



Office of Research

March 2, 2023

Dr. Jack Hu
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
203 Administration Building
220 S. Jackson St., Athens, GA 30602

Dear Provost Hu,

Consistent with the [University of Georgia 4.13 Policy on Centers](#), I formally recommend the formation of the Center for Business Analytics and Insights as proposed by Dean Ayers. I have reviewed the proposal from Terry College and find it meets the requirements outlined in the Policy on Centers. Additionally, this Center would help further establish the University of Georgia in the emerging field of business and data analytics.

Sincerely,

Karen J.L. Burg, Ph.D., FNAI, FBSE, FAIMBE
Vice President for Research

Attachments:

- Center for Advanced Computer-Human Ecosystems Proposal
- Letters of support:
 - Benjamin C. Ayers, Dean, Terry College of Business
 - Chris Cornwell, Head, Dept. of Economics
 - Marie-Claude Boudreau, Head, Dept. of Management Information Systems
 - John Hulland, Head, Dept. of Marketing
 - T.N. Sriram, Head, Dept. of Statistics
 - Kyle Johnsen, Director, Georgia Informatics Institutes for Research and Education
 - Thiab Taha, Interim Director, School of Computing

cc: Benjamin C. Ayers, Dean, Terry College of Business

APPROVED:

SVPAA & Provost

3/3/2023
Date



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

Benjamin C. Ayers, Dean
Earl Davis Chair in Taxation

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December 6, 2022

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

The Terry College of Business is submitting a proposal to set up a Center for Business Analytics and Insights. This interdisciplinary center will synthesize the substantial efforts Terry has made in the past 5 years in the area of business analytics as a key part of its strategic initiatives. The proposed center will serve as a forum for instructional and research collaboration across Terry's academic units as well as those at The University of Georgia.

At the instructional level, several academic programs underscore Terry's commitment to business analytics. These include graduate programs like the Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA), Master of Accounting (MAcc), Master of Marketing Research (MMR) and PhD programs in Economics, Management Information Systems, Marketing and Finance. At the undergraduate level, Terry has recently launched a college-wide area of emphasis in analytics, while the MIS department offers its own area of emphasis in data analytics. As such, courses such as Business Intelligence, Data Management, Energy Informatics, Cyber Security, Causal Inference, Machine Learning, Predictive Analytics, and Artificial Intelligence have been developed across different academic units in the College. On the experiential learning side, students in the MSBA and MMR programs work on real-world big data and consulting projects as part of their respective capstone requirements. The proposed center will integrate the learning experience in business analytics across the undergraduate and graduate curricula, expand opportunities for experiential and project-based learning in this area and provide additional support for students through initiatives like the Terry Analytics Lab, case competitions, and speaker series.

A substantial number of Terry faculty are actively engaged in quantitative research that involve big data, and analytics research spans all of Terry's departments. The proposed center will provide a platform for faculty collaboration through seed grants, industry partnerships and seminar speakers.

Terry Department Heads and Associate Deans unanimously support this proposal, and I am pleased to offer my full support and happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Benjamin C. Ayers
/abg

Center for Business Analytics and Insights

Proposal DRAFT

Introduction

The Terry College strategic plan prioritizes four areas for growth and expansion: Analytics, Innovation, Sustainability and Leadership. Of the four, Analytics is arguably the *most foundational*. Without proper attention to the data and the ability to make sense of it, innovation will be misdirected, real sustainability cannot be realized and leadership will be misguided. No modern organization can be successful if its decision-making is not data-driven.

Analytics not only *cuts across* the other initiatives but every business discipline as well. This is clearly evident in the research of Terry's faculty members and graduate students. From Accounting to Risk Management, their work crucially depends on state-of-the-art data pipelines, wrangling tools and statistical methods.

To meet the market demand for business analytics skills and ensure Terry faculty and graduate students stay on the frontier of empirical research, it is essential that the activities related to both have clear direction and coordination. Hence, the Center for Business Analytics and Insights.

Center goals

Because analytics is foundational and cross-cutting, its development and growth will affect the teaching, research and service missions of the Terry College one way or the other. However, without a centralizing institutional structure and proper leadership to define the mission and set goals, the initiative will fall short of its promise.

The Terry College is already an established leader in business analytics education through its highly regarded Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA). Entering its 5th year, Terry's MSBA has been smartly differentiated from the typical business-school entry in this space through its emphasis on machine learning, causal inference and business strategy. In fall 2022, Terry added an Area of Emphasis (AoE) in Business Analytics to its undergraduate degree programs. The AoE and MSBA target students who want to pursue professional opportunities that require high-level analytics skills. The AoE is designed in part as an on-ramp to the MSBA, which undergraduates can complete as a part of UGA's Double Dawgs program. What is missing is dedicated expert oversight of the AoE→MSBA pathway and clear communication about the learning opportunities that flow from it.

In addition, the MIS department offers its own AoE in data analytics and the Marketing department is known for its Master of Marketing Research (MMR) program. With its variety of advanced technical and conceptual courses, the MIS AoE complements Terry's. MMR students are exposed to hands-on use of the analytics tools and research methods used by marketing research industry to guide business decisions.

Empirical research standards are increasingly being set outside traditional business-school disciplines, as data science "roll ups" expertise in economics, information systems, computer science and statistics. Going forward, business-school scholars will be expected to have mastery over modern machine learning and causal inference methods and fluent in the essential languages of computation. Other than in a few isolated graduate courses (e.g. the PhD econometrics sequence offered by Economics), there is no centralized effort to provide ongoing training and assistance in state-of-the-art empirical methods.

As the state's flagship business school, Terry has a responsibility to share its expertise with external stakeholders. The college does this effectively within disciplines, but the cross-cutting nature of analytics begs for an integrative approach. Much like the way the Institute for Leadership Advancement has connected leadership training to organizations and communities, a center would do the same for analytics.

For these reasons, we propose the Center for Business Analytics and Insights (CBAI) with a mission to lead the promotion, development and dissemination of analytics knowledge and skills for the Terry College. The goals of the CBAI will be to:

1. Coordinate and enhance analytics instruction across Terry College academic programs, including managing and overseeing the Terry Analytics Lab (TAL), hosting workshops and speaking events, organizing case competitions, offering "micro-credentials" and providing computing support.
2. Develop and provide analytics-related resources for empirical research in the Terry College, including hosting academic seminars and workshops, sponsoring conferences, acquiring and warehousing proprietary data, and awarding seed grants to foster external research grants.
3. Disseminate analytics expertise to external stakeholders of the Terry College, including supplying student consulting expertise, supporting professional analytics education, supporting Data for Good, assisting UGA athletics through MSBA capstone projects, and developing a network of alumni working in analytics-related professions.

Administration

The CBAI will be administratively housed in the Dean's Office of the Terry College. Owing to its integrative mission, it will not be affiliated with any particular department. The Center will be led by a director who is appointed by the Dean of the Terry College and reports to the appropriate associate dean. The Director will provide a report annually summarizing the Center's activities, and their appointment will be reviewed every three years.

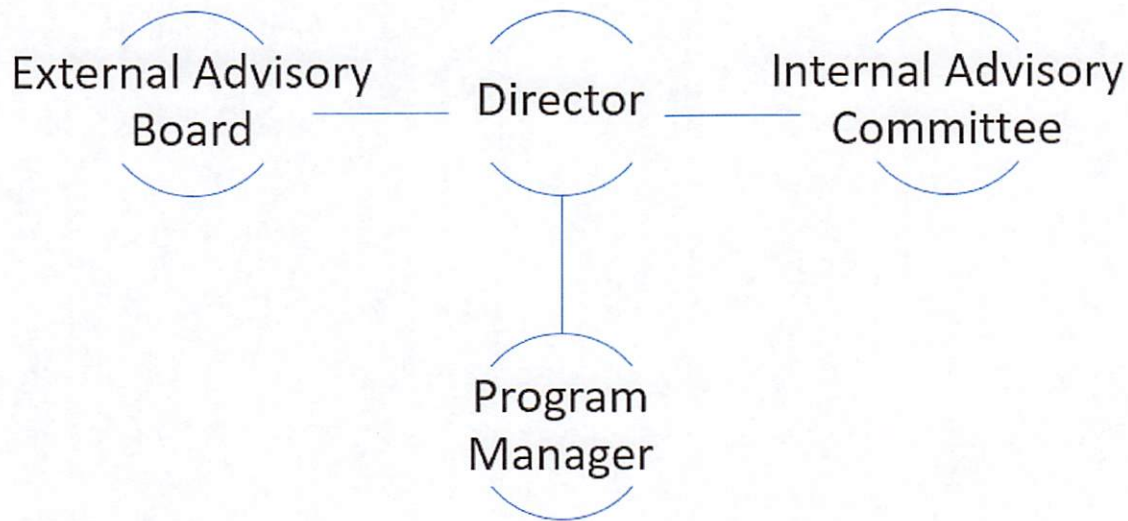
The CBAI will be reviewed internally every five years by the Terry College Dean. As a part of this review, the CBAI Director will produce a comprehensive report documenting center activities and funding efforts during the review period. The primary activities to be evaluated will be:

- *Instructional activities*
 - Number of students served by TAL
 - Student satisfaction with TAL services
 - Number of TAL tutorials and workshops produced
 - Number of speaker events
 - Number of micro credentialing opportunities
 - Number of case competitions and hackathons
 - Number of students using cloud computing resources
 - Impact of instructional activities
- *Research activities*
 - Number of seminars and professional workshops hosted
 - Number and scope of conferences
 - Proprietary data purchases
 - Number of faculty using cloud computing resources
 - Number of seed grants awarded and summary of external research grants generated
 - Impact of research activities
- *Service activities*
 - Number of student consulting projects
 - Impact of student consulting
 - Professional analytics education support
 - Data for Good support
 - UGA athletics support through MSBA capstone projects
 - Growth of the alumni network

Measures and baseline values for these activities will be determined and agreed to by the Dean and Director with the formal launch of the CBAI.

Governance

The Director is responsible for providing administrative leadership, including establishing and managing the leadership team, forming and chairing an external advisory board and internal advisory committee, and reporting on center activities.



The external Advisory Board will comprise senior professionals working in analytics-related areas. The Advisory Board's responsibility will be to assist the Director in aligning center activities to the market and support experiential learning activities across analytics programs. The internal Advisory Committee will be composed of Terry faculty with discipline-specific analytics-related expertise. The Advisory Committee's role will be to assist the Director in setting center priorities and provide oversight of center operations.

The Program Manager will provide administrative support to the Director, coordinating and managing center activities, including TAL, and overseeing the center communications.

Budget

In its launch and early development, the CBAI will be supported by the Terry College using existing resources. The initial costs associated with CBAI operation will include the Director's compensation, staff salaries, TAL operations, speaker series, seed research grants, cloud computing and travel. The expected costs for the first three years are sketched below.

<i>Expense Category</i>	<i>FY24</i>	<i>FY25</i>	<i>FY26</i>
Director compensation	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Program manager (Salary supplement for existing staff member)		\$10,000	\$10,000
TAL Support	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Speaker series	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Seed research grants	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Cloud computing/Data	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$25,000
Travel	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$110,000</i>	<i>\$135,000</i>	<i>\$140,000</i>

As the CBAI grows and matures, it will increasingly be supported through private fundraising, corporate partnerships and revenue from consulting projects. The long-run goal will be to fully endow the CBAI.

Staffing

The Terry College will support the CBAI for the first three years from its launch in FY24. This support will include resources to fund TAL, a speaker series, cloud computing and travel. To effectively meet its goals, in FY25 the CBAI will add a part-time Program Manager to help coordinate the center's activities.

Space requirements

The CBAI will operate out of the Director’s office. The TAL will continue to utilize existing space in the BLC, and CBAI events will utilize existing event space within the BLC.

Affiliated faculty

The CBAI will identify faculty affiliates by their teaching and research interests. Affiliation with the CBAI will facilitate the sharing of expertise in analytics-related instruction and research methods.

Recipients of CBAI grant funding will be designated CBAI fellows for the duration of their grants.

Letters of support

The CBAI proposal is supported by

- Ben Ayers, Dean, Terry College of Business
- Chris Cornwell, Head, Department of Economics
- Marie-Claude Boudreau, Head, Department of Management Information Systems
- John Hulland, Head, Department of Marketing
- TN Sriram, Head, Department of Statistics
- Kyle Johnsen, Professor and Director, College of Engineering
- Thiab Taha, Professor and Interim Director, School of Computing



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Terry College of Business
Department of Economics

Christopher Cornwell
Professor and Department Head

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2 December 2022

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

I am writing to express my strong support for Terry's proposed Center for Business Analytics and Insights at the Terry College of Business. As described in the proposal, the CBAI will provide much needed direction and coordination of analytics-related instruction and research. As it stands, these activities are largely siloed by discipline and opportunities for collaboration and synergy are missed. Centralizing and integrating analytics activity across disciplines is essential to meet the market demand for these skills and provide the necessary state-of-the-art resources and training for empirical researchers. The CBAI will also provide a platform for connecting its expertise to external stakeholders who look to the Terry College for leadership in developing and implementing data-driven organizational strategies, as well as to units on campus whose programs and scholarship complement Terry's.

Economics is already an important provider of analytics instruction at every level, but the coordinating force of the Center will magnify our contributions and impact. From expanded support of analytics instruction (e.g. through TAL funding) to seminars and workshops by leading econometricians and empirical economists, Economics expertise will be shared more widely and intentionally.

On behalf of the Economics faculty, I am pleased to offer my endorsement of the CBAI proposal.

Sincerely,

Christopher Cornwell
Professor and Head



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Marie-Claude Boudreau
Associate Professor and Department Head
Department of MIS
Terry College of Business

November 29th, 2022

RE: Letter of support for Terry College Center for Business Analytics and Insights

To:
Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia

Dear Dr. Burg,

This is a letter of support for the proposed Center for Business Analytics and Insights (CBAI) within the Terry College of Business. The proposed Center will centralize all of Terry's recent efforts in Business Analytics in the domains of instruction, research, and experiential learning. It will create a forum for interdisciplinary collaboration across all departments within the College.

As the proposal outlines, analytics is now ubiquitous for our educational mission, as embodied both at the graduate level (through our Ph.D. programs, Master in Sciences in Business Analytics, and Master of Marketing Research) and the undergraduate curriculum (Area of Emphasis in Business Analytics). In addition, faculty members across all disciplines within Terry are actively engaged in quantitative research involving big data. As such, the proposed Center will add significant value in integrating these efforts across the College.

My department will greatly benefit from the repository of resources that the Center will bring. It will also provide greater visibility to my department's Area of Emphasis in Data Analytics and will signal to our prospective students and other stakeholders that we have established expertise in this important area.

Accordingly, I highly approve of the creation of this Center.

Sincerely,

Marie-Claude Boudreau
MIS Department Head



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Terry College of Business
Department of Marketing

December 1, 2022

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Marketing Department, to indicate our support for the proposed Center for Business Analytics and Insights at the Terry College of Business. The proposed Center will synthesize Terry's recent efforts in the area of Business Analytics to enhance related instruction, research, and experiential learning, and to create a forum for interdisciplinary collaboration across departments. As the Center proposal outlines, analytics has become core to the educational mission at Terry, embodied across our graduate and undergraduate level programs.

Many Marketing faculty already teach courses that incorporate business analytics elements. The Center will help to both enrich these existing courses as well as identify new instructional opportunities for our faculty. The Center will also enhance communication and coordination of our courses that are part of college-wide programs with those of other departments.

In addition to supporting teaching, the Center will aid Marketing faculty working on research projects that involve big data. Many of our tenure track faculty are already involved with such research and will benefit from strengthened inter-departmental communication relating to analytics research, greater exposure to relevant grant opportunities, and better connections to other external resources.

My colleagues and I fully support this initiative.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Hulland
Marketing Department Head



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Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Statistics

December 1, 2022

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the proposed *Center for Business Analytics and Insights* at the Terry College of Business. The proposed Center will synthesize Terry's recent efforts in the field of Business Analytics in instruction, research, and experiential learning and create a forum for interdisciplinary collaboration across all departments within the College. As the Center proposal outlines, analytics has become ubiquitous for the educational mission at Terry, embodied both at the graduate level through several Ph.D. programs (economics, marketing, MIS, etc.), professional master's programs [MS In Business Analytics (MSBA) and Master of Marketing Research (MMR)], and the undergraduate curriculum (Area of Emphasis in Analytics).

For many years, we have recommended our Statistics majors to pursue the MMR degree, and in recent years, we have been advising some students to pursue the MSBA degree. As you may know, the Department of Statistics started offering a Bachelor's in Data Science in 2019 and will be offering a new master's degree in Data Science in Spring 2023. Given our focus on Data Science, the proposed Center will add tremendous value in advancing analytics at Terry College and initiating collaborative research with faculty members in Statistics. The Department of Statistics will benefit from the Center, both in terms of programs and instruction as well as faculty research.

On behalf of the faculty members in the Department of Statistics, I offer my full support to the proposed Center.

Sincerely,

T. N. Sriram
Professor & Head



College of Engineering
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



*Georgia Informatics Institutes
for Research and Education*
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Date: 02/25/2023

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

I am writing to you regarding the Terry College of Business' proposal to establish a Center for Business Analytics and Insights. The establishment of an interdisciplinary center is an excellent strategic move to integrate the many instructional and research programs throughout the Terry College, while simultaneously providing a vehicle to advance a key area of growth directly related to efforts to expand our university's footprint in the increasingly important areas of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

The Terry College has always been a strong supporter of the Georgia Informatics Institutes, particularly by faculty in its Department of Management Information Systems, but also the inclusion of courses through Terry College in our undergraduate certificate that have enabled pathways for students in the College of Business to earn the Undergraduate Certificate in Informatics. I am happy to add the new center into our network of informatics institutes and help promote its programs to our students and faculty. I also see opportunities to hold joint events and seminars and look forward to working with the center's director.

For these reasons, on behalf of the Faculty of Georgia Informatics Institutes for Research and Education, I am pleased to offer my support the establishment of the Center for Business Analytics and Insights.

Sincerely,

Kyle Johnsen, Ph.D.
Professor, School Electrical and Computer Engineering
Director, Georgia Informatics Institutes for Research and Education
College of Engineering
University of Georgia
Phone: 352-219-5419
Email: kjohnsen@uga.edu



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February 27, 2023

Dr. Karen Burg
Vice President for Research
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA

Dear Dr. Burg,

This is a letter of support on behalf of the School of Computing faculty for the proposed Center for Business Analytics and Insights at the Terry College of Business. I think this is a timely proposal for not only the Terry college faculty and students, but it also will have a positive impact on education and research across a good number of units on campus. The School of Computing at UGA offers several degree programs and courses in Data Science and Machine Learning. It offers a BS and an MS in Data Science jointly with the Statistics Department and a certificate in Applied Data Science. More than 500 students have already enrolled in the Applied Data Science Certificate. We have several faculty whose research areas are in Data Science, and ML, and we are recruiting for 4 more faculty this Spring. I anticipate that there will a good collaboration between the proposed center and the faculty in the School of Computing.

On behalf of the faculty in the School of Computing, I offer my strong support to the proposed Center.

Sincerely,

Thiab Taha

Thiab Taha
Professor and Interim Director