

Building Educational Partnerships to Design Data Science Programs: Practice, Research, and Policy

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ABSTRACT

Since 2021, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) has been one of the universities hosting the Bolashak International Scholarship. The scholarship aims to prepare scholars and professionals to work on priority sectors of Kazakhstan's economy (Bolashak International Scholarship, 2025). At UIUC, the Bolashak International Scholarship is coordinated by Global Education and Training (GET), Illinois International. In 2024, GET invited the School of Information Sciences (iSchool) to set up an educational partnership to co-host data science Bolashak fellows. The partnership was implemented through the establishment of one team representing GET and one team representing the iSchool. The GET and the iSchool team collaborate to design a one-year data science program composed of academic events, mentoring, and course audit. The data science program concept is taking into consideration the scholars' needs and interests, and relies on data science instructors' expertise, and previous literature on teaching data science and data science programs (Wing, 2019; Brunner, Kim, 2016; Kross, Guo, 2019; Rokem et al., 2015; Tang and Sae-Lim, 2016). Although the implementation of the program faces challenges, such as finding more faculty to participate in the program, a lack of partnership policies and definition of roles, appropriate data science curriculum for one year, the partnership is cooperative and is taking shape as a coalition partnership (Tushnet, 1993; Berliner, 1997). Co-hosting Bolashak fellows has driven a research agenda that integrates research, practice, and policies to create a data science program based upon the iSchool's unique perspective working at the intersection of people, technology, and information.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Specific populations; Continuing education; Curriculum; Information policy; Administration.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Data Science; Higher Education; Visiting Exchange Programs; Partnerships; Policies.

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