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Establishing the Metropolitan Chicago Data Science Corps (MCDC)

Thursday 27 October 2022 10:10 (1 hour)

We established the Metropolitan Chicago Data science Corps (MCDC) in the Fall of 2021. MCDC is a partnership between five Chicago-area universities and local not-for-profit organizations. It serves data science needs of the organizations and provides real world data science questions, data sets and experience for data science students. Goals of MCDC are to advance data-driven decision making, build community, facilitate data utility and access, develop the data science workforce, and implement a learning system for dissemination. MCDC works at the intersections of data science with environmental sciences, health sciences, and social sciences. Data science students who participate in MCDC take foundational data science course work and enroll in a practicum. During the practicum students develop skills in 9 different areas of data acumen and are exposed to the multifaceted aspects of applying data science with community partners. Subsequent summer internships with community partners (Data science Application for Undergraduates (DAU)) allow more intensive collaborative applications of data science in service of the goals of the community partner.

During the 2021-2022 academic year about seventy students participated in practica and nine summer interns participated in a DAU, partnering with a total of eleven different non-profit organizations. Faculty served as practicum instructors and community-specific project mentors. Seventy five MCDC community partners, students, and faculty gathered at the inaugural MCDC workshop in June and shared best practices, experiences, results, ideas, and goals. Faculty development was supported by the workshop, an interactive on-line collaboration platform, committees' activities, and a collection of resources curated by MCDC researchers with expertise in community-academic partnerships.

Research

Education and Outreach

Data & Cyberinfrastructure

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