

# Building Big Data Initiatives Across the University: Challenges and Opportunities

Christopher Zorn  
Pennsylvania State University

January 27, 2016



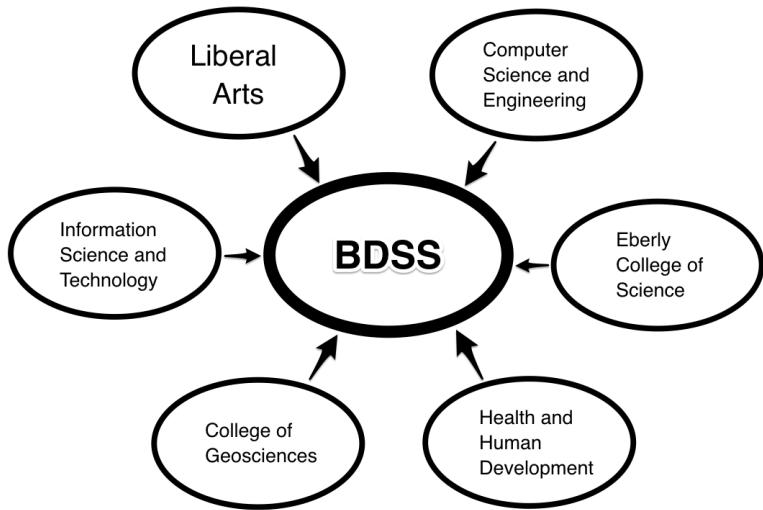
**B D SS**

# BaDaSS



## BDSS support:

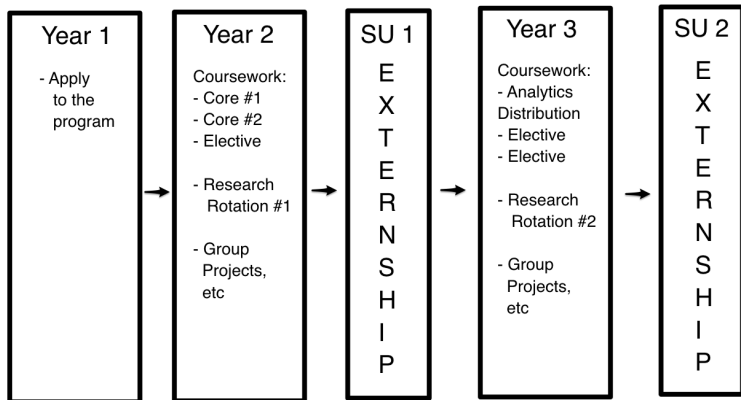
- NSF IGERT (\$3.2m)
- Penn State administration (\$3m)
- PSU Colleges (various)
- Social Science Research Institute, Institute for Cyberscience, etc.



# BDSS Structure

- “Dual-Title” Ph.D. in *Social Data Analytics* (“SoDA”)
- 7-8 students per year for five years (+ “associates” and “affiliates”)
- 2nd - 3rd year of Ph.D.
- This that

# BDSS Process





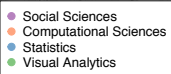
- 21 trainees + 4 associates + 8 affiliates
- Fields: Geography, Political Science, Statistics, Sociology, Information Science, Human Development, Health Policy
- 40% female, 20% from historically underrepresented groups
- > 100 student-authored publications (300+ Google Scholar citations)

- Selected Externships:
  - Academic: ETH Zurich, NYU, Harvard, UCLA, German Economic Institute, UMass
  - Industry: IBM Research, Parus Analytics, Google, Strava, Scitor
  - Other: Census Bureau, DSSG, Oak Ridge, Pew Research Labs
- Placements:
  - Tenure-track: Minnesota, Delaware
  - Post-docs: CMU, Concordia, Harvard
  - Industry: Google ( $\times 2$ ), NASA, Verisk Maplecroft, IBM Research, LinkedIn, etc.

# Lesson #1: Champions



## Penn State BDSS-IGERT



**Institutionalize  
flexibility.**