

Fayetteville State University Students Place Second at Decision Sciences Institute

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In today's digital world, business intelligence or data analytics has become a powerful tool for various business analytical applications with the enormous amount of available data. Every moment, around the world, in various ways, by various resources, the data is being collected and mined from online activities, digital responses, smart phones, mobile apps, social media, websites, market research, scientific research, photographs, videos etc.

The huge data centers and cloud data storage having petabytes or exabytes or yottabytes of data has been setup by various organizations like Amazon, Google, Facebook etc. for various analytical needs and predictions. To utilize the power of data, companies like Netflix, Zillow etc. have paid million of dollars as prize money for refined prediction algorithms to be created through competition.

In September 2017, Amazon invited a response to its Request for Proposal ("RFP") for future site selection for its Head Quarter2 (HQ2). Amazon mentioned that for this new site for HQ2 it would be investing \$5 billion and hiring 50,000 full time high-paying jobs. Since then, the prediction game has been in big news; with various articles and

predictions in media for various cities including an artificial intelligence system developed by Wells Fargo Securities. Similarly, two Fayetteville State University (FSU) MBA students - Ankur Bagda and Tiffany Crosby - from College of Business and Economics (CBE) submitted a paper at SEDSI (Southeast Decision Sciences Institute) in December 2017, based on combined advance data mining and AHP techniques to predict the future Amazon HQ2 location. This paper attracted significant attention throughout the two-day, 48th annual conference of SEDSI at Wilmington, NC and won the second-place award as part of SEDSI's 2018 graduate student paper competition in February 2018.

CBE has answered the industry demand for graduates that have the management savvy to effectively leverage "Big Data" with their new MBA concentration and Graduate Certificate programs in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics. This program is one of a handful of AACSB-accredited programs nationwide. It was designed while considering the latest analytical technologies, industry feedbacks and practicality of use having SAS Certifications, Google Analytics Certifications, Business Strategy Simulations, Capstone projects etc. FSU is also building a new state-of-the-art data analytics lab with funds awarded through a recent Title VII grant sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

Data analytics is the process of examining data sets to draw conclusions about the information they contain, increasingly with the aid of specialized systems and software. These systems transform, organize, and model the data to draw conclusions and identify patterns to improve predictions and support decision making. [This is related to the technology that has gotten Facebook and Cambridge Analytics into such hot water recently.] Using their knowledge and sophisticated analytical tools, Bagda and Crosby were able to predict a probable Amazon HQ2 site, Washington DC-VA metro area, with New York, Atlanta, Chicago, and Dallas as subsequent options. Though our results do not show North Carolina as a top option, it does show the ability of FSU students to tackle "Big Data" and various selection characteristics to arrive at a probable or "more likely than not" conclusion.