



Clinical Data Science

MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

Student Handbook



July 1, 2026

Dear Students:

Welcome to the world's first Clinical Data Science graduate program!

We are thrilled to have you join us in this groundbreaking journey. The University of Cincinnati's Master of Science degree program in Clinical Data Science is the first of its kind across the globe. As pioneers in this innovative program, you will not only have an opportunity to learn from leaders in the field and contribute to the direction of biomedical science's newest specialty but you will also have the opportunity to have an impact on healthcare today.

Our program brings together students, faculty, and staff who are committed to training top-notch scientists who can lead the way in biomedical research. Whether you are coming to us from academic, industry, or government research settings, we are dedicated to mentoring and guiding you through your academic journey. We look forward to facilitating your success.

Located within the Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in the University of Cincinnati's College of Medicine, our Clinical Data Science program is designed to challenge and inspire you. Our curriculum is meticulously crafted to ensure that our students gain a deep understanding of the new and evolving field of clinical data science by grounding your education in the tenets of biostatistics, biomedical informatics, biomedical science, and regulatory science.

We look forward to seeing the remarkable contributions you will make to the field and the positive impact you will have on society.

Sincerely,



Richard F. Ittenbach, PhD, AdvDSP
Director, Clinical Data Science Program
Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
Department of Pediatrics, Cincinnati Children's
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

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Introduction

Program Overview

The Master of Science (MS) in Clinical Data Science (CDS) degree is designed to be a rigorous, fast-paced program of study, using a combination of face-to-face and online coursework. Fulltime students should be able to complete the coursework and practicum within 12 months. Part-time students should be able to complete the coursework and practicum within 24 months. The minimum number of credit hours for successful completion of the degree is 33. Some students will elect to take additional coursework.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of our Master of Science program, students will be able to:

Scientific Understanding	Articulate in oral and written forms, the sequence of steps in a clinical research study as they relate to the scientific method, from initial study design and setup through database lock and closeout.
Knowledge and Management of Clinical Research Data	Design, monitor, and manage the flow of data through the lifecycle of a clinical research study using multiple data types.
Regulatory Science	Demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of key regulatory guidelines needed to ensure that clinical research complies with all local and federal policies, laws, and regulations.
Leadership	Demonstrate essential leadership skills needed for practice as a clinical data scientist in a team science setting.
Professional Communication	Present project work, oral as well as written, in a professional and scientifically rigorous manner.

Key People

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Requirements of the Program

Courses and Credits

The program consists of the following courses:

Four core courses that define the fundamental knowledge base for students and the professional specialty (required):

- CDS 6010: Clinical Data Science I: Overview
- CDS 6020: Clinical Data Science II: Roles & Responsibilities
- CDS 6030: Clinical Data Science III: Design & Implementation
- CDS 6050: Practicum in Clinical Data Science

Five 3-credit hour research courses that serve as the foundation for the specialty area (required):

- CDS 7000: Biostatistics in Clinical Data Science
- BMIN/CS 7053: Introduction to Medical Informatics
- CDS 7020: Introduction to Biomedical Science
- BE 7036/PHDD 8010: Clinical Research Regulatory Overview or Global Regulatory and Development Strategies of Drugs and Medical Devices
- PHIL 6050: Clinical Research Ethics

One elective must be taken from the following list:

- CS 6101: Introduction to Applied Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- CDS 6040 Data Engineering
- BE 7033: Project Management and Evaluation
- BE 8093: Introduction to Database Systems and Applications
- BE 7066: Principles of Clinical Trials
- BMIN 7001: Scientific Communication

A minimum of 33 credit hours is required to graduate.

Class Assignments, Papers, and Presentations

The CDS program is housed in the University of Cincinnati's College of Medicine, which follows the American Medical Association (AMA) 11 referencing style. It is expected that all assignments, papers, and presentations will be formatted in AMA 11 style.

Admissions Criteria

Admission review will follow a three-stage process. The first stage will screen all applications for meeting one of the following minimum requirements:

- Bachelor's or higher degree in a CDS relevant field and minimum GPA of 3.0
- At least one year of professional work experience in CDS

All students will be asked to submit a personal statement regarding why they would like to pursue a master's degree in Clinical Data Science, transcripts of their previous academic work, a resume/curriculum

vitae outlining their previous work history, and two signed letters of recommendation from prior supervisors, instructors, or colleagues.

All applicants will be scored by the admissions committee on their academic proficiency, CDS work experience in a relevant field, their commitment to the field of CDS, and professional skill set (communication, organization, ability to work as a team member). Candidates will be invited to participate in a follow-up interview, either in-person or virtual, depending upon conditions.

Practicum in Clinical Data Science

General Information

The overarching goal of the Clinical Data Science program is to prepare scientists who are equipped to enter the workforce and make an immediate contribution to clinical research. As such, all CDS students are required to enroll in a 6 credit-hour, field-based practicum experience in the last semester of their program. The practicum is designed to have clinical data science students apply their classroom knowledge to real-world problems encountered in the workplace, effectively combining theory and practice.

The practicum is designed to be a full-time, 8-week placement in an industry-leading academic, governmental, industry, or clinical research organization. Depending upon the size and scope of the organization, some students may also be placed in a qualifying nonprofit organization. All students on practicum will have two supervisors, a faculty instructor who is responsible for the class and the student's progress in the class, and a field supervisor who is responsible for the student's work on-site during the practicum. The two supervisors will work together to provide the best experience possible for each student. During the practicum experience students will participate in four bi-weekly virtual meetings with the faculty instructor too discuss their practicum experience in relation to the classroom curriculum.

The practicum is designed to be a for-credit, educational experience with no financial compensation. This does not preclude any financial remuneration from the host organization; however, financial compensation will not be provided by the program. For students who cannot take on the responsibility of a full-time practicum away from Cincinnati, a limited number of local practica will be available. For those students who cannot enroll in a full-time, 8-week practicum experience, an extended part-time option may be considered. An inability to engage a full-time practicum experience at an industry-leading site is incompatible with successful completion of the program.

Capstone Paper

A key component of the practicum is the completion of a Capstone Paper. The Capstone Paper is intended to be a scholarly contribution to the field of clinical data science in which the student works under the direction of the faculty instructor on an applied problem of scholarly interest. The paper should be approximately 10 to 12 pages in length, be research based, and provide insight into a problem faced by professionals in the field today. Before a Capstone Paper can be accepted in fulfillment of the degree, it must be

presented in a formal capacity within one's practicum or professional communities.

A planning meeting will be scheduled each fall, by the Associate Director for Practicum and External Partnershipsto orient students to the practicum experience and outline steps needed for successful completion of the experience. Some students may elect to begin their Capstone Paper prior to going on practicum. Students interested in learning more about the structure, format, criteria for evaluation, and core competencies of the practicum course may wish to consult the practicum guidelines.

Course Load and Time Commitments

In an effort to accommodate working professionals from various backgrounds, we offer students two different enrollment options, either an intensive, full-time, 12-month program or a more extended, part-time, 24-month program.

In the former, students begin with a traditional 12-hour course load in the fall, move to a 15-hour course load in the spring, and then finish with a 6-hour summer internship in the summer. In the latter, part-time students will take 6-hours of courses each term for two full years, finishing with the 6-hour internship in the summer of the second year. In both cases, students begin with the 6010 (Introduction to Clinical Data Science) course and biostatistics and biomedical informatics courses, then move through the other core courses while taking research courses as well as an elective.

Students may begin in one sequence (full-time, part-time) and switch to the other sequence as their schedules allow. Because this is a small program, core courses will only be offered once or twice a year, but not in all three terms. Due to the nature and complexity of our courses, students who elect the part-time program, and are working full-time, will not be permitted to take more than two courses each semester. Students working part-time and enrolled in the CDS program part-time will work with an advisor to find the best set of classes each term to fit their schedule. Students should expect to devote 10 to 12 hours per week of study time for each 3 credit-hour course in which they are enrolled. Depending upon prior experience with the material and prior experience with programming languages such as SQL, R, SAS, and Python, time devoted to a given course may be more or less. Listed on the next page is an example sequence of courses taken in both sequences.

Program Administration

The Clinical Data Science program is administered by a Program Director, Associate Director, and an Associate Director for Admissions, all of whom are supported by a Program Management Specialist.

While it is the responsibility of the Clinical Data Science Program Director to assure that all program-related activities are carried out in accordance with College of Medicine and Graduate College policies, the Clinical Data Science faculty and staff work together to make certain the needs of the program and its students are fully met. The program's Associate Director is appointed on a biennial basis to partner with the Director in the oversight of day-to-day operations of the program while the program's Associate Director for Admissions

oversees all admissions-related activities, including student interviews and evaluations, making recommendations to the admissions committee regarding each class of incoming students. Clinical Data Science also has a Program Management Specialist who serves

as the primary point of contact for clerical support, budgetary monitoring, student progress and communication, and faculty guidance on university related activities and deadlines.

Sequencing of Courses										
Clinical Data Science Program		12m Program			24m Program					
Course Title	Course Number	Fall	Spring	Sum	Fall 1	Spr 1	Sum 1	Fall 2	Spr 2	Sum 2
Core Courses										
Clinical Data Science I: Overview ^a	CDS 6010	☑			☑					
Clinical Data Science II: Roles & Responsibilities ^a	CDS 6020	☑					☑			
Clinical Data Science III: Design & Implementation ^a	CDS 6030		☑						☑	
Practicum in Clinical Data Science ^b	CDS 6050			☑						☑
Research Courses										
Biostatistics in Clinical Data Science ^a	CDS 7000	☑			☑					
Introduction to Medical Informatics ^a	CS, BMIN 7053	☑						☑		
Introduction to Biomedical Science ^a	CDS 7020		☑			☑				
Clinical Research Regulatory Overview ^c	BE 7036		☑			☑				
or Global Regulatory and Development Strategies of Drugs and Medical Devices ^c	PHDD 8010	☑			☑			☑		
Clinical Research Ethics ^a	PHIL 6050		☑				☑		☑	
Elective Course(s)										
Total Credit Hours		12	15	6	6	6	6	3	6	6
Electives (Choose 1 of the following)										
Introduction to Applied Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Tools ^c	CS 6101	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Data Engineering ^b	CDS 6040			◆			◆			◆
Project Management and Evaluation ^c	BE 7033		◆			◆			◆	
Introduction to Database Systems and Applications ^a	PH 8093		◆			◆		◆		
Principles of Clinical Trials ^c	BE 7066	◆			◆			◆		
Scientific Communication ^a	BMIN 7001		◆			◆			◆	
Note: ^a on ground, in person; ^b online synchronous; ^c online asynchronous; & recommended placement in the program; ◆ when electives are offered.										

Academic calendar 2026–2027

Fall 2026

Classes begin: Monday, August 24

Labor Day holiday: Monday, September 7

Reading days: Monday, October 12 & Tuesday, November 3

Veterans Day: Wednesday, November 11

Thanksgiving holiday break: Thursday, November 26–Sunday November 29

Classes end: Saturday, December 5

Final examinations: Sunday December 6–Saturday December 12

Spring 2027

Classes begin: Monday, January 11

Martin Luther King Jr. holiday: Monday, January 18

Spring Break: Monday, March 15–Sunday, March 21

Classes end: Friday, April 23

Final examinations: Saturday, April 24–Thursday, April 29

Summer 2027

Classes begin: Monday, May 10

Memorial Day holiday: Monday, May 31

Juneteenth holiday: Friday, June 18

4th of July holiday: Monday, July 5

Classes end: Saturday, August 7

Final examinations: during last scheduled class. [Please see Academic Planning Calendar — Calendars | University of Cincinnati for the most up-to-date information on the academic calendar.](#)

Academic Advising

Academic Misconduct

Students in the Clinical Data Science program will be held to the highest code of academic conduct. Academic misconduct or dishonesty is defined in the University of Cincinnati Student Code of Conduct and includes, but is not limited to, acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and misappropriation of credit. The Student Code of Conduct defines behavior expected of all University of Cincinnati students. It is each student's responsibility to know and comply with the University's Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary procedures are explained in a step-by-step manner, along with the procedures for appeal of decisions.

Curriculum Planning/Individual Development Plan

The purpose of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) is to "explore career possibilities and set goals to follow the career path that fits you best" as defined by Science Careers' myIDP website. The Graduate College's IDP form has been modified to reflect the CDS program. Each student should review their IDP with their advisor at least once a year.

Grades

Students are required to achieve a B minus (B-) grade or better in all program-required/core courses (CDS 6010, CDS 6020, CDS 6030, CDS 6050, CDS 7000, CDS 7020). If a student obtains a C+ grade or lower in any required class, they will be required to re-take the course under department rules. There is no grade replacement at the Graduate level at the University of Cincinnati, so both grades will appear on the transcript and count toward the GPA.

If a student receives a "C" level grade in an elective course, they will not be required to re-take it unless otherwise stated on the course syllabus.

Course Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class sessions, prepared and on time, remain for the entire class period, free of electronic (phone/internet) distractions, and contribute thoughtfully to class discussions, as appropriate. While missing a class is often inevitable, students are responsible for notifying the instructor prior to missing class and obtaining class notes on their own. This includes times when students must miss class for university related functions. Students missing class for religious reasons must adhere to the University's Student Religious Accommodations Policy 1.3.7, which requires the student to notify the course instructor of forthcoming absences within the first two weeks of class. Should exam, class period, or project deadlines be modified while the student is away, the student will be responsible for meeting the modified deadlines.

Credit Hours and Transfer Credit

To graduate with a Master of Science in Clinical Data Science, students must complete a minimum of 33 graduate credit hours. Credits toward a degree higher than the one the student is completing at UC

cannot be transferred. This means that credits taken toward a doctoral degree at UC cannot be applied toward the CDS program.

Up to 1/3 of the credits of a graduate program outside of UC can be applied toward the CDS degree through advanced standing (i.e., 11 credits from another institution may be applied toward the CDS program). Credits from a different UC graduate program may be eligible to fulfill CDS requirements. Please refer to the [UC Graduate Handbook](#) for more details.

Withdrawal and Dismissal

Any student who wishes to withdraw from the program for personal, professional, or financial reasons will need to contact the program chair in writing as soon as the decision is made to withdraw. It is recommended that the student contact the Student Financial Aid office for advice if one needs to withdraw in the middle of the term, as financial aid could be impacted.

Program administrators have the right to dismiss a student from the program and must copy the Graduate Program Manager on the notification to the student. Reasons for dismissal include but are not limited to academic misconduct and unprofessional behavior.

Maintaining Active Student Status, Reinstatement, and Readmission

To maintain active status as a graduate student and thus be eligible for a graduate degree, students must register for at least 1 credit each academic year. In addition, students are required to register for at least 1 credit during each semester that they wish to use University resources (excluding summer semester). If a student does not maintain active status, they will have to follow the University's [reinstatement](#) process within three years or apply for readmission to their program thereafter.

To request reinstatement, program administrators must petition the Graduate College on behalf of the student. Prior to the program petitioning the Graduate College, the student must communicate with the Clinical Data Science program director to review the degree progress to date and form a plan for degree completion. The program director will initiate the reinstatement process in Gradtracker. Graduate College administrators will review the recommendation and make the final decision.

Graduate students who have been inactive for three or more academic years are not eligible for reinstatement and must apply for readmission to the university. Readmission does not change the student's original entry date. Time to degree will be calculated from the student's first entry date. The program may petition the Graduate College on behalf of the student for readmission. If the student has exceeded time to degree limits, the program should also petition for an extension with the readmission to specify the term in which the student will graduate. Prior to the program administrator petitioning for readmission, the student must communicate with the Clinical Data Science program director to review the degree progress to date and form a written plan for completing the remaining degree requirements and removing any standing impediments to graduation, including any I/F, F, and NG grades. This plan should include a timeline that describes the student's progress toward degree completion to date.



International Student Admission

University of Cincinnati student services, which supports the needs of [international students](#), is located at Suite 7148, One Edwards Center (1-513-556-4278). Information about admission to the University of Cincinnati for international students is available on their [website](#).

In instances where an international student holds a degree for which the U.S. equivalent is not known, or if it is determined by the program or the Graduate College that the applicant does not have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree, the program must submit a petition for admission without the bachelor's degree, with supporting documentation and rationale, to the Associate Dean of the Graduate College.

Duration and Time Limits

Students pursuing a master's degree at the University of Cincinnati must complete all programmatic requirements within 5 years of the date of matriculation for the degree program. Under extenuating circumstances, students may petition the Associate Dean of the Graduate College, through their program, for an extension of the time limit. Petitions must be submitted on the Reinstatement/Extension form available on the Canvas Student Community Page. Students who have not been enrolled in classes for more than three years are not eligible for reinstatement and must apply for [readmission](#).

Financial Support

The University offers need based financial support on federal and state levels. More information about financial aid can be found on the University of Cincinnati [graduate school aid web page](#). Although this program does not yet have any specific fellowships or scholarships, students may qualify for university-wide fellowships or scholarships. More information for interested students will be in the [Graduate College Handbook](#). Students may also reach out to the Graduate College to see if they qualify for any merit-based scholarships.



Helpful Sources of Information

How to Register for Classes

[Catalyst](#) is where you can register for classes as well as pay your bill, check your grades, request a transcript, and more.

1. Registration information can be found on the [Office of the Registrar](#) page. Select the academic year, then the Dates and Deadlines Calendar. Log into [Catalyst](#).
2. Select the My Academics tile.
3. Open the Classes and Schedule drop-down menu.
4. Select Add/Drop/Edit Classes.
5. Follow the instructions on the screen to search and register for the class(es) you need.
6. Make sure you make it all the way to the end and receive the green check mark that indicates that you are registered.
7. Verify that the class was added by [checking your schedule](#).

Canvas Course Management

All online courses are accessed through the [Canvas](#) course management system. In-person courses will also have a Canvas course that houses various documents such as course syllabi and rubrics.

Immunization Requirements

As a student in the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, all students in the Clinical Data Science program will be required to have up-to-date immunizations consistent with the health professions student requirements. These records will be made available to both the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center for review. Failure to fulfill this requirement will prevent a student from receiving a University of Cincinnati or Cincinnati Children's Hospital badge and/or termination from the program. Additional information on the University of Cincinnati's immunization requirements and guidelines may be found using the following link. [Immunization Requirements | University Health Services](#)

Libraries

University of Cincinnati Libraries offer access to an outstanding research library collection of 2.8 million volumes and a wide range of services to help students with their research needs. Students have access to the University of Cincinnati Libraries' catalog including resources and services through [University Libraries or the Health Sciences Library](#). The libraries' web sites serve as gateways to OhioLINK, which includes a statewide library catalog of nearly 50 million books and materials from 89 Ohio colleges and universities.

Each University of Cincinnati library is home to knowledgeable staff eager to assist students, faculty, and staff with their research and service needs. Among the most important services provided by our staff are instruction in library research, and assistance with the appropriate use of electronic resources.

The Health Sciences Library is located on the E level of the Medical Sciences Building/CARE building.

Circulation Desk:	513-558-0127
Reference:	513-558-5628
Technology Support:	513-558-4173

Students may log in to Cincinnati Children's VPN to access Pratt Library resources. The Pratt Library Staff are available via email (prattlibrary@cchmc.org), phone (513-636-4320), and by appointment (Monday through Friday, 9 am–5 pm). The Burnet Campus library is on Floor 2, Suite 435 of the Clinical Sciences Pavilion.

Technology Resources

Students may purchase hardware and software at discounted prices. The [UC Bookstores](#) offer hardware including laptops and tablets. [The UC Bookstores Technology Center](#) provides non-warranty Apple and PC repairs for a small fee. Adobe and statistical software such as SAS and SPSS may be purchased through [GetIT](#).

Certain licensed software is available in the Langsam Computer Lab and the [MyDesk Student Desktop \(Virtual\)](#). Check the [DTS Computer Labs](#) page to view a list of currently available products. For complimentary support installing and/or removing software, malware/virus removal, or with internet connection, submit a request to [Digital Technology Solutions](#). Please visit [Software & Technology Tools](#) for the most up-to-date information on available resources.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming an important and essential tool in graduate education. The Clinical Data Science program embraces the use of AI within the scope of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine's standards for responsible use. Whether one uses AI as a part of teaching, learning, research, or professional practice, all students are expected to use AI safely, responsibly, and in accordance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Students are required to disclose its use and contributions to the academic work. Please see the University of Cincinnati's AI Guidelines and Policies for more detailed information. [Guidelines & Policies — AI | University of Cincinnati](#)

University Bookstores

The University of Cincinnati Bookstore is your source for your textbook, apparel, and supply needs. Contact bookstore staff at 513-556-1700 or visit the [Bookstore website](#). University of Cincinnati Bookstore

2766 UC Main Street
Tangeman University Center Room #365
Cincinnati, OH 45221



University Health Insurance

The mission of University Health Services is to provide superb health care and health education in a compassionate and caring environment, to assist the University in providing a safe environment for students and employees, and to provide wellness in a Just Community.

All students are required to be covered by health insurance, either by the Student Insurance Program or another policy, which must be at least as comprehensive as the University policy. Graduate students enrolled in less than six (6) credit hours may purchase coverage with: 1) an Insurance Action Form; 2) written certification of matriculation from your academic department; and 3) payment.

Contact the UC Student Health Insurance office by phone at 513-558-7333 or visit the [UC Student Health Insurance website](#) for updated health care information.

Mental Health Services

The University Health Services Mental Health Clinic provides professional, confidential mental health services for UC students with Student Health Insurance. Students can find a list of services provided on the University Health Services Mental Health website but can also call 513-556-2564. Another resource for all students is University of Cincinnati Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)). Call 513-556-0648 during business hours to schedule a free consultation or appointment, or for crisis support or after-hours care.

Parking & Transportation

[UC Student parking](#) permits must be purchased at the beginning of each semester. You may purchase/register online and the cost will be added to your student bill. Alternatively, you have the option to pay the [daily rate in campus garages](#). Please [click here](#) for parking maps.

If you arrive on campus and the sign for your permitted garage says FULL, space is still available for permit holders. The FULL sign is directed towards visitors to campus.

In-person classes will be located at 3080 Exploration Avenue, unless otherwise stated. Students have access to Cincinnati Children's shuttles and UC shuttles (must present the appropriate badge to ride). Check UC's Live Shuttle Tracker.

Campus Security

On the Cincinnati Children's campus, report suspicious activity to Protective Services at 513-636-4204. You may also contact them to request an escort to your car if parked on Cincinnati Children's campus.

On UC's campus, the non-emergency number is 513-556-1111 or 513-558-1111. The Bearcat Guardian app is available for free to stay connected with UC Police ([click here for more details](#)). In an emergency, students should dial 911.