




# **MS Data Science Pre-Decision Information Session**

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Fall 2026





# Introduction



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# Overview

- Requirements
- Sample enrollment plans
- Facts about MS Data Science
- Policies
- Funding options
- Cost of living in Madison & housing resources
- Career information & resources
- Next steps



# Requirements

## MS Data Science Program

- Statistics Core courses: 9 credits
  - STAT 611 Statistical Models for Data Science
  - STAT 612 Statistical Inference for Data Science
  - STAT 613 Statistical Methods for Data Science
- Computer Sciences Core courses: 9 credits
  - Algorithms
  - Systems
  - Humans and Data
- Machine Learning Core courses: 6 credits
- Data Science Elective courses: 6 credits

## UW-Madison Graduate School

- 30 credits
- 16 minimum credits in residence as a graduate student
- Continuous enrollment (fall/spring terms)
- Minimum enrollment requirements for international students: 8 credits in fall/spring, minimum 5 cr of in-person courses
- Minimum of 2 credits of enrollment in final semester (including summer)

MS Data Science Graduate Guide: <https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/statistics/data-science-ms/#text>

UW-Madison Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: <https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/>



# Sample Enrollment Plans

## 2 Year/4 Semester Plan:

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### First Semester

- STAT 611 (3 cr)
- STAT 613 (3 cr)
- Computer Sciences Core (3 cr)

### Second Semester

- STAT 612 (3 cr)
- Computer Sciences Core (3 cr)
- Machine Learning Core (3 cr)

### Third Semester

- Computer Sciences Core (3 cr)
- Machine Learning Core (3 cr)
- Data Science Electives (3 cr)

### Fourth Semester

- Any remaining electives (3 cr)

## 1.5 Year/3 Semester Plan:

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### First Semester

- STAT 611 (3 cr)
- STAT 613 (3 cr)
- Computer Sciences Core (3 cr)

### Second Semester

- STAT 612 (3 cr)
- Computer Sciences Core (6 cr)
- Machine Learning Core (3 cr)

### Third Semester

- Machine Learning Core (3 cr)
- Data Science Electives (6 cr)

**F-1/J-1 visa holding students must enroll in a minimum of 8 credits in all semesters, except the final semester with an approved Reduced Course Load**



# Facts about MS Data Science

MS Data Science is a coursework-based professional Master's program with a set curriculum



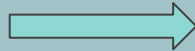
MS Data Science is **not** a research or thesis-based Master's program, and is **not** a guaranteed path to UW-Madison PhD programs

Students **must** follow the program curriculum



Students may **not** enroll in any coursework outside of curriculum and/or not counting toward degree requirements without prior approval

MS Data Science is a joint program between the Statistics Department and the Computer Sciences Department



MS Data Science is **not** a substitution for a Computer Sciences-only program



# Policies

## Program Policies

- Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress while in the program
  - Must maintain 3.000 cumulative GPA
  - Must only be enrolled in MS Data Science program coursework
    - No courses outside of requirements
  - Must have an approved course plan survey each semester
  - Must graduate in the semester in which all program/degree requirements are completed
  - Must uphold personal conduct expectations

## Campus Policies

- Enrollment in courses outside of the MS Data Science curriculum is **not** permitted
- Concurrent enrollment in additional programs (MS/PhD) is **not** permitted
- Students **can** accept teaching/project/research assistantship (TA/RA/PA) positions but **will not** be granted tuition remission
  - **Can** accept stipend or hourly rate as compensation

*\*[F1/J1 visa-holding students](#) have additional policies for enrollment minimums, time-to-degree, internships, etc.*



# Funding

- Scholarships - all departmental scholarships allocated at the time of admission
- Graduate assistantships - professional program students **can** hold graduate assistantship positions such as teaching, project, and research assistantships
  - **Can** receive stipend or an hourly pay rate
  - **Cannot** receive tuition remission
- Hourly employment (<https://studentjobs.wisc.edu/>)
  - Visa holding international students must be on-campus or have CPT authorization for employment



# Cost of Living in Madison, WI

Category	Cost for one person	Rank (within U.S.)
Total with rent	\$2,483	784/2202
Without rent	\$905	590/2202
Rent and utilities	\$1,578	827/2202
Food	\$633	1019/2202
Transport	\$91.70	95/2202
Monthly salary after tax	\$4,348	1069/2202
Quality of life	84th percentile	147/2202
Population	270K	84/2202

As of October 14, 2025

<https://livingcost.org/cost/united-states/wi/madison>



# Housing

- UW-Madison has some apartments available for graduate students and families: <https://www.housing.wisc.edu/apartments/>
- Off-Campus Housing Marketplace: <https://campusareahousing.wisc.edu/>
- Large Property Management Companies:
  - Mullins Apartments
  - Madison Property Management (MPM)
  - Steve Brown
- Search Resources:
  - Madison and Campus Downtown Living
  - Rentable
  - Craigslist
- Tenant Resource Center: <https://www.tenantresourcecenter.org/>



## Career Information

- MS Data Science is a fairly new program, so data does not yet exist for alumni career trajectories
- Alumni may enter the job market or continue their education
- Anticipated careers in a wide variety of companies depending on student interests, such as technology, finance, healthcare, sports, and government, among others
  - Supplement data science skills with internships, as well as with deeper experience in one or more specialized domain areas
- Anticipated continuing education: PhD programs related to Computer Sciences, Statistics/Biostatistics, Business Analytics, Industrial and Systems Engineering, etc.



# Career Resources

- Students opt in & select what resources/opportunities they wish to engage with
- Events and engagement opportunities
  - **Statistics & Computer Sciences Departments:** staff advisors, career development coordinator, faculty, student orgs, department sponsored events, employers who visit the department, CPT internship course
  - **CDIS:** the School for Computer, Data, and Information Sciences has a number of events each year to help connect employers and students
    - Example: CDIS Career Fair (<https://cdis.wisc.edu/career/>)
  - **Graduate School:** several professional development programs to pursue (<https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/>), events, workshops, trainings
  - **Broader campus events:** career fairs, materials/interview prep, presentations by potential employers, specific career events/information for F1/J1 visa students etc.
- Events and opportunities sent via email



## Next Steps

Acceptance decisions due **April 15**

- Finalize admission with the Graduate School
  - Have official transcripts sent as soon as possible, along with other documentation as applicable
  - UW-Madison Graduate School makes final admission decision and offer
- Complete the Decision Reply Form in your UW application portal
- If you need an extension, email [msdatascience@stat.wisc.edu](mailto:msdatascience@stat.wisc.edu)

After your decision is received, you will receive additional information via email to help with requesting your student visa (if applicable), onboarding, fall course enrollment, orientation, etc.



## Additional Resources

- MS Data Science email address: [msdatascience@stat.wisc.edu](mailto:msdatascience@stat.wisc.edu)
- MS Data Science Program Page:  
<https://stat.wisc.edu/graduate-admissions/ms-datascience/>
- MS Data Science Graduate Guide Page:  
<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/statistics/data-science-ms/>
- Becoming a Global Badger (for students requiring a visa):  
<https://iss.wisc.edu/becoming-a-global-badger/>
- Student jobs site: <https://studentjobs.wisc.edu/>
  - For visa-holding international students must be on-campus or have CPT authorization

**Questions?**

