

FACULTY NEWSLETTER

Dear faculty of the School of Data Science,

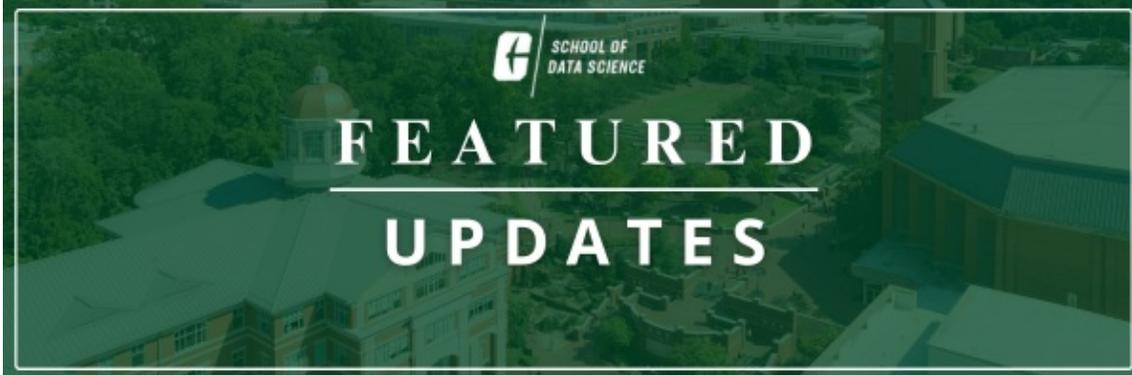
Last Thursday, it was announced that UNC Charlotte has earned an R1 classification, officially joining the nation's top-tier research institutions. This milestone represents a significant achievement for the School of Data Science (SDS), the University, the Charlotte region, and the state of North Carolina. The R1 designation will substantially broaden our reach and elevate our impact, positioning us to attract world-class faculty, staff, and students. This advancement will further strengthen our commitment to academic excellence, foster deeper industry partnerships, and accelerate talent development.

In the past week, the School hosted multiple faculty candidates for the on-campus interviews for our two tenure-track assistant professor positions. I appreciate all the school faculty who participated in the candidates' job talks, met with the candidates individually, and provided valuable feedback and comments to the faculty search committee.

The School receives over a hundred applications, including 76 complete applications, for admission to our new Ph.D. program in Data Science in Fall 2025. We are very excited to see prospective students' great interest and enthusiasm about our Ph.D. program and look forward to welcoming the first cohort of doctoral students this August.

Last but not least, most of the current SDS faculty members have signed the updated MOUs to continue being a part of the school as either a joint or an affiliate faculty. There will also be a dozen new faculty members joining the school this Fall. Thank you for your continuous support of and contributions to the School of Data Science.

Warm regards,
Dongsong Zhang, Ph.D.
Interim Executive Director, School of Data Science



Seeking Your Feedback on SDS PhD Candidates

The SDS Admission Committee has shortlisted 22 top candidates (19 full-time and 3 part-time) from 76 applications for the PhD program this year. If you're interested in mentoring any of the candidates or offering an RA position through your research grant, please feel free to reach out to Dr. Shaoyu Li (shaoyu.li@charlotte.edu) with any questions. Thank you for your input!

Spring 2025 Enrollment Report for SDS Academic Programs

Each semester, SDS compiles an enrollment trends report across undergraduate and graduate programs. This evolving report will expand next year with the addition of the DS PhD and SA BS programs.

Key Takeaways:

- **Undergraduate Growth:** Enrollment in the Bachelor's in Data Science continues to rise, with a 6% increase from Fall 2024 to Spring 2025.
- **Graduate Decline:** Graduate enrollment is down, with DSBA dropping by 6% and HIA by 14% for Spring. This decline is primarily due to fewer international applicants.
- **Domestic Applications:** Domestic graduate applications remain steady, offering a positive trend.

You can download the full report [here](#). Please reach out with any questions.

[Download the Report!](#)

Sports Analytics Website Live! Introducing the B.S. in Sports Analytics — Only at Charlotte!

UNC Charlotte is excited to launch the Bachelor of Science in Sports Analytics, recruiting for Fall 2025. Building on the success of the undergraduate certificate, the program prepares students for careers in the fast-growing field of sports analytics, offering skills in predictive analysis, data visualization, and sports applications. Students gain hands-on experience through collaborations with Charlotte's Division I Athletics and professional sports teams, including the Carolina Panthers, Charlotte Hornets, and Charlotte FC. This unique program is a collaboration between the

School of Data Science (SDS) and the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS), focusing on human performance, athletic training, and kinesiology.

- **Bachelors of Science in Sports Analytics**- The B.S. includes coursework in data science, machine learning, and human performance, requiring 120 credit hours with no additional prerequisites.
- **Undergraduate Certificate in Sports Analytics**- The 12-credit certificate provides foundational skills in statistics, programming, and human performance.

For more information, visit sportsanalytics@charlotte.edu.

Visit the Website!

WiDS Charlotte 2025 – March 13 at UNC Charlotte Marriott | Free for Students!



Join us on March 13th for WiDS Charlotte 2025, hosted by UNC Charlotte's School of Data Science. This free, day-long event offers workshops, networking, and mentorship opportunities for both current and aspiring data scientists. Sessions will cover topics like generative AI, explainable AI, data privacy, and AI in healthcare. Attendees can also connect with employers at the WiDS Career Fair and network at the evening reception. Keynote speakers include Camille Stewart Gloster, a strategist and former executive at Google and the White House, and Sheila Jordan, SVP and Chief Digital Technology Officer at Honeywell. With over 500

attendees expected, the event will feature keynotes, panel discussions, and a fireside chat with female Fortune 500 leaders.

Seats are limited—Please Encourage Your Students to Register Today!

WiDS Information

Fall 2025 Advising for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Registration for Fall 2025 opens on March 31st. Please encourage all students to attend a group advising session or schedule a one-on-one appointment with an advisor to ensure their course plan and degree progress are on track. Students can also visit their program websites for additional course options.

Undergraduate Advising (DTSC and SPOA)

Schedule your advising session now—spots fill quickly! Check your email for scheduling details and visit your program website for course options.

- [Data Science BS Advising](#)
- [Sports Analytics Advising](#)

Graduate Group Advising (HIA and DSBA Programs)

Prepare for Summer and Fall registration by attending the group advising sessions for HIA and DSBA programs. These Zoom sessions will last about 1 hour.

- [Health Informatics and Analytics](#): Wednesday, March 19 at 4:00 pm
- [Data Science and Business Analytics](#): Thursday, March 20 at 4:00 pm

Abstract Submissions are Now Open for the NC Public Health Data Summit 2025!

NCPHA invites you to submit an abstract for the **North Carolina Public Health Data Summit 2025**, taking place May 20-22, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Asheville. The summit will bring together public health professionals, data scientists, and community stakeholders to explore how data can improve health outcomes statewide.

Who Should Submit:

Those working with public health data at any level, including public health agencies, academic institutions, healthcare systems, non-profits, and tech sectors

Submission Guidelines:

- Title and abstract (max. 500 words, 12-point font, single-spaced)
- Optional tables, charts, and figures
- **Submissions due by February 21, 2025**
- Please submit abstracts using the link below.

[Submit your Abstract!](#)



□ 2025 SDS Summer Seed Grant Proposals Now Open!

We are excited to announce the continuation of the 2025 Summer Seed Grant Program with increased funding of up to \$20,000 per grant. **The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2025.** This year, we've made some updates to the proposal format. We are requesting a white paper that can serve as a foundation for future submissions to funding agencies or foundations. This change aims to help position your projects for long-term success beyond the initial grant. If you have any questions about the process or the new format, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Please visit the [SDS website](#) or email Jason Windett (jwindett@charlotte.edu) with any questions.

Submission
Form

NIH Data Sharing Index (S-index) Challenge | Letters of Intent Due: March 3, 2025

The National Eye Institute (NEI), in collaboration with multiple NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs), invites participation in the Data Sharing Index (S-index) Challenge. This initiative seeks to create, develop, and validate a quantitative metric to assess and reward effective data-sharing practices. The S-index will evaluate how well researchers share data for future use, considering factors such as adherence to FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) standards, data timeliness, annotation completeness, reuse in other studies, and associated publications or patents. This metric aims to recognize and incentivize data-sharing efforts by individuals and teams. *From [South Big Data Hub](#)*



Resource for Students Considering a PHD: Learn more about UR2PhD!



UR2PhD (pronounced "you are to PhD") is working to boost the number of women and gender-marginalized students in computer science, particularly those who identify as Black, Latinx, and

Native/Indigenous. We're building capacity by connecting undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty mentors, universities, colleges, and non-profits. The UR2PhD program focuses on increasing both the quantity and quality of mentored research experiences for undergraduates, fostering and maintaining their interest in pursuing a PhD.

Learn More:

- [Undergraduates](#)
- [Graduate Students](#)
- [Faculty Mentors](#)

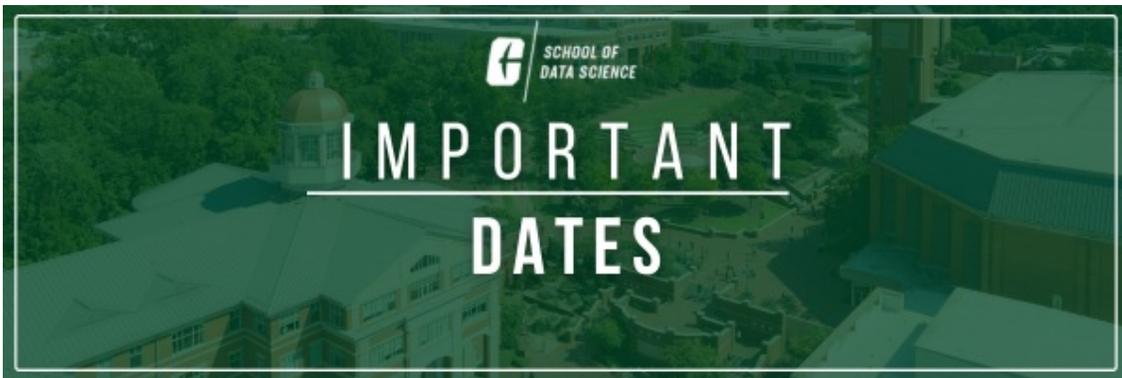
Grant Approval– Dr. Yan's Research "Roles and Regulations of APE1 in ATR signaling"

SDS Faculty Dr. Shan Yan's NOA for his research project titled "Roles and regulations of APE1 in ATR signaling" is now complete.

Project Details

- **Project title:** Roles and regulations of APE1 in ATR signaling

- Funding source: National Cancer Institute
- Year: 3/01/2025-2/28/2030
- Total budget amount: \$342,569



Find the full [SDS Calendar of Events](#) on the program website.

- **March 3** Fall 2025 Schedule of Classes available on the web
- **March 3** Student registration appointment times available on the web
- **March 3-8** Student Spring Recess – No Classes
- **March 13** [2025 WIDS Conference- Register Today!](#)



[Triangle Symposium on Statistics and Data Science \(TSSDS\): May 12–13, 2025, North Carolina State University](#)

The inaugural Triangle Symposium on Statistics and Data Science (TSSDS) will take place on May 12-13, 2025, at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC. This event will showcase the work of local faculty, students, and researchers while featuring top experts from across the country and beyond. The program includes two plenary talks, four invited sessions, two rapid talk sessions, and a poster session. Those interested in participating can fill out the Google form on the [conference website](#). Travel support is available for graduate students, postdocs, and early-career researchers presenting posters.

See the details here!

[AMIA 2025 Informatics Summit:](#)

March 10 – 13, 2025, Pittsburgh, PA

The AMIA Informatics Summit is the leading conference for professionals in data-driven informatics. It offers a comprehensive program covering translational bioinformatics, precision medicine, clinical research informatics, data science, and artificial intelligence (AI). Attendees will hear from leaders in the field, network with peers, and earn credits. Early bird registration is now open, offering discounted rates for those who register early.

[More Information](#)

Faculty & Staff NEWS

Analytics Frontiers Conference: April 3

The [AFC](#) will be held at the Hilton in Uptown Charlotte this year. AFC is the largest data science conference in the region, attracting over 500 thought leaders, scientists, and business executives from various industries and academia! It features an agenda packed with two keynote speakers, two main stage panels, and several breakout sessions scheduled around a catered breakfast, lunch, and an evening networking reception.



Early Bird registration for the general public opened on January 3rd, so please spread the word within your networks! There is a reduced rate for SDS faculty - only \$49. This price will be in effect leading up to the conference.

[Secure your spot today!](#)

SDS Faculty Polos – Request yours Today!

The School of Data Science has experienced significant growth over the past year, welcoming several new faculty members. When we first launched three years ago, we provided polo shirts to our joint, affiliate, and adjunct faculty. If you have not already received a polo in the first round, this is your chance to add to your wardrobe! Click the link below to fill out the form, and we'll hand-deliver your SDS polo before the end of the month.

Student Resources

AND OPPORTUNITIES

Join Us for SDS Professional Seminars – Connect with Industry Leaders!

SDS Professional Seminars are held every Monday from 4:00 to 5:00 PM at the Dubois Center, offering valuable insights from top employers in finance, manufacturing, retail, and healthcare. These seminars provide a unique opportunity to connect with industry leaders, explore career opportunities, and tackle real-world data challenges. *These seminars are open to the campus- graduate and undergraduate students.* We invite you to join us for engaging discussions on a variety of topics! View the full spring schedule and register [here](#). We hope to see you there!



- **Monday, February 24th @4:00 pm- Navigating Human Behavior in Data Science. Join Dr. Karen Hegarty, Head of AI and Innovation-VP of Cognitive Computing @Novant Health.** This seminar will explore the challenges of implementing data science solutions at scale in healthcare, emphasizing the importance of human behavior alongside technical aspects. It will explore how to ensure adoption, mitigate risks, address unintended consequences, and integrate human-centered design and AI trust and safety to create effective, sustainable solutions. **Register Today!**
- **Monday, March 10th @4:00 pm- Build YOUR Brand. Join Preeti Badri, Global Head of Enterprise Corporate Solutions @Archer Daniels Midland (ADM).** This session focuses on equipping individuals with the tools and strategies to create a strong personal and professional brand. It covers the 4 C's of branding—Clarity, Consistency, Creativity, and Connection—highlighting how to define and communicate your unique value. **Sign up Today!**

Schedule &
Registration

The Informatics Research Seminar Series
Virtual Sessions | Wednesday @ 4:00 PM

[Check the schedule!](#)

- **Wednesday, February 19th @ 4:00 pm-** Join Dr. Byron Jaeger from Wake Forest University- *Oblique Random Forests: Making Leo Breiman's Masterpiece Accessible and Interpretable*

Event Schedule

[WiDS Datathon 2025 – Encourage Students to Join Today!](#)

Students can sharpen their data science skills while tackling a critical social impact challenge. This year, they will use fMRI data to build a model predicting both an individual's sex and their ADHD diagnosis. The Datathon is organized in collaboration with the Ann S. Bowers Women's Brain Health Initiative, Cornell University, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. The Entry and Team Merger Deadline is April 27.

More Information



Just Released: NC TECH's 2025 State of the Tech Industry

North Carolina's economy has shown strong performance over the last decade, with employment growth outpacing the national average, particularly in high-wage sectors like management, finance, and tech. However, sectors like production, office administration, personal care, and farming have seen job losses. A significant driver of this growth has been population increase, particularly among individuals aged 20-39, boosting the state's workforce. Additionally, in-migration, especially from states like New York and California, has brought both a younger workforce and wealth to North Carolina, further stimulating economic activity.



Read the full report!

Data Science and Health Analytics In The NEWS

The Great US Government Data Purge of 2025

In 2025, the Trump Administration initiated massive data removals from US government websites, prompting the scientific community to act quickly. Key datasets like CDC data were backed up to the Internet Archive, and tools like GovWayback were created to access the data via modified URLs. IPUMS data was preserved independently, and 311,000 data.gov sources were published by Harvard Law School. While many resources have been restored, issues like broken links and incomplete data remain. A federal judge ordered the FDA, HHS, and CDC to restore their data, but researchers still face challenges in verifying its completeness.



Read the full article!

Other Newsletters and Resources

Suggestions are always welcome- please email lindsay.lennon@charlotte.edu with any questions or recommendations.



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