Approved by the Board of Trustees

July 21, 2022

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Board Meeting

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# ESTABLISH THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS + DATA SCIENCE, GIES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Bachelor of Science in Business + Data Science, Gies College

of Business

**Funding:** No increase in faculty within Gies is required, as the college currently has the capacity to accommodate the expected minor increases in enrollments resulting from this program. Students will utilize existing Gies College of Business career and advising services. No additional financial resources are needed.

The Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois System with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the Gies College of Business to establish the Bachelor of Science in Business + Data Science (B.S. in Business + DS).

The proposal to establish the B.S. in Business + DS is part of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign’s “X + DS Degree” initiative. The initiative’s first programs (Bachelor of Science degrees in Accountancy + Data Science, Astronomy + Data Science, Finance + Data Science, and Information Science + Data Science) were approved by the Board of Trustees on July 22, 2021.

In 2017, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, The Grainger College of Engineering, School of Information Sciences, and Gies College of Business formed a collaborative task force to explore opportunities for an undergraduate data science education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In 2019, based on recommendations from this task force, the deans of these four academic units agreed to support a shared framework for these “X + DS” programs. The framework includes a set of core competencies with a reference standard set of courses and activities that fulfill the data science portion of these programs. A Data Science Education Committee was formed to review how proposed majors provide the expected competencies and features of “X + DS” programs in a manner that is appropriate for their students. This committee will also keep track of offerings related to data science to facilitate collaboration and reduce redundancy, connect undergraduate data science education resources across the university, advise colleges on matters related to undergraduate data science education, and review “X + DS” degree proposals to provide comment on how they meet expectations for and engage collaboratively and strategically with the university’s resources in data science education.

Specific to the Business + DS program, businesses are being transformed by technology and data. Business professionals must increasingly have a native familiarity with data, a natural facility for consuming and analyzing data, and a ready ability to communicate the lessons from that analysis. Data science is an increasingly important part of scholarship across multiple fields of inquiry, with new tools enabling new modes of discovery in many disciplines. Demand for jobs that rely on data analytics is growing rapidly in all economic sectors. Simultaneously, the advent of automated tools to suggest conclusions from massive data sets has serious social and ethical implications. The proposed program will prepare students for engagement in contemporary business analytics using the tools of data science. Graduates will be prepared to collaborate, communicate, and work effectively and ethically in a data-rich and interdisciplinary work environment.

Based on enrollment projections, the courses required for the Business + DS program have capacity or can be expanded through the use of differential tuition. No new or additional facilities, significant improvements to existing facilities, or additional resources from the University Library are needed.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Interim Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University of Illinois System recommends approval. This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.