

Mathematics and Statistics

Mathematics has always held a central position in the liberal arts, and over time it has also come to play an important role in more and more aspects of our lives. Mathematical analysis and modeling are involved in many areas far beyond the traditional association of mathematics with the physical sciences and engineering. This fact is reflected in the diversity of the students who study at least some mathematics during their time at Washington University — students who recognize the importance of quantitative skills in a world that becomes more and more technological.

Students major in mathematics for many reasons. Some are planning academic careers in mathematics or statistics that involve teaching or research. Others plan to work as actuaries or at other jobs in industry or government. Some plan careers in secondary education. Many majors do not intend to become "mathematicians" at all but simply realize that quantitative training is a valuable asset in many kinds of careers; often, work in mathematics or statistics is meant to complement their study in other areas. Still other majors just view mathematics as an interesting concentration in their liberal arts education, even though they plan to enter professional fields such as medicine or law.

The Mathematics and Statistics program gives majors and minors a broad introduction to the subject. Majors choose among several tracks to complete their study; these tracks add different emphases to their programs and reflect individual interests or professional goals. Majors are encouraged to complete additional work (perhaps even a minor or a second major) in other related areas.

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