New Data Science Degree Prepares You for a Booming Job Market

Data scientists study everything—from which rollercoaster ride has the greatest fun factor, to why the Patagonia clothing company created fabrics that reduce the ecological footprint to why facial recognition software is unethical.

Data science combines the tools and techniques for acquiring information and preparing it for analysis that can help uncover cause and effect, predict outcomes, and communicate insights to different audiences. The field of data science requires people with creativity, curiosity, training in scientific methods, and journalism/storytelling—in addition to math and statistics. Because data science is one of the 15 fastest growing careers, creating 11.5 million jobs, Montgomery College created a new data science degree curriculum to prepare students for this dynamic—and growing field.

Professor Rachel Saidi, program coordinator, says, “Data science is transdisciplinary, as it crosses all disciplines. It’s useful for everyone because we are all consumers and producers of data. I think everyone should learn a little bit about data science.”

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Data science is now transforming industries such as health care, energy, and transportation. If you are pursuing a degree in liberal arts, business, finance, science, health sciences, social sciences, or education, data science skills will give you an edge over other candidates competing in today’s job market. In addition to pursuing a data science degree at a four-year institution, an emphasis in data science can contribute to or enhance the pursuit of other majors.

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The associate of science in data science will roll out in spring 2023. In addition to this associate’s degree, students will also earn a data science certificate. And next fall, high school students in the Early College program can participate in this data science cohort.

College has articulation agreements with four-year institutions including Coppin State University (A.S. in data science to B.S. in data science) and University of Maryland, College Park (A.A. in general studies-STEM plus data science certificate to B.S. in information systems).

According to Glassdoor, data scientist salaries in Washington, D.C., across all industries are about $122,000 per year. If you are already working, you can add data science skills to your current portfolio and offer employers what they need. Data skills double the job prospects for liberal arts graduates and add a $12,000 premium, on average, to starting salaries, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education.

For more information on this program, visit montgomerycollege.edu/datascience.
Get Ahead of the Class
Early College’s Elementary Education/Special Education Prepares Teachers Faster

"I’ll never forget Miss Jones from Fairland ES," says Jordan Jefferson. "She was the first teacher who looked like me. She was so enthusiastic about her job. And she encouraged all of us to go to college. Even though I was only in third grade, the lessons she instilled in me were so powerful."

Jefferson, a 17-year-old from Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) HS, says Miss Jones’ impression was so profound. It drove her to pursue the Early College program in elementary education/special education. When she graduates in spring 2023, along with a high school diploma, she will earn an associate of arts in teaching. She will transfer to a four-year school to complete her teaching degree.

"Jordan is going to be a great teacher," says Professor Detra Peters, director of elementary and secondary teacher education partnerships at the College. "She’s really got a heart for it—and she already does a lot of work with kids as a counselor at an after school program. She’s exactly the kind of student we want to recruit from MCPS and place in a classroom someday."

Students in the Early College program in elementary education/special education pursue coursework toward teacher certification in Maryland. They fulfill their general education requirements and complete a core of professional education coursework required for the first two years of teacher preparation, which includes participating in fieldwork experiences. "Last year I did fieldwork at Fields Road ES," says Jefferson. "The teacher gave me a lot of responsibility. I did small group work and read to the students. I got to see firsthand the impact teachers have on kids—and it’s really fun."

While she would not describe the workload of student as fun, Jefferson says she rose to the challenge. "I want to be an HBCU [Historically Black College or University], but I understand the College has transfer agreements with Towson University," she says. "The A.A.T. can transfer to any related four-year education program; however, there are specific transfer agreements with elementary education/special education programs at all Maryland public and private universities, including Towson University at the Universities of Shady Grove.

"I'll go to a four-year school. I'll have reaped so many benefits from this program," she says. "I want to be around kids and mentors through the Educators Rising chapter and the CREATE ( Culturally Responsive Educators Aspiring for Teaching Excellence) Program. \In CREATE, students receive one-on-one advising, study sessions, monthly teacher talks, and leadership training."

Jefferson said her involvement in CREATE prompted her to form Sister-Sister, a mentorship club for African American students just entering B-CC. "Growing up in Bethesda, I didn’t see a lot of people who looked like me," she says. "I really want to be a role model and make a difference in another student’s life."

For more information on the Early College program in elementary education/special education, visit montgomerycollege.edu/dep.

Jordan Jefferson, a 17-year-old Early College student in the elementary education/special education cohort, says Miss Jones, her third grade teacher at Fairland ES, had a profound influence on her decision to go in to teaching.

Hé’s Got an X-Ray Vision
At 19 years old, Terrell Wright ‘22 is the youngest registered radiologic (x-ray) technologist in Maryland. Wright (Northwest HS) is an Early College radiologic (x-ray) technology cohort graduate, passed his American Registry of Radiologic Technologists certification on the first try. Now at Towson University studying allied health, Wright wants to go to medical school to become an interventional radiologist. He will start a job in the Diagnostic Radiology Department at Johns Hopkins Hospital in October.

Wright (Northwest HS) Middle College student celebrates their accomplishments.

DID YOU KNOW?
igniTe Hub
This brand new facility at the Rockville Campus provides a physical and virtual space where lifelong learners, faculty, local business owners, and community members can grow their technology and coding skills, learn to create apps, collaborate to solve problems, and create or improve existing products and services.

Made possible through a partnership with Montgomery County government, MC, MCPS, the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC), and Apple, igniTe hub features learning pods, state-of-the-art Apple technology, and instructional classes on technology skills such as app coding and design. The hub space and programming will offer community members with the knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century.

The igniTe Hub is an extension of the Montgomery County Code program, formed in 2019 to offer local middle school students an enriching and educational summer camp experience to learn computer coding.

Diagnostic Radiology Department at Johns Hopkins.
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Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Montgomery College (MC) honored 265 students—the largest class ever—of dual enrollment graduates at a Recognition Ceremony held May 23 at the Universities at Shady Grove.

The students completed both their MCPS high school diploma and an MC associate’s degree in one of four dual enrollment programs: Early College, JumpStart, Middle College, and the New Pathways in Network and Information Technology (P-TECH).

Dr. Genevieve Floyd, supervisor of career and postsecondary partnerships at MCPS, served as mistress of ceremonies for the event, which included remarks from then-Interim (now permanent) School Superintendent Dr. Monica McKnight and Dr. Jermaine Williams, MC president, as well as other MCPS and MC administrators.

Some of the laudable accomplishments of these dual enrollment graduates included 49 MC Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society, (3.5 GPA or higher) inductees, 63 MC Dr. Harry Harbinder Academic Excellence Award winners, (3.5 GPA or higher), and three MC Excellence in Equity Award winners.

Notable individual achievements included Elizaver “Elle” Montgomery, a 16-year-old Walter Johnson HS JumpStart student, recognized as the youngest-ever dual enrollment graduate. She is attending Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Jordan Lee, a P-TECH graduate from Clarksville HS, won the President’s Gold Award for earning 965 student service learning hours. He is a Virginia Tech student. Elizabeth Salguero-Romero (Northwood HS/Middle College) earned 100 college credits—the most ever. She is currently a College Park Scholar at the University of Maryland. And Elia Razo’s (Middle College) 4.88 GPA is the highest ever recorded at MCPS.

We Are Not Scared to
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