EMORY UNIVERSITY | Department of Data and Decision Sciences

Master of Science
Data Science (𝔻Sci)
Graduate Program Handbook
2026-2027

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HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

This handbook outlines program policies and procedures for Emory University's Data Science (𝔻Sci) Master of Science students. Students should also familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures of the Laney Graduate School (LGS) via their LGS handbook: https://gs.emory.edu/handbook/. Continuing scholars agree to be bound by the rules and requirements of both handbooks. While we strive to keep the 𝔻Sci MS handbook complete and updated, the program administration may clarify or change policies as needed, with the approval of the LGS Executive Council. All changes will be announced ahead of time and reflected in the copy of the handbook available on the department website. If there are major changes to any policies during the tenure of this handbook that would affect a student's academic progress, scholars who entered the program under a previous handbook will still be held to the handbook in place when they started at Emory. If you have questions about the handbook, your first point of contact should be the Graduate Program Coordinator. All forms referenced in this handbook are available from the Graduate Program Coordinator and on our website.

In addition to those policies and procedures provided here and through the Laney Graduate School, students, faculty, and administrators are subject to applicable university-wide policies.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master of Science in Data Science (𝔻Sci) at Emory University is both an education and career-enhancing STEM-designated program established in fall of 2023. The 𝔻Sci MS degree will serve a diverse range of graduates in multiple industries because our curriculum uniquely blends the traditionally siloed subjects of data science and liberal arts; thus, poising our students to become well-rounded communicators as well as analysts who are able to bridge the gaps between technical and nontechnical information.

The department also demonstrates a pluralistic approach to scholarly research by curating a topically and methodologically interdisciplinary faculty consisting of twenty-five core and nine associated faculty members. 𝔻Sci's recent hires in Anthropology, History, and Law, highlight our ongoing commitment to collaboration across academic disciplines while remaining unified by the principal of sound inference. As such, we offer the traditional data science instruction in mathematical modeling, causal inference, and predictive modeling, as well as in-depth training in ethics, critical thinking, and data visualization.

The master's curriculum also features an Applied Capstone Research course—a distinctive industry-department collaboration that enables students to apply their knowledge to real-world problems, while strengthening their leadership and communications skills under faculty mentorship. Our specialized curricular and extracurricular priorities have resulted in consistent support from the university administration.

GRADUATE PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

The baseline requirements for applying to the 𝔻Sci MS program are the LGS standards (e.g., official undergraduate transcripts, statement of purpose, resume/CV, three letters of recommendation, and $75 application fee).

Specific program requirements include the following:

- minimum of one calculus or linear algebra course or equivalent test credit
- minimum of one statistics course or equivalent test credit
- English Language Test Scores for non-native English speakers *

*Applicants will not need to submit an English Language Test Score if their undergraduate degree was conferred by an institution where English is the language of instruction. For all other applicants whose native language is not English, a TOEFL exam (minimum score 100 IBT), IELTS exam (minimum score 7.0), or Pearson Test of English (PTE; minimum score 68) score will be required. An English Language Test waiver may be requested if a candidate has spent at least 3 years in the U.S. studying toward completion of an undergraduate degree, OR completed a graduate degree in the U.S. followed by at least 2 years of work in the U.S. All international students will be reviewed by LGS English Language Support Program to determine if additional training is required in writing and/or speaking.

𝔻ATA SCIENCE MS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- One year in residence
- Completion of required coursework
- Nine regular graduate courses: 36 credit hours at the 500-level
    - Two course sequences in Theoretical Reasoning: DATASCI 510 and 511
    - Two course sequences in Applied Statistics: DATASCI 520 and 521
    - Two course sequences in Computational Methods: DATASCI 530 and 531
    - One course in Communication: DATASCI 540
    - One project-based course: DATASCI 550 - One capstone course: DATASCI 560

⁎ Independent Study/Directed Research - DATASCI 599R

DSci students have the option of engaging in independent studies, referred to as Directed Research, on topics of their choosing. To enroll in DATASCI 599R students must 1) consult with the DGS regarding their proposed topic, 2) confirm support from the instructor and provide an outline of the objectives, readings, and assignments for the Directed Research, 3) receive approval from the DGS, and 4) submit approval to GPC who will enroll you in the course. These steps must be completed before the end of the fall semester, as DATASCI 599R is exclusively offered during the summer semester.

HONOR CODE/CONDUCT CODE

All students should familiarize themselves with and adhere to the Laney Graduate School Honor Code and the Laney Graduate School Conduct Code as outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook. This deals with the professional standards and conduct demanded of all graduate students, as well as the procedures for reporting and adjudicating any violations. The Laney Graduate School Honor Code will apply to all cases of academic misconduct for MS/𝔻SCI students.

This code is presented in order to acquaint students with: (1) the rights and responsibilities of members of the academic community; and (2) some of the policies that apply to them as members of the academic community at Emory University. All students, as members of the Laney Graduate School and of the University community, are expected to cooperate in maintaining academic integrity. Given below in this Honor Code are definitions of academic dishonesty and the procedure for hearings in cases where academic misconduct is suspected.

- The University community assumes high standards of courtesy, integrity, and responsibility in all of its members.
- The requirements of student conduct expressed or implied in this code are in effect and applicable to all students.
- Students are individually responsible for their own conduct and for their violations of the requirements of student conduct.
- That continuation as a student is conditional upon compliance with these requirements.
- This code does not pretend to catalog every law or regulation related to the student's life. Rather, it attempts to identify only those whose violation is almost certain to be considered a breach of acceptable conduct. This code further describes in detail the operation of the conduct procedures within the graduate school.
- 𝔻Sci requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic course of study must be the original work of the student and must uphold academic integrity at the graduate level. Students are expected to engage in ethical conduct consistent with Emory University.
- Allegations of violations of the Honor and Conduct Code undergo a preliminary investigation by the Senior Associate Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs or their appointee. The matter may be resolved at that point or referred to a formal Hearing Committee consisting of students and faculty members who make their recommendation to the Executive Associate Dean for Educational Affairs. Students may petition to appeal that decision; in which case a second Hearing Committee may be convened.

It is the obligation of every student to know the regulations regarding academic misconduct. Ignorance of these regulations will not be considered a defense. If a student is unclear about whether something violates the academic integrity of a course assignment and/or degree

requirement, it is their responsibility to seek clarity with the instructor and/or academic advisor. In situations outside the classroom, the student should seek clarifications from an appropriate 𝔻Sci official.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or a lack of academic integrity. Violations of academic honor include but are not limited to cheating, plagiarism, falsifying research data, falsification and forgery of university academic documents, facilitating academic dishonesty, and providing false evidence.

Violations of student conduct include any action by a student which violates ethical conduct consistent with Emory University. These actions may include, but are not limited to, dishonesty through misrepresentation or withholding of pertinent factual information; forging, falsifying, or misusing university documents or records; infraction of university rules and regulations which protect the university community; conduct in violation of university policies prohibiting discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct; theft; personal abuse; malicious damage/breaking and entering; disorderly conduct and disruption of class; misuse of electronic equipment and information technology; substance use; infractions of public law that involve and/ or are linked to Emory University; and actions that deliberately demean or violate the integrity of other university members.

𝔻ATA SCIENCE GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students who wish to outline grievances or disagreements of an intra-program nature should first address either the program Chair or the appropriately designated committee in their program. Students who do not receive satisfaction through these channels, or who believe that they have recognized academic or professional problems that cannot be resolved, may present grievances to the Laney Graduate School Committee on Grievances. This committee is composed of three graduate faculty members. Any student who wishes to present grievances in academic matters to the Laney Graduate School Committee on Grievances should communicate with the Associate Dean of the Laney Graduate School.

Students who have a grievance related to an aspect of their program in the Department of Data and Decision Sciences should report it to the Program Coordinator. The document should describe the grievance and relevant details in a letter addressed to the Program Coordinator or Director of Graduate Studies, who will try, if possible, to resolve the grievance in conversation with the student and relevant parties. If this is not successful, the DGS will appoint a committee of three 𝔻Sci faculty members (or faculty members outside the department if the situation warrants) to review the grievance and propose an appropriate response. If it is impossible to resolve the grievance within this committee or within the framework of the Department's administrative structure, the Director will forward the grievance to the Office of the Senior Associate Dean of Laney Graduate School. From this point forward, the grievance will be managed according to the Grievance Procedure outlined in the Laney Graduate School Handbook.

ACADEMIC PROBATION POLICY

Students should discuss program terms and conditions of probation and reinstatement to satisfactory standing with their DGS or PC. For probationary periods caused by the failure to make satisfactory academic progress as defined by LGS, students will automatically return to good standing in the subsequent term. However, a student who fails to meet LGS or program standards for satisfactory performance in the following term will be placed on probation for a second term. The probation notation will remain on the unofficial transcript for one term unless there is cause for another probation for a different reason. Probation notations cannot be removed.

All student evaluations will be based upon class performance. Evaluation will entail a mix of homework assignments, in-class exams, class projects, and class participation. The mix of evaluations will vary according to the class. Because the curriculum is structured to be completed sequentially in one year, and because courses are offered only once per academic year, if a student is deemed to fail a class, they will be provided with an opportunity to do an extra credit assignment over the break to demonstrate that they have mastered material required to proceed. If a student fails to demonstrate mastery, they will be forced to temporarily leave the program and re-enroll the following year to re-take the failed class(es).

GRADING EXPECTATION FOR ASSIGNING AN S OR U IN RESEARCH CLASSES

“S” indicates satisfactory work, Pass

U” indicates unsatisfactory work. A grade of “U” carries no academic credit. A student cannot be promoted to the next phase of the curriculum with a grade of “U” on their transcript. Any student who receives a “U” will, at a minimum, have to successfully remediate the course, and may be susceptible to additional actions such as probation or dismissal, as determined by 𝔻Sci.

“IP” indicates ‘in-progress’ course work. Final transcripts cannot carry grades of “IP.”

“I” indicates incomplete course work. The grade of “I” will be assigned to students who have been unable to complete the requirements of the course/clerkship due to absences approved by the dean’s office. The grade of “I” is appropriate only when enough work has been completed at an acceptable level of performance such that the student can complete the remaining work without repeating the entire course. If a student receives a grade of “I,” the remaining work must be completed within a reasonable time, as determined by the Dean’s office, or the grade of “I” will automatically convert to an “F.” The grade of “I” cannot be

assigned for unsatisfactory work. The grade of "I" is to be viewed as a non-prejudicial entry on the student's record.

"W" indicates withdrawal from course without penalty.

"WF" indicates withdrawal failing.

"WU" indicates unsatisfactory withdrawal.

The S/U letter grade option is not allowed within the 𝔻ata Science Master of Science program. The grades of F, IF U, W, WF, WU, IP, I, or IU are not counted toward degree or credit hour requirements. Two tentative status notations may be given: 1. An I notation (incomplete) is appropriate when a student fails to complete all requirements for a course by the end of the term due to an illness or some other unforeseen circumstance. 2. An IP notation (in progress) may only be used for courses that run two consecutive terms. LGS must approve sequential courses that require or use IP grades. IP grades are inappropriate for courses designed to be one term in length. A student must resolve all incomplete (I) or in-progress (IP) courses before graduation.

When course assignments or research expectations are not completed in a term, the instructor may assign a grade of I (incomplete). The instructor and student should discuss and document the time needed to fulfill requirements and align with the program's policy. Questions should be directed to the program DGS or LGS. If assignments are not completed within one calendar year (12 months), the LGS will change the grade from I to IF or IU (depending on the grading basis). A grade of IF or IU is deemed unsatisfactory, resulting in probation. A grade of IF or IU is considered final. Therefore, it can only be changed through a request submitted by the instructor to the LGS, citing compelling reasons for the grade change. The Emory Registrar approves final requests.

The LGS defines unsatisfactory as any one of the following:

- A cumulative GPA of less than 2.7
- A GPA in any term of less than 2.7
- Receipt of a grade of F, U, IF, or IU in any course
- Receipt of two or more incompletes in a term, or having a total of two unresolved incomplete grades on their academic record

EEO EMPLOYER-DISABILITY/VETERAN

Emory is an equal opportunity employer, and qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, protected veteran status or other characteristics protected by state or federal law. Emory University does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment,

including recruitment, hiring, promotions, transfers, discipline, terminations, wage and salary administration, benefits, and training. Students, faculty, and staff are assured of participation in university programs and in the use of facilities without such discrimination. Emory University complies with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act, and applicable executive orders, federal and state regulations regarding nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action (for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities). Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to the Emory University Department of Equity and Civil Rights Compliance, 201 Dowman Drive, Administration Building, Atlanta, GA 30322. Telephone: 404-727-9867 (V) | 404-712-2049 (TDD).

Emory University is committed to ensuring equal access and providing reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. To request this document in an alternate format or to seek a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at accessibility@emory.edu or call 404-727-9877 (Voice) | 404-712-2049 (TDD). We kindly ask that requests be made at least seven business days in advance to allow adequate time for coordination.