



EASTERN UNIVERSITY

DATA PULSE

SPRING 2 2026

FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN

There's something genuinely strange about graduating right now. You've earned every reason to celebrate. And yet the world you're stepping into is more unsettled than perhaps any in recent memory.

For those of you crossing the finish line this term, congratulations! Finishing a graduate program while working, managing life, and navigating a field that was changing underneath your feet the entire time is no small thing. You should be proud. But I want to address this to our whole community, graduates and continuing students alike, because this moment is instructive for all of us.

The honest truth is that no one can tell you with confidence what the job market looks like in two or three years. AI is reshaping roles faster than organizations can keep up with, and even the experts disagree on what will stabilize and what won't. That uncertainty is real, and we can't pretend otherwise.

What I can tell you is this: the credential on your wall matters far less than what you had to become to earn it. Sure, you've learned skills, like how to wrangle data, create ML pipelines, and create dashboards. But you've also learned the importance of asking better questions, being intellectually curious, and how to adapt when the ground shifts. These are not skills AI replaces. That is, in fact, exactly what this moment demands.

The degree is proof you can do hard things you didn't know how to do when you started. In an uncertain market, that might be the most valuable thing you own. So celebrate (and I hope to celebrate with you in-person at commencement)! And then stay curious. The world needs people who know how to learn, not just people who know things. No matter your past, the future is looking for people like you. As always, thanks for being the most important part of our School.



**DR. GREG LONGO, ASSISTANT DEAN,
THE SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCES**

PRAYER COMMUNITY

The Eastern University community is so grateful to be able to pray for you. These prayers and praises are seen and prayed over by the Office of Faith and Practice, the President's Office, and Unceasing Prayer Ministry. Full names and contact information will not be shared when requests are distributed to those offices for prayer.

Use [*this link*](#) to submit prayer requests and praises.

A link to attend [Morning Prayer \(7:30-7:45am EST\)](#) is here. You can also email morningprayer@eastern.edu with any questions.

VICKY TAM WEBINAR



In case you missed it:

The Webinar titled “The Geography of Health: Applied Spatial Analytics in Biomedical Research” [can be viewed here.](#)

Vicky Tam, Principal Data Scientist at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, discussed how she uses geospatial and clinical data to understand how neighborhoods shape health outcomes. She highlighted her work as the head of CHOP's enterprise GIS program and the effects that her research has had on the Philadelphia community.

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Dates

Last Day to Withdraw - April 26th by 5:00pm ET

Last Day - April 26th

First Day of Summer 1 - May 18th

Add the [Student: MSDS/DA Calendar](#) to your Google calendar for all dates reminders.

Registration for Summer 1 and Summer 2 is open! If you have any questions, please contact:

dsadvising@eastern.edu

FROM THE CAREER CENTER

What are your career goals?

The Center for Career Development is here to help! All of our recorded workshops are on our YouTube channel to help support your next career move. Whether you're getting your resume ready, building up experience, or actively interviewing, there is something for everyone.

[Center for Career Development YouTube Channel](#)



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



Manuel Cortez works for the MSDS program as an Academic Quality Specialist. As an MSDS graduate, he uses his knowledge to improve, set up, and build courses for the program. You might also know him as a Tech Support GA, where he supports students as they troubleshoot software issues.

Prior to joining the MSDS program, what was your previous role and how did you land it?

I worked full-time as a healthcare data analyst and research analyst. As a healthcare data analyst, I worked in the quality improvement and patient safety space. This included managing my organization's data, our client's data, and doing analyses. As a research analyst, I conducted research and program evaluations for universities, where I ran statistical analyses and wrote reports on the findings.

What advice would you give to current students or recent graduates looking to break into the field?

Apply your data skills to everything. Data is everywhere, and there are countless projects you can create in your free time. Being able to showcase real-world experience will ultimately lead to jobs. While in the program, I ran a social media account centered around reposting viral videos. I used the skills I learned in this program to gather social media data, analyze it, and run experiments. That project stood out to employers and helped me land my first job while I was still in the program.

What strategies do you recommend for balancing the demands of the MSDS program with personal life?

Everyone comes into this program with different life experiences, but we all made it through undergrad. Lean into what worked for you and keep building on it. If something didn't work for you, consider trying something new. Be realistic and understand it is not a race. Most importantly, use all the resources we give you. If you skip the videos and optional documents, or avoid the discussion boards and GAs, you'll end up spending far more time trying to figure things out alone.

With your background, what are the most important emerging trends or skills in data science that you believe every student should focus on?

Understand concepts and be innovative. With the advent of LLMs, some parts of our jobs have become easier, but our roles are far from obsolete. You may forget programming syntax, but if you understand which tool to use and when, you'll be able to complete tasks effectively and go above and beyond. Engage with assignments in a meaningful way, not just to check a box, but to truly understand the why.

Were there any specific courses or experiences that had a major impact on your professional journey?

DTSC 550, 580, and 650 were integral to both my learning and my job skills. About 85% of my time was spent on data wrangling. Because of that, I leaned heavily on 580 and 650 to clean and transform data. Courses 550 and 650 were important in my research analyst role, since I relied on statistical knowledge to interpret results and write reports.

Contact Us:

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