

Dr. William Johnson is a nontraditional CS faculty at Georgia State University. He was a software engineer for over 20 years, holding positions of increasing responsibility in the U.S. government at the Centers for Disease Control and at Microsoft Corporation along with various computer industry startups in the Atlanta area. He has numerous industry certifications in programming, web design, and database administration and architecture. Before completing his Ph.D. at GSU, he was a computer science instructor at Perimeter College, a community-based college that merged with GSU in 2016.

He grew up on a farm in northern Alabama before moving to Atlanta in 1988 with a CS degree and a goal to work at CDC. He brings this small-town to big city understanding into his education success, teaching goals, advising outcomes, and ideas for improving CS education. His teaching awards include advisor of the year in 2015 and the outstanding graduate teaching award from Georgia State's Department of Computer Science in 2019.

His dissertation research involves a study of undergraduate CS students to build a predictive model using decision trees to understand successful completion of the CS core curriculum. His current research focuses on applying educational data mining and machine learning to discover learning biases of first-generation and underrepresented groups in undergraduate CS populations.