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The DataLab: A Groundbreaking Research Collaborative Project

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By Samah Alshrief

The Research Data Services at Seton Hall University Libraries announced the creation of the DataLab in



Spring 2022. This groundbreaking new research project aims to advance research activities across all disciplines of Seton Hall University. In alignment with the Seton Hall strategic plan to advance research productivity, the DataLab supports faculty with their research ideas and supports students in exploring research and data analysis careers.

One of the DataLab initiatives is to act as a hub that connects the library, faculty, and students. The faculty will provide the DataLab with a research idea and potential student researchers' names. The data services at university libraries will provide the DataLab with all the resources needed to work on the research projects, including purchasing new software and intense research methods training. The DataLab will give student researchers a small stipend (\$1000). The DataLab will equip SHU students with numerous data management and analysis skills to prepare them for the job market.

Amy Hunter
and Amy Joh
from
Psychology
stated,
"Through
DataLab, we
provided



stipends to support the research projects of three Psychology Undergraduate Honors students. To enhance their experience, each student attended two Data Services workshops: one on a program they already planned to use for their thesis work and one on a new-to-them technology relevant to their project. All three students chose to attend workshops on SPSS and Microsoft Power BI. Through these workshops they learned new tools and skills that improved their research project and enriched their overall experience."

Overall, we and the students appreciated the support of their involvement in research and the opportunity to expand their knowledge of data analysis and visualization, providing them with critical skills that will serve them well in the next steps in their careers.

Business
Librarian
Chelsea Barrett
sees the
DataLab
"collaborating
on big and
timely projects



where students will be able to collect, analyze and visualize data in real-time. As the expertise of our students continues to grow, the possibilities are endless. Seton Hall's DataLab may become the birthplace of innovation in the years to come." Data Specialist Samah Alshrief added, "I think the DataLab will be the key institutional collaboration driving the university strategic planning in research and innovations. This initiative increases research productivity, data training opportunities, and

faculty and student engagement add more beneficial values to students learning experience at Seton Hall University."

The DataLab was approved in Fall 2022 and launched in Spring 2022 based on funding from the Office of the Provost for Cross-Disciplinary Academies. The DataLab Pilot delivers a premier student experience based on DiploLab run by Professor [Joseph Huddleston](#) to collaborate with the University Libraries Data Services team. Professor Joseph Huddleston (School of Diplomacy and International Relations) and [Lisa DeLuca](#) (University Libraries) were awarded the Seed Grant to establish the Diplomacy Lab Undergraduate Research Lab Pilot. The lab funds, trains, and assists undergraduate students in analyzing qualitative data. The first cohort of DiploLab finished all required training in May 2022.

Building on work created over the last two years by [Sharon Ince](#) and Lisa DeLuca, the DataLab supported eight research projects from different disciplines across the campus. The research projects combine research methodology, data management, and data visualizations. Undergraduate and graduate students in the DataLab currently analyze data from multiple projects from SHMS, Political Science, Psychology, and English Departments and interface with data analysts offered by Data Services.

Lisa DeLuca, the Assistant Dean of Public Services, said, "With support from the Provost's Office, it is expected that DataLab could grow into a larger center that sponsors undergraduate research with support of the University Libraries Research Data Services. This center would feature the latest tools for students in GIS, qualitative and quantitative research tools."

The DataLab application for Spring 2023 is available for faculty [here](#).

Categories: [Research](#)

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