

Subject: Monday Matters: Data Science Initiatives

Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 at 8:00:51 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Dodge, Gail

To: Dodge, Gail

CC: Whitfield, Tiffany L., Harvey, Rodger, Greene, Lesley H., Xu, Yuesheng

Dear Colleagues:

There is a lot going on related to data science at ODU these days. My goal with this email is to inform you about some of the data science activities within the college. This is not a complete list and the campus is wrestling with longer term questions, such as whether we should have a center or school or college of data science. Holly Handley, Provost's Fellow for Artificial Intelligence and Data Science, is studying the possibility of creating a center at ODU and the matching of our AI and DS degrees to military, government and industry jobs. In the college we have hired many outstanding data science faculty in Computer Science, Math, and Statistics, as well as faculty across the college who use data science techniques in their research.

In the short term, I hope we can bring faculty together across departmental and college boundaries to encourage new projects and collaboration. The new monthly **Data Science Seminar Series** began in July with a talk from Ciprian Crainiceanu (Biostatistics, Johns Hopkins) and then a talk by Ling Li (Information Technology & Decision Sciences, ODU) in October via zoom. The seminar series is being organized by Yuesheng Xu (Dean's Fellow for data science), Lucia Tabacu, and Guohui Song – it is meant for those interested in learning broadly about data science as well as for the experts. The plan is to have a wide variety of speakers from inside and outside ODU.

We are also setting up a monthly **Data Science Coffee Chat**, via zoom this fall, to bring together researchers and students interested in discussing data science and forming new collaborations. The tentative plan is to have these informal discussions Wednesdays at 1 pm in between the monthly seminars.

We plan to send information about the seminar series to all faculty, at least at first. If you would like to be included on a more targeted email list for those interested in data science, please contact Lucia (ltabacu@odu.edu). People on that list will be reminded about the Coffee Chats and will receive information about data science events and opportunities.

Our data science gatherings build on our educational initiatives already under way. The MS in Data Science & Analytics, run by the Graduate School (GPD: Mohammad Zubair) is now well established with four tracks in applied areas. A 200 level T course for data science (geared toward non-technical majors) is being developed by Lucia and Guohui with help from Hideaki Kaneko and Yuesheng. Lucia is also organizing an undergraduate data science seminar series. Lesley Greene is planning a one-week **Data Science Boot Camp** for Summer 2022, to enable graduate students to acquire skills in this important area. More details will be available in spring.

Finally, there have been several very impressive outreach programs, initiated by Sampath Jayarathna and Yaohang Li. Sampath held an in-person Data Science Summer Camp for high school teachers August 2 - 4, sponsored by the Virginia Space Grant Consortium. Also, a Data Science Summer Camp was held for high school students from August 9 – 20, 2021 both virtually and in-person, thanks to a grant from the PRA Group. These are but a few of our efforts and I know that I am not aware of everything that is being done in this area.

If you have ideas or would like to help organize data science activities, we want to hear from you. Please

contact Yuesheng, Lesley, Rodger or me.

Best Regards,
Gail

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