Oregon State University's New Online Programs in Data Analytics Aim to Address National Shortage

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CORVALLIS, Ore. (PRWEB) July 19, 2016 -- With the United States facing a shortage of more than one million skilled data scientists, Oregon State University will train an array of new professionals through a pair of graduate programs in data analytics to be delivered entirely online.

Beginning this fall, students can pursue a [master’s degree or graduate certificate in data analytics](http://www.prweb.com/releases/2016/07/prweb13432896.htm) through Oregon State Ecampus, the university’s online education division. These are the first programs developed for online delivery by OSU’s College of Science.

The programs integrate Oregon State’s strengths in statistics, computer science and mathematics. This interdisciplinary approach will train students in many data analysis techniques and, program leaders say, make them appealing to employers in every industry.

"Data analytics is playing a major role in drug discovery, climate change, and business and policy decisions. It is an exciting time to be a data scientist in our data-enabled world," said Sastry G. Pantula, dean of OSU’s College of Science.

“These graduate programs are unique in the marketplace. We build global leaders with strong critical-thinking and problem-solving skills who are grounded in the statistical and computational sciences.”

According to data from the McKinsey Global Institute, the United States could face a shortage of up to 180,000 people with deep analytic skills by 2018 and an estimated 1.5 million managers and analysts.

The need for businesses worldwide to be able to make sense of data is at an all-time high. Data impacts every sector, from finance and travel to health services and neighborhood grocery stores.

“When a store gives you a receipt, it might also give you a coupon for cat litter. It’s tailored to you because it recognizes you just bought cat food,” said Virginia Lesser, professor and chair of OSU’s Department of Statistics. “That’s data analysis that’s being done immediately to improve peoples’ businesses. It’s everywhere.”

Oregon State’s new programs will expose students to the whole data pipeline, from collecting data, through analysis, to reporting to stakeholders. Students in the 45-credit master’s program will be trained with advanced statistical and predictive modeling skills and strong computational and programming skills to manage and analyze large data sets.

All classes in the master’s program and the 18-credit graduate certificate program were developed and will be taught by faculty from OSU’s College of Science and the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
“Our faculty recognize that data are often complex, and we know how to deal with messy data,” Lesser said. “It’s important for students to know that they’ll learn from faculty who have exposure to real data and extensive hands-on experience.”

Fall classes at Oregon State begin Sept. 21. To learn more about these data analytics programs, visit ecampus.oregonstate.edu/data.
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