Introduction to Computational Data Science

Many important questions ("What's the best restaurant in town?", "Is this law good for citizens?", etc.) are answered with *data*.
Data Scientists try and answer these questions by writing *programs that ask questions about data*.
Data of all types can be organized into **Tables**.

- Every Table has a **header row** and some number of **data rows**.
- **Quantitative data** is numeric and measures *an amount*, such as a person's height, a score on a test, distance, etc. A list of quantitative data can be ordered from smallest to largest.
- **Categorical data** is data that specifies *qualities*, such as sex, eye color, country of origin, etc. Categorical data is not subject to the laws of arithmetic — for example, we cannot take the "average" of a list of colors.

Answering questions with data can take many forms. Here are a few types of questions, each requiring a different kind of analysis:

- **Lookup Questions** can be answered just by finding the right row and column of a table. (e.g., "How old is Toggle?")
- **Compute Questions** can be answered by computing over a single row or column. (e.g., "What is the average weight of animals from the shelter?")
- **Relate Questions** require looking for trends across multiple columns. (e.g., "Do cats tend to be adopted sooner than dogs?")