

Course: Data Sciences**Provider: General Assembly**

Cost: \$4,000 (inclusive of all required materials, except laptop)

GA typically asks for 50% to secure a spot for the class but has a flexible fee schedule.

Duration: 11 weeks, Jun 1- Aug 12 (66 Hours, 3 hours x 2 days per week 6:30pm-9:30pm M&W)

Course Description:

A practical introduction to the interdisciplinary field of data science and machine learning, which is at the intersection of computer science, statistics, and business. You will learn to use the programming languages, tools, and technologies to help you acquire, clean, parse, and filter your data.

A significant portion of the course will be a hands-on approach to the fundamental modeling techniques and machine learning algorithms that enable you to build robust predictive models about real-world data and test their validity. You will also gain practice communicating your results and insights about how to build systems that are more intelligent and take advantage of the data that you have (think recommendations systems or

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Acquire, clean, and parse large sets of data using R and/or Python
- Choose the appropriate modeling technique to apply to your data
- Programmatically create predictive data models using machine learning techniques
- Apply probability and statistics concepts to create and validate predictions about your data
- Communicate your results to an appropriate audience

Goal:

Build on existing proficiency with (STEM) programming, technology and data analysis and integrate with policy and communications functions, specifically projects involving data analytics (i.e. Biennial Certificat Survey, WIN, HPI, Adviser Compensation Data).

Relation to Career Development:

A course in data sciences will allow me to make greater contributions to policy and communications projects that require a deeper understanding of data sciences and analytics. The course is project focused and I plan to utilize the resources and lessons made available to enhance policy and communications functions. Outlined below are specific learning objectives related to career development.

Specific Learning Objectives:

- Improve ability to create reports and analyze available data from NetForum, MeridianIQ, and Cerulli.
- Develop skills in collecting large sets of data to allow customized monitoring of twitter, news article comments, forum posts and any other public forums and enable policy and communications department to get a better “pulse” on issues of interest.
- Acquire a proficiency in utilizing automated data collection and analysis for use in analyzing regulatory comments (i.e. utilize automated data collection techniques for use in analyzing comment to upcoming DOL Fiduciary proceeding, stakeholder comments during policy review).
- Gain skills necessary for understanding the resources and processes needed to develop a certification and designation tool for use in Certification and Designation Strategy.

Benefit to CFP Board:

In addition to the specific objectives outlined above, course will also allow me to be cross trained in data analytics and allow the Policy and Communications department to have a dedicated staff member with a proficiency in data analysis. Additionally, an increased understanding of data analytics and sciences will enable me to better interpret financial services issues that are intertwined with data analytics.

Alternative Courses Explored:

Prior to exploring the GA Data Sciences course, I was evaluating whether to seek support for an online masters in Predictive Analytics from Northwestern University.

The Northwestern program is estimated to cost \$48,000. The GA program covers many of the same concepts as the Northwestern program. Based on the information provided to me, I believe the GA program to be better suited for my goals than the Northwestern program. In addition to cost, outlined below are additional reasons I believe the GA course is better suited:

- GA program is an in-person program
- GA program is project based and will allow me to utilize the available resources to suit my outlined learning objectives
- GA program will allow me to complete pre-requisites via self-study ahead of the course start date.