1. **Am I Eligible To Apply?**
   The purpose of the Data Science application process is to have our faculty determine if you fit the criteria for the program. That determination can only be made if you are applying to the program.

2. **When Should I Apply?**
   Apply as soon as you feel your application is strong enough, or as soon as possible.

3. **When will I hear back from WPI?**
   We do our best to return application decisions within three weeks' time. However, please bear in mind that faculty from all three disciplines of the DS program examine every application, and this takes time.

4. **I'm hoping I can get my application processed faster by sending it to the DS office...**
   Please do not send your resume, or your CV, or any official transcripts to the DS office! We just have to inter-office mail them to the Graduate Admissions Office and this delays processing by several days. You lose.

5. **Are there any Pre-Requisites for the Master’s in Data Science?**
   Yes, and they are:
   a. Earned Bachelor’s Degree
   b. Quantitative or computational background
   c. Programming with data structures
   d. Algorithms for computational skills
   e. Calculus
   f. Linear Algebra
   g. Basic statistics

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**YOU ASKED - WE ANSWERED**

This document is a compilation of Frequently Asked Questions emailed by prospective DS students. If you don't find your question and answer here, please email us at datascience@wpi.edu.
6. **What if I Have Some, But Not All, Of The Pre-Requisites?**

If the rest of your application meets the Data Science criteria, you may be admitted on the condition that you take the needed course or courses before you are admitted to the DS program. You may take the courses at WPI in conjunction with other DS courses, or you may take the courses, get exceptional grades, and then re-apply.

7. **What Other Criteria Does the Data Science Faculty Use When Making Admission Decisions?**

Admission to the Data Science Program is highly competitive and selection is based on:

a. Whether required prerequisites are met
b. Demonstration of high aptitude for quantitative analysis
c. Academic success as evidenced by undergraduate and graduate course work
d. Professional experience that suggests a propensity for teamwork
e. Maturity
d. Self-initiative and leadership potential
g. Career aspirations that align with the Data Science program’s mission
h. Academic performance is important but is not a sufficient condition for enrolment.

8. **What Does The ‘Plan Of Study’ Entail?**

The ‘Plan of Study’ for both the M.S. and the Ph.D., tracks your course work to ensure that all of your core requirements are fulfilled. It ensures that you stay on track to graduate on time with courses that align with your career goals.


9. **What Programming Languages Are Taught?**

The Data Science MS uses many programming languages but R and python are the most common.

10. **What If I’m Accepted But When I Register, A Required Course Is Full?**

If a required class is full, **be sure to put your name on the Waitlist!** This alerts us to the number of students who want or need a particular class, in which case we may open another offering. Also: You must arrive on the first day of class and politely tell the professor that you are a Data Science student, that you need this class, and politely ask to be admitted. Remember to smile.

11. **May I Take Data Science Courses Without Being Officially Enrolled In The Program?**

Certainly, if there’s space in the class.

12. **Who Is My Faculty Advisor And Should I Contact Him/Her Before I Start my first semester?**

You will be assigned a Faculty Advisor in your focus area who you will meet during the Data Science Orientation right before classes begin. It’s not necessary to make contact before classes begin as DS students take most of the same classes during the first year of their master’s program.
13. How Long Is The Masters In Data Science Program?
   This is a two year, or 33 credit program. Some students take longer to complete the program but
   that depends on visa requirements and lifestyle demands.
   https://www.wpi.edu/academics/departments/data-science

14. Can a WPI M.S. Get A Transcript/Diploma Showing a Concentration/Distinction?
   No. Only that is only available is as mentioned below.

15. For A Specialization (E.G. Computer Security), What Is Shown On The Transcript And The
    Diploma?
   Your official diploma will read: “M.S. in Computer Science.” The transcript will show your
   specialization, but not the diploma.

16. Is The Data Science Program A STEM-designated Program?
   Yes, the WPI Data Science Program is STEM certified.
   http://www.wpi.edu/academics/datascience/stem-program.html

17. Please Explain The GQP.
   GQP is an acronym for the Graduate Qualifying Project or the M.S. practicum. M.S. students may
   choose to do either a GQP or a Master’s Thesis during the last semester of the M.S. program.
   https://www.wpi.edu/academics/departments/data-science/graduate-qualifying-project

18. What Is A Cohort-Based Program?
   A learning cohort is a group of students moving through their courses and related learning
   experiences together. Cohort learning prepares students for employers who value teamwork and
   collaboration.

19. How Many Students Do You Accept For Each Cohort?
   The Data Science Program limits each cohort to very strong students. However our cohorts have been growing as the demand for Data Scientists across the globe has increased so dramatically.

20. Will There Be Opportunities For Internships?
   Absolutely! Most, if not all of our DS students work at internships. These include at companies like: Monster.com, ESPN, Kronos, Red Hat, UMass Medical School, Pay Pal, and eBay, Dimensional Insight, iRobot Corporation, Object Edge and so many more. Too many to list here.
   https://www.wpi.edu/student-experience/career-development

21. If A Student Earns A DS Graduate Certificate, Can These Credits Be Applied Toward The DS M.S.?
   A student who is enrolled in the Certificate program must APPLY to the DS MS program and be accepted. Some of the credits earned in the certificate may be transferred over to the MS.
22. **What Is The Data Science Certificate Program?**
The Certificate program is a shortened program for those who are not interested in earning a Master’s Degree in Data Science. [http://wpi.edu/academics/datascience/certificate-program.html](http://wpi.edu/academics/datascience/certificate-program.html)

23. **Can A Student With An M.S. Apply The Same Credits Used For The M.S. Towards A DS Certificate?**
   No. Please see Page 7 of the WPI Graduate Catalogue. [https://web.wpi.edu/academics/catalogs/grad.html](https://web.wpi.edu/academics/catalogs/grad.html)

24. **In Either Case, Would They Then Have BOTH an “M.S. in Computer Science” AND a “Graduate Certificate In Computer Science”?**
   Yes, but only if a student earns a DS Certificate and

25. **Can a WPI M.S. Get A Transcript/Diploma Show**
   No. Only that is only available is as mentioned below.

26. **Do You Offer A PH.D.? In Data Science?**
   Yes, we have one of the first Ph.D. Programs in the [http://www.wpi.edu/academics/datascience/phd-p](http://www.wpi.edu/academics/datascience/phd-p)

27. **Where Do I Find?**
   Data Science web page: [http://www.wpi.edu/academics/datascience/degree-requirements.html](http://www.wpi.edu/academics/datascience/degree-requirements.html)
   Questions regarding being an international student: [http://www.wpi.edu/offices/ih.html](http://www.wpi.edu/offices/ih.html)
   The application process: [http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/application-process.html](http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/application-process.html)
   Applying to WPI: [http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/faqs.html](http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/faqs.html)
   Course catalogue or list of classes I can research? [http://www.wpi.edu/offices/registrar/](http://www.wpi.edu/offices/registrar/)
   DS Program cost? [http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/financing.html](http://www.wpi.edu/admissions/graduate/financing.html)