Analytics Heads to Graduate School at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

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IBM

Rochester, N.Y. (RPRN) 04/25/13 — IBM (NYSE: IBM) and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute are combining forces to offer a new graduate program in fall 2013, to prepare students for the expanding scope of careers requiring Big Data and analytics skills.

Nearly two million information technology jobs will be created by 2015 in the U.S. to support Big Data, according to research firm Gartner, Inc. Offered through the Lally School of Management and Technology, Rensselaer's new Master of Science in Business Analytics degree will empower students and career professionals with the skills required to fill those jobs.

The news today underscores IBM's ongoing efforts to help students and career professionals enter and succeed in the growing, high-demand analytics workforce. In addition to collaborating with Rensselaer on the new degree program, IBM has also recently donated a Watson system to the school in order to help faculty and students explore new uses for cognitive computing and expand their understanding of Big Data and analytics.

The new Master of Science in Business Analytics degree is a one-year, 30 credit graduate program offered by the Lally School at Rensselaer. Supported by longstanding partner IBM -- which will provide Rensselaer with curriculum materials, real-world case study projects, access to a wide spectrum of software solutions, and IBM thought leaders as guest lecturers -- the

graduate program will feature a three-part curriculum comprising:

· A business core to ensure students understand where Big Data fits into a business' strategy and operations, as well as how analytics-driven decisions can impact a business' growth, competitive standing and bottom line.

· An analytics core that includes hands-on training in predictive modeling to help businesses identify profitable data patterns, focusing also on data management, statistical analysis and leading-edge techniques in harnessing Big Data.

· An experiential core with project-based courses that allow students to apply their newly gained skills to real-world problems faced by businesses spanning a range of industries.

“As a world-class technological research university, we attract graduates with strong technical and quantitative skills,” said Thomas Begley, dean of the Lally School. “Data will be the lifeblood for businesses throughout the 21st century, and only a trained analytics professional can help unlock its hidden value. In collaboration with IBM and Lally School faculty, we are proud to offer a degree program that will send skilled, distinctive candidates into the workforce, to help today's businesses address the wealth of opportunities and challenges that data poses."

Begley noted that Rensselaer is well positioned to provide tomorrow's business leaders with the analytics skills needed to not only succeed, but also make a meaningful impact in the world.

"We believe that analytics merits an entire Master's program of its own, because this is no longer an emerging field; today's businesses will only thrive if they master the application of analytics to all forms of data," said Brenda Dietrich, IBM Fellow, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, Business Analytics, IBM. "Whether your office is a scientific lab, a manufacturing company, an emergency room, a government agency or even a professional sports stadium, there is no industry left where an analytics-trained professional cannot make a positive impact."

Advancing the Conversation on Big Data and Analytics

To advance the conversation on preparing students for high demand analytics careers, Rensselaer will host a Business Analytics Panel on Friday, April 26. Faculty, students, business leaders and members of the news media are invited to attend the panel, which will take place in the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies Building (CBIS) auditorium from 4 to 6 p.m. During the event, a team of industry experts, including IBM's Brenda Dietrich and Lally School Professor T. (Ravi) Ravichandran, will discuss trending Big Data and analytics topics and engage in a question and answer session.

IBM and Rensselaer - A Longstanding Partnership

The Master of Science in Business Analytics program is the latest collaboration between IBM and Rensselaer, which have worked together for decades to advance the frontiers of high-performance computing, nanoelectronics, advanced materials, artificial intelligence, among other

areas of research and innovation. IBM recently donated an IBM Watson cognitive system to Rensselaer, making it the first university to receive such a system. The arrival of the Watson system will enable new leading-edge research, afford faculty and students an opportunity to find new uses for Watson, and help prepare students for high-impact, high-value careers in Big Data, analytics and cognitive computing. This donation is a core element of IBM's expanding range of Watson-powered academic programs being employed at universities across the country, including curriculum, internships and academic case competitions in which students identify Big Data-driven business and societal challenges that Watson can help solve. In addition, IBM -- along with New York State -- is a key partner of the Rensselaer supercomputing center, the Computational Center for Nanotechnology Innovations, where the Watson system will be hosted.

The IBM Academic Initiative

The collaboration is part of IBM's Academic Initiative that offers a wide range of technology education benefits to meet the goals of colleges and universities. As a member of this initiative, participating schools receive no-charge access to IBM software, discounted hardware, course materials, training and curriculum development. Nearly 6,000 universities and 30,000 faculty members worldwide have joined IBM’s Academic Initiative over the past seven years. IBM has developed more than 300 academic partnerships focusing on Big Data and analytics, with Rensselaer and other leading schools such as Yale, Northwestern, Michigan State and Fordham universities.

To join the social discussion about IBM and Rensselaer's Master of Science in Business Analytics, please include the Twitter hashtag #ibmrpi

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Media Contact Name: John Natale
Media E-mail: jdnatale@us.ibm.com

About the author:

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