DEPARTMENT OF DATA AND DECISION SCIENCES (𝔻SCI)

Undergraduate Student Handbook

2025-2026

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1. Overview

Welcome to the Department of Data and Decision Sciences

By declaring a major or minor in Data Science, you join a lifelong community of students, faculty, alumni and external partners committed to realizing your dreams in college and beyond.

The Department of Data and Decision Sciences (𝔻Sci) supports your progress through cutting-edge curriculum, extensive real-world and research learning opportunities, specialized professional development, extensive networking opportunities, and a seamless integration with our alumni and external partners.

Our program is designed to ensure that any Emory student - whatever their disciplinary or technological interest - will get an education in how to engage data with impact and find the right career path based on their passion. Join our community of future leaders trained to be data-driven decision-makers!

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2. Department Policies & Advising Guidelines

Academic Calendar

Emory Academic Calendar

School year 2024-2025 calendar can be found here. Here you will find: degree application deadlines, drop/add deadlines, holidays, exam periods, and commencement dates.

Connect with the 𝔻SCI Department

- 𝔻SCI Department Slack Channel link
- 𝔻SCI Department X page link

Declaring the Major

You can declare a Data Science major or minor any time after your first semester freshman year.

- Declare your Data Science major in OPUS under the "Course Planning and Enrollment" tile.
- Once you declare online, you will need to attend an in-person onboarding appointment with the 𝔻SCI Undergraduate Program Coordinator (UPC).
- Onboarding sessions typically occur in September, December, and March. You must attend one of these sessions to be officially cleared as a major or minor. You will receive invitations to these events and must RSVP to attend. Students must bring their computer (or smartphone) to complete a short survey during the onboarding process.
- Advising meeting times will not be used for declaration of major or minor meetings. Therefore, please do not sign up for the declaration of major/minor meeting on the advising calendar in Calendly. Advising meetings are for individual assistance with general questions about their major or minor.

Declaring the Minor

Follow the same procedure as above for declaring the major.

Changing the Data Science Track

If you are already a Data Science major and want to change your track:

- Declare your new major in OPUS by filling out the major change form.
- Submit your form to the department's undergraduate coordinator for approval and record updates.
- If a student previously declared a major in Data Science (DATASCI) and later withdrew from the program, they are required to complete the major declaration process again (see above) should they wish to re-enroll in the Data Science major.

Course Exemptions & Substitutions

If you are trying to substitute a required 𝔻SCI course with a non-𝔻SCI course offering or believe that you should be exempt from a Data Science major required course, please contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) for a Course Exemption or Course Substitution form. These will be **approved only in special circumstances on a case-by-case basis**, in which it is the student's responsibility to present evidence in support of the proposed substitution/exemption.

Transferring Credits

Students who receive a 4 or 5 on the AP Statistics exam may receive general credit towards the 124 academic hours for graduation; however, the course does not substitute for DATASCI 100 or any requirements for DATASCI degree options.

Double Majoring

Per College policy, you can:

- complete 1 major
- OR 1 major and 1 minor
- OR 2 majors.

You may NOT have 2 minors, 3 majors, 2 majors + 1 minor, etc.

- **only double-count two courses between any two majors or a major and a minor**. That means that if you are a Psychology-track QSS major and Sociology double major, a maximum of two courses between these two majors can overlap. This is true for any double major or major/minor combination in the college.

- **not take some double majors.** Check with your faculty advisor or the UPC to ensure your double major is allowed by the College

Grade Disputes

𝔻SCI identifies two grounds for dispute and appeal of grades by students: (1) the grade for a course or for coursework is incorrect due to miscalculation of scores by the instructor and/or (2) the grade for the course or coursework relies on criteria that contradict or go beyond what the instructor stated in writing on their syllabus or in emails or orally during class or office hours regarding expectations and requirements.

A student must follow this sequence to try to resolve their grade dispute and appeal their grade:

1) Resolution through discussion between the student and faculty member;
2) Resolution through inquiry and decision by the DUS (or Chair if course in question is taught by the DUS); and, if necessary,
3) Referring the dispute and appeal to the Office of Undergraduate Education for resolution.

To initiate the appeal process with the faculty instructor, the student must write a description of the reasons for the appeal, explaining which of the two recognized grounds apply to their case, providing evidence and/or supporting documentation for it, and specifying the desired resolution (redo the grade tabulation in case of a miscalculation, or a full regrade in the case of contradictory/unstated grading criteria). The faculty should review the appeal and decide whether the student's desired resolution (re-calculate or regrade) is warranted. Students should be made aware that if they request a regrade, their grade is not guaranteed to go up. A regrade may move the grade up or down.

If a student-faculty discussion does not resolve the matter, the student may submit a statement to the DUS or Chair (if appropriate) that describes the decision being challenged, the impact of it, the resolution desired, and why it should be granted, as well as the date of the initial student-faculty discussion and any email correspondence with said instructor. The dispute must be initiated within one semester of receiving the grade. The instructor should also submit a written statement describing why the grade calculation is correct and how the student may misunderstand it. The DUS or Chair will then decide.

Grade disputes and appeals can be prevented through communicating clear expectations in a course. Each faculty member should do the following:

- Define assignments and expectations on the syllabus and in class conversation

- Explain how they will evaluate assignments and elements of performance (e.g., criteria for good participation, consequences of absences in relation to participation grades, criteria for good papers etc.;
- Explain grading standards in 𝔻SCI; and
- Adhere to performance expectations and obligations of students stated on the syllabus.

Graduation

1. For graduation approval, seniors should get instruction from the registrar's office to submit their OPUS degree tracker summary reports to Mrs. Hannans for audit and signature.
2. Students must send Degree tracker summary report via email, in a PDF format to the UPC and they will return them, signed, via email. No manual forms, copies, or in-personal submission of the Degree Tracker Summary Report form will be accepted.

3. 𝔻SCI Curriculum

𝔻SCI Undergraduate Majors

Data Science Major

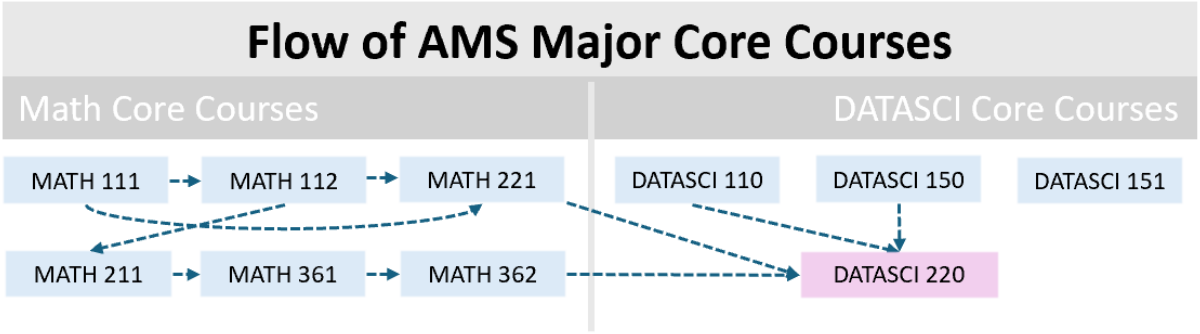
The Data Science major (DATASCI) is the integration of liberal arts and data science. With the Data Science major, students learn data science techniques and quantitative theory while they study the natural sciences, social sciences, or humanities. The required number of credit hours for any DATASCI major is 50+.

STEM Tracks	Social Science Tracks	Humanities Tracks
DATASCI | Data Science	DATASCI | Anthropology	DATASCI | Architectural Studies
DATASCI | Biology	DATASCI | Biological Anthropology	DATASCI | Art History
DATASCI | Environmental Sciences	DATASCI | Economics	DATASCI| East Asian Studies
DATASCI |Informatics	DATASCI| International Studies	DATASCI | English
DATASCI | Neuroscience & Behavioral Biology	DATASCI | LACS	DATASCI | History
	DATASCI | Linguistics	DATASCI | Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies
	DATASCI | Political Science	
	DATASCI | Psychology	
	DATASCI | Sociology	

Applied Mathematics and Statistics Major (AMS)

The Applied Math and Stats major (not to be confused with the Applied Math major) is jointly offered by 𝔻SCI and the Department of Mathematics. It is the most technically rigorous curriculum offered by the 𝔻SCI department. It will provide the necessary building blocks for statistical analysis as well as the tools and conceptual foundations for quantitative research and empirical quantitative work.

- For the course checklist click here
- AMS major required credit hours: 20 courses/61+ credit hours
- Here is the recommended flow of core courses:



Business Administration & Quantitative Sciences Major (BBA + DATASCI)

The Department of Data and Decision Sciences (𝔻SCI) in Emory College and the Bachelor of Business Administration program in the Goizueta Business School have joined forces to offer a BBA with a secondary major in Data Science. This partnership couples the rigor of the BBA program with a secondary major in Data Science.

- For the course checklist click here

Public Policy Analysis Major (PPA)

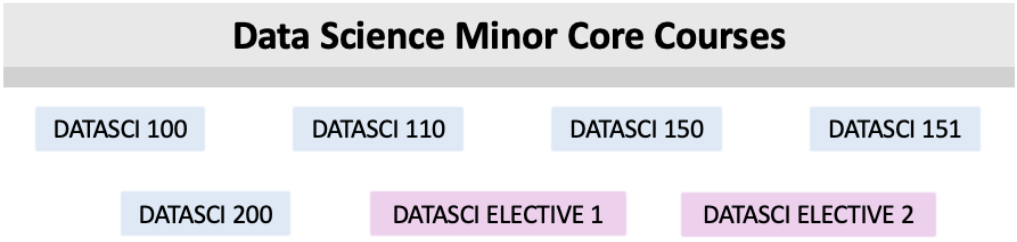
The major in Public Policy Analysis is a joint major with Political Science and combines the rigor of a quantitative sciences degree with an emphasis on public policy.

- For the course checklist click here
- PPA major required credit hours: 17 courses/51+ credit hour

DATASCI Undergraduate Minor

The DATASCI minor offers Emory students an option to establish or enhance a statistical and computational skill set while pursuing another major program, and without the curricular commitment of a full Quantitative Sciences B.S. degree.

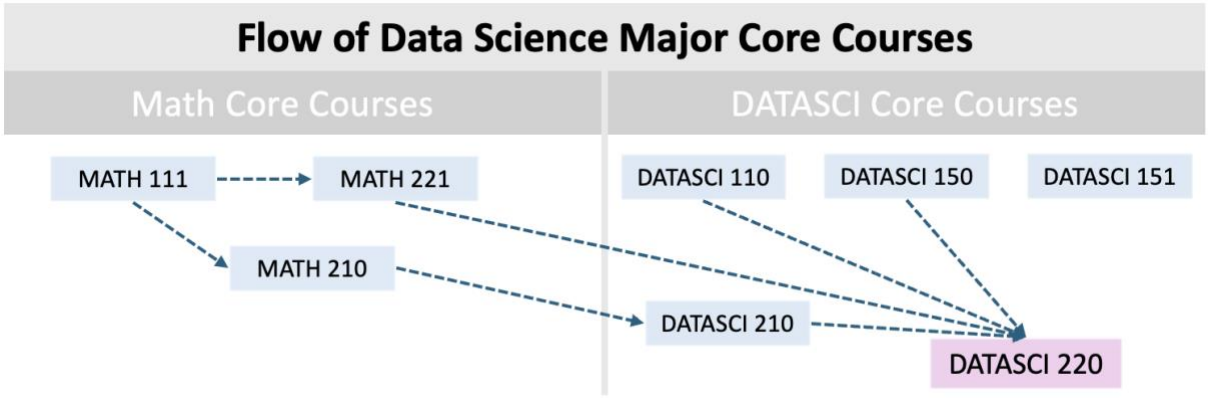
- For the minor checklist click here



DATASCI Core Courses

You can find descriptions of all DATASCI courses here on the website. **All classes counting toward a DATASCI major or minor must be taken for a letter grade**. Please note, students must meet the minimum GPA requirement of 2.0 to graduate with any major or minor from the department. If you have any questions about undergraduate DATASCI courses, please contact the UPC. Access the Emory Course Atlas to register for courses here

Core Courses for the DATASCI, BBA + DATASCI, & PPA Majors:



- DATASCI 110: Intro to Scientific Methods
- DATASCI 150: Introduction to Statistical Computing I
- DATASCI 151: Introduction to Statistical Computing II
- MATH 111: Calculus I (must take for a grade; does not count towards major GPA)
- MATH 210: Advanced Calculus for Data Sciences or MATH 211
- DATASCI 210: Probability and Statistics
- MATH 221: Linear Algebra (must take for a grade; does not count towards major GPA)
- DATASCI 220: Regression Analysis

DATASCI Elective Courses

You can find a list and description of all 100, 200, 300, and 400 level DATASCI courses on the 𝔻SCI website, here.

Research for Credit

In addition to required coursework, 𝔻SCI students can gain hands-on experience by conducting research projects and earning credit through peer mentorship and TA opportunities.

Capstone

DATASCI 498R: Data Sciences Capstone is a semester-long course where advanced 𝔻SCI majors work in teams on real-world projects from industry, government, non-profits, or academia. Students apply their skills to solve partner challenges, practice professional communication, and present their findings and recommendations to stakeholders.

- For more information and to apply for the program check out the website here.

Peer Mentoring

DATASCI 398R: Students can earn credit by mentoring peers in statistics or assisting in DATASCI 100 or other DATASCI courses. The responsibilities may vary by the specific DATASCI course, and students will be automatically enrolled in this course as LAs (2 credits) or UTAs (1 credit).

Directed Research

DATASCI 499R: Designed for majors (Data Science, AMS, PPA, and BBA + Data Science, etc.) working on independent research under the direction of faculty. Students' involvement must include the employment of their statistical, computational, mathematical, and/or theoretical knowledge. Reach out to faculty with whom you would be interested in developing a directed research project

Honors Program

The DATASCI Honors Program offers exceptional students the opportunity to conduct original, data-driven research and write a thesis under faculty mentorship during their final two semesters. Admission is competitive and based on qualifications beyond the major's standard requirements. For more information including how to apply, check out the website here.

4. Student Opportunities

Student Clubs

Emory Data Science Club

The Emory Data Science Club is a student-run organization that promotes data science through technical workshops, alumni panels, and collaborative projects with companies and nonprofits. They also partner with campus groups like the Data and Decision Sciences Department to offer hands-on experience and data-driven insights.

- Find more information on their website here.

Emory Data Interpreters Association

Emory student organization focused on uplifting its local community by providing data analysis and visualization

- Find their LinkedIn here.
- Find their Instagram here.

Student Data Events and Programs

Data Blitz

DataBlitz is a two-day conference showcasing Emory College's undergraduate work at the intersection of data science and the liberal arts, featuring student research, capstone projects, and community partnerships. Highlights include presentations to stakeholders, data-driven projects for social good, and award-winning student work. For more information check out the website here

DataFest

ASA DataFest, hosted by the 𝔻SCI Department since 2012, is an annual undergraduate statistical competition held each spring semester. During the competition, student teams apply their classroom knowledge to real-world problems, working intensively to analyze a large and complex datasets while developing valuable analytical and computational skills. At the event's conclusion, teams present their findings in a concise, high-impact format. Judging is based on creative insights, analytical rigor, and problem-solving approaches.

Through this experience, students gain hands-on expertise in data analysis and meaningful collaboration with their peers. For more information check out the website here, or reach out to DataFest sponsor Dr. Gong (zgong5@emory.edu)

A.I.Data Lab

In the AI.Data Lab experiential learning program, students work with real-world datasets from sponsors like Invest Atlanta and The Carter Center to solve data-driven challenges. The semester-long project culminates in a public research showcase, and students can earn a General Education credit. For more information and to apply, check out this website or reach out to program sponsor Dr. Kevin McAlister (kevin.mcalister@emory.edu).

𝔻SCI Undergraduate Fellowship

𝔻SCI Fellows earn academic credit while working 8-10 hours per week as independent research assistants, with the option to continue for a second semester. Unlike a traditional class, the fellowship offers self-directed learning and valuable experience applicable to careers in research, business, law, and public service. For more details about the program and how to apply click here