

Computational & Data Sciences, PhD (CDS)

Mentored Experience Implementation Plan

As part of their degree requirements, PhD students must complete a program-defined Mentored Experience Requirement (MER) as per these guidelines. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plan (MEIP) is the written articulation of a program-defined degree requirement for PhD students to engage in mentored teaching activities and/or mentored professional activities, collectively referred to as *MERs*.

Mentored Experience Requirements (MERs)

Philosophy of Teaching

We embrace the significance of Mentored Teaching Experiences (MTEs) as integral to the comprehensive preparation of PhD students. Engaging in MTEs not only provides students with opportunities to develop pedagogical skills and classroom management techniques but also fosters a deeper understanding of their discipline and enhances their ability to communicate complex ideas effectively. Students will learn to engage diverse audiences, adapt instructional strategies, and foster inclusive learning environments, all of which are essential competencies for success in academia and beyond. Moreover, MTEs instill a sense of responsibility, professionalism, and ethical conduct, preparing students to navigate the complex landscape of higher education with confidence and integrity. Whether students pursue careers within academia or choose alternative pathways, the skills honed through MTEs equip them to excel as educators, mentors, and leaders making meaningful contributions to their communities and professions.

Preparatory Engagement

Preparatory Engagement activities are those that represent an introduction to the foundational skills associated with teaching or communication. Pedagogical preparation engagement activities are normally completed before students are permitted to engage in assisting or teaching in a classroom.

Two Preparatory Engagement activities are required:

1. Center for Teaching and Learning Teaching Orientation
2. One 90-minute teaching workshop offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning

—or—

1. McKelvey Teaching Orientation (Canvas course)
2. McKelvey Teaching Workshop (Canvas course)

Mentored Teaching Experiences (MTEs)

Assistant in Instruction (AI)

An Assistant in Instruction (AI) is a PhD student who is directly engaged in the organization, instruction, and/or support of a semester-long course *primarily taught by a faculty member*. An AI receives mentorship from a faculty member related to best practices in classroom engagement, instruction in the field, interpersonal engagement, and other relevant skills. Students and mentors complete a mentorship plan prior to the start of each AI experience. To complete each AI assignment and to ensure that it applies toward their degree requirements, students must register for the appropriate course number for each semester of engagement. Refer to the "Required Pathways for Completion" section below for course numbers and details.

The Division of Computational & Data Sciences requires two AI assignments at 10 MER units each. Each student works with their graduate supervisor on the timing and content of those assignments.

Required Pathways for Completion

Students work with their faculty mentor and their Director of Graduate Studies to plan how and when they will complete their MERs. Students register during the normal registration period for courses in accordance with one of these approved pathways.

- Preparatory Engagement

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