concern	No Evidence	Notes
Enrollment	This **program** has significantly positive enrollment trends and robust credit hour production	This **program** has stable or moderately positive enrollment trends and healthy credit hour production	This **program** has negative enrollment trends and weak credit hour production		Macon in-person enrollment has been rising on average (1 to 8, 2020 vs 2024), and program has been recovering steadily since a drop AY 2020-2021 {153-2020, 128-2021, 124-2022, 2023-137, 2024- 147} 5-yr annual avg growth: -0.9% 5-yr change: -3.9
Graduation Trends	Three year rolling average greatly	Three year rolling average meets or exceeds USG			Graduation has been trending

IEB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation

USG benchmark:	*exceeds USG minimum benchmark for degrees conferred*	==*minimum benchmark for degrees conferred*==			down but remains well above the USG benchmarks
Bachelor's Degrees: 10 graduates/year **Graduate, Associate's or Certificates**: 5 graduates/year Programs falling under these benchmarks are designated as "low performing"					84 in 2020 to 70 in 20233; full 2024 data including Spring and Summer has not been added into this year (so far at 26) 5-yr annual avg growth: -25.4% 5-yr change: -69.0% prv. 4-yr avg growth: -5.9% prv. 4-yr change: -16.7% 3-yr rolling avg graduate: 55.7

Program Strengths of Note:

Program enrollment has been recovering since the drops in 2020 and 2021; 2021-2024 is up 14.84%

SLOs are all in good shape

Program completion time has fallen by 9.44%

There is regional demand for this kind of professional credential

IEB's Comprehensive Program Review Rubric and Evaluation

This program has stable enrollment trends and healthy credit hour production. Adjusting for the exclusion of Spring 2025 & Summer 2025 graduates, this program's previous four-year annual average growth of graduates is -5.9% and the previous four-year change of graduates is 16.7% decline. However, this program's three-year rolling average of graduates (55.7) greatly exceeds the USG Benchmark of ten graduates per year and thus, the moderate decline of graduates over the past five years does not appear to be a concern.

Areas of Concern:

While numbers are above benchmarks, enrollment and graduation did show declines, as have GPAs (3.93 to 3.91)

Other Comments:

Comprehensive Program Review Report

Academic Program Name: MS in Information Technology

College or School: Computing

Department: IT

Date of Last Internal Review: Sprin 2025

Outcome of Previous Program Review (brief narrative statement, if applicable):

Current Date: 5/28.2025

Executive Summary: *Provide a summary related to the academic program' s* **quality, viability, and productivity of efforts** *in* **teaching and learning, scholarship, and service** *as appropriate to the institution's mission. If this is the initial review of the program address how the program is/is not meeting the enrollment and credit hour projects contained in the original program proposal.*

This MSIT program has stable enrollment trends and healthy credit hour production. The program's three-year rolling average of graduates (55.7) greatly exceeds the USG Benchmark of ten graduates per year and thus, the moderate decline of graduates over the past five years does not appear to be a concern.

Categorical Summation

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program. *Include a statement of plans for action based on the overall categorical summation contained in this section.*

☒ Program MEETS Institution's Criteria (also indicate 1 subcategory below)

    ☐ Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.
    ☐ Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing or a high demand field and thus will be enhanced.

Required statement of plans for action:_____

☐ Program DOES NOT MEET Institution's Criteria (also indicate 1 subcategory below)

    ☐ Program will be placed on a monitoring status.
    ☐ Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.
    ☐ Program will be deactivated.
    ☐ Program will be voluntarily terminated.
    ☐ Other (identify/add text):

Required statement of plans for action:_____

Academic Dean Signature:
Dean of Graduate Studies Signature (when applicable):

Date: 5/28/2025