Center For Analytics and Transformative Technologies
2018-2019 Newsletter

The Texas McCombs Center for Analytics and Transformative Technologies (CATT) fosters interaction and collaboration among faculty, industry leaders, and students to understand and address significant business problems of value to both industry and academia. The center was created in collaboration with USAA to serve as the primary hub for research at the school.

Yes. We Have a New Name.

We are slowly making the transition, but the former Center for Research and Analytics has been renamed as the Center for Analytics and Transformative Technologies (CATT). This change was brought about as we begin to explore the impact of new technologies, such as blockchain, and their importance on the global economy.

The Texas Blockchain Initiative, led by Dr. Cesare Fracassi, has three main goals: (i) to support faculty and graduate students research on blockchain across colleges at the University of Texas at Austin; (ii) to teach students the main concepts related to blockchain, cryptocurrency, and digital payments; (iii) to be the hub of knowledge for external relations with industry practitioners, policymakers, and media.

We are also proud to announce that Texas McCombs was among 17 academic recipients worldwide from Ripple. The five-year commitment, part of a larger $50 million gift, will assist in the creation of the Texas Blockchain Initiative.

“Demand for blockchain learning, research, and project-based experience is at an all-time high among university faculty and students, and this gift will go a long way in fulfilling that demand,” says Dr. Fracassi.

To learn more about the Texas Blockchain Initiative, please see the website at blockchain.utexas.edu.

The 2018 Texas Analytics Summit was held September 27-28 at Rowling Hall on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. Over 300 students, faculty and industry leaders attended a day and a half of speakers and panels on the future of analytics.

Topics of discussion ranged from AI to FinTech, and data science. Charles Thomas, Chief Data and Analytics Officer at General Motors delivered the opening keynote address. Brett Hurt of data.world was a keynote speaker, closing out the first day with a discussion of The Importance of Transforming Into a Data-Driven World. Michael Willette, Assistant Vice President and Technical Fellow at USAA, the founding partner for the Center for Research and Analytics, provided the lunch keynote on Friday.

Michael Sherman, Texas McCombs MSBA Class of 2014 and currently a Machine Learning Engineer at Google Cloud, was on the Productization of Machine Learning panel led by Dr. Joydeep Ghosh. Another MSBA alum, Monica Chan (class of 2015), took part in the Experimentation in Marketing panel. Monica is now an International Marketing Campaign Manager at Indeed here in Austin.

To watch the videos of the speakers, please check out our website at https://tinyurl.com/2018CRAVideos.

The 2019 Texas Analytics Summit will be held in October of 2019. For more information, contact granger.huntress@utexas.edu
Dell Technologies and Texas McCombs. Old Friends, Building a Bright Future.

We are proud to announce the recent addition of Dell Technologies Services to the Center for Analytics and Transformative Technologies family. This partnership will be the impetus to many data science research projects involving both faculty and students.

To kick off this partnership, Dell is sponsoring three guided Capstone projects within the MS in Business Analytics program this spring. These projects, which each consist of four MSBA students, will be working with faculty members to solve analytical problems for Dell involving three areas of Dell’s business: Procurement, eServices, and Depot Repair. Guiding the student from the faculty side will be Ty Henderson (Marketing), Guoming Lai (IROM) and Deepayan Chakrabarti (IROM). These projects will not only provide greater insights for Dell but could also grow into long-term research papers down the line.

“I’m very excited for Dell Technology Services to be the newest member of the Center for Analytics and Transformative Technologies,” explained Matt Peterson, the business leadership sponsor from Dell Services’ Technology team, “and look forward to bringing together two great organizations to accelerate our data science research.”

A one-day workshop with Dell and McCombs faculty is being scheduled for the spring to stimulate more ways the two can work even more closely to develop long-term research projects.