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# Colleges reveal which advanced degrees are the most popular

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Where can you find a mathematician, a businessperson and a journalist?

The answer: In a class for SUNY Buffalo State’s data science and analytics master’s program, according to Joaquin Carbonara, program chair



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have a goal in common has been a

lot of fun, very revealing and also is a way to show people that we can go beyond just multidisciplinary,” he said.

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The cross-discipline collaboration and ability for all groups to use data science to develop a view of the future has led to the field's growth and has made the program one of the most popular advanced education offerings at the college.

The master's, which started three years ago, enrolled 13 students in summer 2021, 39 in fall 2021 and 37 spring 2022.

The pandemic accelerated an already-growing discipline, he said.

"Now every single student is familiar with digital tools," he said. "Once they're in place, you can start collecting more data. Once you do that, you can use it to make better decisions. You need data science to do that."

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At Canisius College, two education-related advanced degrees are popular – one for aspiring teachers and another for folks who are already educators.

Its two-year WNY Teacher Residency Program, which started about five years ago, allows non-teachers to get a master's degree and state dual certification in childhood (grades 1-6) and special education (K-12) or childhood and teachers of English to speakers of other languages (K-12).

Meanwhile, students get real-world experience modeled after medical residencies, according to Lorrei DiCamillo, associate dean of the education school and co-director of the program.

"The idea is that instead of just training people and having these student teaching experiences, you have them

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six when it started and has recently stayed consistent around 14 enrolling each year. Ideally, that number would be around 25, according to DiCamillo.

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For educators who want to work in leadership, Canisius has an educational leadership and administration program. The asynchronous, online program, which is about two decades old, can include a school building leader license, school district leader license, school district business leader licenses or a master's degree in educational leadership.

The degree currently has 155 enrolled students, according to Meg Keller-Cogan, program director, and rolling enrollment has stayed relatively steady since the offering launched.

She attributes its popularity to the program's flexible modality and the experience levels of those who teach its courses, which allows coursework to stay current and helps students find jobs, she said.

"I think online learning is not only here to stay, but I see it as an emerging opportunity," she said.

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At Niagara University, flexibility has helped grow two of its most popular advanced education programs.

The college's master's program in information security and digital forensics started in 2016 with about a dozen students and has added about 30 students each fall. That enrollment level is ideal to keep the degree's quality high, according to Petter Lovaas, chair of the university's cyber security and operations department.

The offering combines hands-on and research-based learning, which is helpful for out in the field where there is no textbook answer for every problem.

During the pandemic, the program moved to an online format.

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was offered online and in-person even prior to 2020 and was designed to apply to a wide range of sports-related fields.

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Students in the program could work in professional, collegiate and amateur or recreational sports, as well as sports as a form of tourism.

The program started in 2013, in part due to the popularity of the school's undergraduate program in sports and recreation management. The graduate program has about 37 students total.

"The graduate program allows a lot of flexibility to study interest areas and get insight maybe into others," said Bridget Niland, college of hospitality, sport and tourism management dean.

**Lian Bunny**

Reporter

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