



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
GRAHAM SCHOOL
CONTINUING LIBERAL AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

For Immediate Release

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University of Chicago Graham School Launches Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Informatics

Premier program builds clinician and researcher knowledge in rapidly growing field

CHICAGO, IL (October 27, 2015) – Biomedical informatics, one of the world's fastest-growing interdisciplinary fields, is the latest graduate degree program offered by the University of Chicago Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies. The University brings together its esteemed faculty and programs in genomic research, translational medicine, and computation within the new Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Informatics (MScBMI). This program is unique in its combination of in-person instruction and industry-based capstone projects, made possible through relationships with healthcare organizations like Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois and nonprofit institutions such as NORC at the University of Chicago.

The MScBMI is designed for working adults. The part-time program offers an individualized approach to each student providing direct access to discussion-based classroom instruction and team-based experiences. The program has appointed two faculty directors, David McClintock, MD, Assistant Professor of Pathology and Medical Director of Pathology Informatics and Samuel Volchenbom, MD, PhD, MS, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Center for Research Informatics both at the University of Chicago. Serving as program director is Suzanne Cox, PhD, MPH, who previously oversaw the development of the Health Sciences Integrated PhD Program including a concentration in Health and Biomedical Informatics at Northwestern University.

Dr. Volchenbom explains that the landscape of technology and healthcare is the driving force behind the Biomedical Informatics program. "It's becoming easier for clinicians, researchers, and technicians to use powerful informatics tools to analyze data, yet it's never been more important for healthcare professionals to understand those tools and methods," explains Dr. Volchenbom. "By going through this program, physicians, nurses, and others in healthcare will be able to use and analyze data much more effectively - resulting in improved medical care. This programmatic approach has the potential to completely change the medicine and science behind the data."

Students entering the program - physicians, nurses, pharmacists, researchers, IT professionals and others working in the biomedical field —will broaden their understanding of the many disciplines within biomedical informatics, while also securing subspecialty knowledge through intensive instruction in select areas.

“Students will see great benefit in learning from and networking with some of the nation’s most highly respected faculty and leaders in biomedical informatics,” said Susan Nedza, MD, MBA, Senior Vice President of Clinical Outcomes Management at MPA Healthcare Solutions, a member of the program’s advisory council and a former Chief Medical Officer for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid and Vice President at the American Medical Association. “Tremendous opportunities exist to pursue scholarly and translational research by collaborating with industry-based experts on capstone projects.”

The new Master’s degree program offers a curriculum aimed at providing both breadth in biomedical informatics training – from the basics of electronic health records systems to cutting-edge medical research – and depth in students’ area of interest. Upon completion, graduates will have a strong knowledge of how biomedical information systems are created and managed, and how they can use informatics to collect, manage, store and understand data critical to health outcomes.

Dr. Volchenbom explains that advances in biomedical informatics knowledge and practice will bring new opportunities to improve healthcare safety, quality, and cost-effectiveness. This degree will provide proper training to “ensure these professionals understand the fundamentals of computer programming and statistics and also advance their skill sets in collecting, analyzing, interpreting and applying data. This will enable more rigorous and informed decision-making to drive innovation in care delivery,” he stated.

According to the American Medical Informatics Association, the U.S. currently faces a shortage of qualified workers in this field, and research shows that demand for health informatics workers is projected to grow at twice the rate of employment overall.

The program is accepting applications on a rolling basis for 2016 Spring and Autumn quarters. Students entering MScBMI who are interested in additional preparation can enroll in two boot camp courses which provide a fast-paced, rigorous introduction to biostatistics and an overview of clinical care systems. Prospective applicants interested in more information on admissions requirements and course schedules can visit: <https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/biomedical-informatics>

About The University of Chicago Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies

The Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies is a bridge to a broad local, national and international community of adult learners for the extension of the University's academic values. With a focus on newly emerging, multi-disciplinary fields combining theory and practice, the Graham School has a history of providing innovative, strategic learning solutions to individuals as well as to private, nonprofit, and public sector organizations in the liberal arts, business and professional disciplines.

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