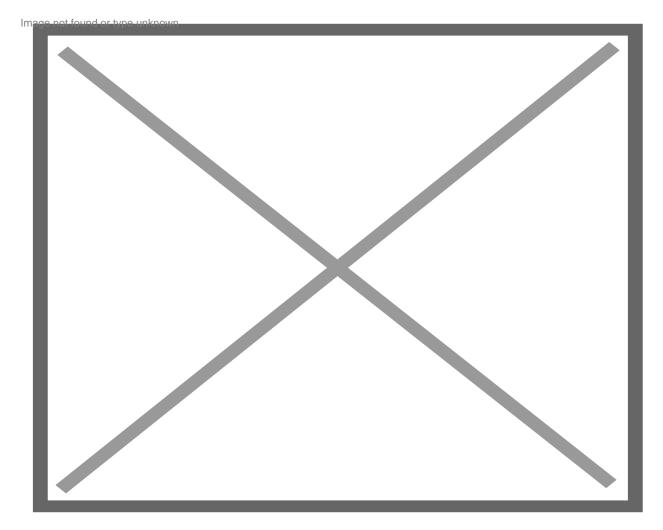logo not found or type unknown

Data Science Certificate Program for Professionals to Launch at UVI Fall 2021

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The University of the Virgin Islands and its partners announced Monday that the university will offer a Data Science Certificate Program, beginning in the Fall 2021 Semester. The program is designed to help professionals advance their careers by leveraging applied data science.

According to the release, the 13-credit certificate program comes on the heels of the recently added Data Science Minor, but the requirements for both programs differ slightly. Students pursuing the DS certificate do not have to be enrolled in a degree program at UVI and do not need prior college experience to register.

The program is tailored to benefit participants from varying backgrounds including government employees seeking to support their departments with data analytics, job seekers who want to make

themselves more marketable, individuals in the private sector who want to learn how to make data-driven decisions, and students exploring career options, UVI said.

Registration for the program will open in the fall, but interested students can register now to start taking both core and prerequisite courses during the 2021 Summer Semester. To register, students new to UVI must fill out a registration form and submit to the UVI Office of the Registrar.

"Almost every projection on work forecasts aggressive growth in employment related to data," said Thomas Lombardi, UVI chair of information systems and technology. "The data science programs at UVI are designed to help professionals adjust to and profit from these trends."

As they study, students can expect to explore practical ways to use data science to drive better decision making in any industry — agriculture, finance, business, aviation, oceanography and more, according to the release. They will also explore data governance, data ethics, and ways to impact economic and community development with applied data science.

"It's important to create a culture of data-driven decision making," said Dr. Joanne Luciano, distinguished professor of data science at UVI. "How do we use data to become eligible for additional federal funding? Can we detect early signs of new contagious diseases arriving in the territory? What types of industries should the USVI invest in to balance its portfolio? Data science has answers."

Students pursuing a DS certificate will learn scientific thinking, statistical expertise, business acumen and programming skills. The program prepares students to support an analytics team in identifying, building, and evaluating relevant data models.

The DS Certificate Program comes as a joint partnership between UVI, the UVI Research and Technology Park, the VI Bureau of Economic Research, private sector partners such as Cane Bay Partners, and other community stakeholders committed to workforce and economic development in the territory.

VIBER Director Dr. Allison DeGazon, who is a member of the advisory board that developed the curriculum, said that supporting the certificate program is crucial to establishing the USVI as a hub for data analytics.

"To achieve this goal, we need to render all support to UVI's data science program to ensure we have the workforce to meet the needs of this dynamic industry," she said. "We are proud to be instrumental in making this program a reality."

Kirk Chewning, co-founder and partner at fintech consulting firm Cane Bay Partners, is also a member of the advisory board that created the DS Certificate Program. According to Chewning, a workforce equipped with the skills to understand and analyze data can make a "game-changing difference" in people's individual lives, business and government.

"Both the EDA and the RTPark have identified opportunities over the next several years that could drive 1,000 to 2,000 new jobs in the territory per year. That is a large magnitude of new jobs created that will require talent," Chewning said. "If we want residents to be empowered to take on these jobs and earn more, we need to create platforms that give them opportunities to learn the skills that will get them there. Any individual who understands how to use data to drive important decisions will be an asset wherever they decide to work – in the public or private sector."

The release stated that the advisory board welcomes contributions from additional government departments, businesses, and community partners to support the advancement of the program and its goals toward workforce and economic development. Prospective partners can contact Dr. Luciano at joanne.luciano@uvi.edu or (340) 693-1253.