

ASA Master's Survey Results - Qualitative

ASA 2017-2018 Masters Follow-Up Survey

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Q69 - Do you have any advice for current statistics students?

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Learn as much about the industry you want to go into as you can while you are still in school. Graduate programs are good at teaching programming and statistical analyses. However, companies want to see that you also understand the terminology, processes, studies, etc. that are used in their industry. Also, do what you can to go above and beyond with the desired skills. For example, take SAS certification exams, or learn some basics of other programming languages through online courses.

Practice coding, do consulting projects and internships. Take the hard theory classes, maybe also some applied math classes

N/A

write more paper

Keep at it! Statistics is a widely varying, challenging and growing area of study!

Yes! Those who would want to follow academic career or any job related to statistics should demand an internship or something their universities involve DURING their education to gain some experience! Because even though you pass a job interview successfully, and answer all the questions correct, the person who filled the resume with an experience in related fields will most likely get the job...

Do internships and side projects/research to get as much "real world" experience as possible.

Always learn new things!

It's not enough to be a generalist.

Learn R and python. Take some data science courses.

If you want a meaningful, good-paying job using statistics, it is best to obtain a PhD.

Focus more on practical analytical stuff than general knowledge.

No

I would suggest you get an internship in the field you are interested in if possible. I'd also suggest you go to a highly ranked program and find a way to get your education funded. I would also suggest you make contacts along the way by getting to know your professors and getting in touch with people in industry whenever possible.

If there is a real opportunity while you're still doing your studies, just go for it, grab it, do not wait or hesitate (as I did)! It will pay off and if you miss it, well, there will always be some new ones, but still ... just grab it, nothing to lose, only gains!

Stay positive! Before success comes in any man's life, he is sure to meet with much temporary defeat, and, perhaps, some failure. So please do not give up!

Try your hardest to get out of the basic classes that make you repeat undergrad level classes and take more useful courses (if they don't let you, just ignore the basic masters classes and study right before the exams and prioritize your time to the useful courses because you'll get a B at the worst for the basic classes).

Start internship as soon as possible

Focus should be more on CS. Hand written mathematical proves are only for interviews. Assuming you are pursuing a career as a data scientist.

Have faith in yourself

learn Bayes; read Andrew Gelman's work and blog.

Focus on clinical trials, longitudinal study, machine learning. learn to use python and R well!

Yes. Make sure to learn how to work with "real" datasets. Also, ask for help when you need it; multiple times if necessary until you understand it.

Obtain strong mathematical and computational skills prior to pursuing an advanced degree in statistics.

Be honest with what you want from a career and decide what degree is needed to obtain that career.

Get good at persuading people to listen to you and writing code

Stay informed

Seek opportunities to work projects from beginning to end, including presenting concepts and results to general audiences.

Up and coming softwares like Python, Hadoop, etc are good to know, but many established companies are just barely starting to use them and respond better to things like SAS certifications

Try to take a part-time job during the semester, not only for the money, but also the social experience.

Take good notes, and summarize what you've learned in a way that will make it easy to look things up later. Make a "cheat sheet" for every test, whether you are allowed to use it or not; you may use them later in your career!

Take classes that utilize R and Python. During the summer, utilize Coursera or another online cert-focused platform to obtain something concrete that involves SQL, Python, or R. SAS, SPSS, etc. are NOT the future

Be open to moving to get your first position in the field. Be open minded about the type of statistical work you'd do.

Always negotiate salary for any job offers

Analyze real data and make sure to get opportunities to give talks and present your research!

More software training and let you do some internship on your summer break.

Analytical skills will work as a starting block. But communication skills and social etiquette will advance you.

Work hard play hard

constructing a solid background in statistics and broaden your scope of knowledge to learn more in different field.

Learn more softwares

Rote learning is an effective way of studying statistics. Stress sometimes interferes with this. True mastery takes time.

prepare yourself for long-time job hunting and all kinds of related skills

Take machine learning courses. Get experience with real world data. Learn SAS and/or Python.

Learn how to use SQL

Explore all your options! Statistics can take you to more places than you think!

Build a good community of support

Take up more courses in biostatistics if they plan to work in public health research

If you are looking to work for industry. Get hands on experience on at least one popular software

Please enroll, only if you have strong faith that this is what you want to pursue.

Don't be afraid to ask for help if you're struggling in a class or the program.

Focus on one specific area and practice it diligently and perfectly

Absorb as much as possible from capstone/thesis mentors. Learn as much as possible while you have professors to ask questions of. Avoid buzzwords (they undermine your credibility with experienced professionals).

For better or worse, "data analysis" and data cleaning/preparation are topics with which statistics students need to be familiar. Unfortunately, one can rarely do statistics in a professional without having done those things first. Real life is not "toy data."

Work on programming skills and get exposure to different fields

Statistics is useful but not everything. Seek out projects in machine learning, programming and artificial intelligence. Seek out large datasets and those opportunities will come.

Learn R and SAS

If you are looking for a job involving statistics after graduate school, spend some quality time thinking and looking at the type of statistics job you want. There are a lot of different type of analytics jobs out there and they can all ask for different things. Knowing ahead what your industry/sector/career desires can help you shape your grad school classes, career to help you land your job.

Work hard.

Learn as many programming languages as possible. You never know what future employers may be looking for. Also, dive into passion projects early--if you work someplace that supports scientific stature endeavors, those projects could come in handy.

Learn Python!!!

Even if you aren't going into teaching, learn how to communicate statistical concepts to others. You can't just present a model or solution, to have impact you must explain it in a way people can grasp.

Interpretation is key. Learn to master that skill

Don't pay for college if you can help it. If its too late for that, pay off the loans as quickly as possible. When they're paid off, funnel those extra payments into a retirement account. Also, move away from the equator now. Don't wait for climate change to make that a necessity.

Summarize what you've learned each week and in each class. Make yourself a reference tool where you can easily look up and remember what you've learned.

Become very fluent with writing scripts, in R, SAS, python, etc. Learn to do simple SQL queries, this will be very useful. When reporting results to non-stats folks, keep it simple - when choosing between one very complex model and a simpler one that gives you essentially the same results, choose the simple one. It will be easier to interpret and to communicate findings in English and not in terms of parameters or variance components :)

Explore and try to discover your passion, and when you identify your passion, then continue to pursue and develop that passion.

Soft skills are important, learn to speak to non-stat audiences. Subject matter expert is important too; don't analyze in a vacuum.

learn how to manage, query, and otherwise work with large data sets - learn Python, Hadoop etc. R and SAS are necessary to learn to perform the analyses, but you have to be able to get the data out of the databases to do the analyses

coding skills

Network, it makes finding a job much easier.

Ensure you participate in conferences to create more networks with other professionals

Experience beside education and grades is key when applying for job positions. Focus on explaining your technical abilities and experience when interviewing for potential positions.

Engineering Skill is very important

Don't think about statistics as black box magic. Each method still has its assumptions and limitations. More importantly, you still have to make sense of the results in the context.

no

Get your hands dirty. Work on projects early and always have goals.

your degree is applicable in a huge variety of fields of work! focus on learning to be a good general problem-solver, have a good sense of the foundations of statistics and data analysis, and you will go far and be adaptable in any kind of job.

Keep an open mind: don't exclusively become a Frequentist, Bayesian, data modeler, algorithmic modeler, R user, or SAS purist. Take a little from everything and constantly strive to apply what you learn to problems/questions in other fields.

Knowing the math behind the statistics can set you apart from your Computer Science peers who might only know how to code an algorithm but not how the algorithm actually works - this is important for client interaction and trust!

Find some investigators to work with ASAP. The real-world experience is critical to getting the experience you will need. Also learn R; it is very useful.

Plan your future

Get the degree that matches the job you want, don't get a degree and then look for a job. The hiring differences between PhDs and Masters degrees are downplayed by schools even though they're critically important for what kind of job you can get. Regardless of experience or expertise (even exceeding that of a PhD holding competitor), many positions won't consider you if you don't have a PhD.

For MS student: get good grades and try your best to find a good intern

Do real data analysis as much as you can.

Learn Python if you want a job in the industry.

Have some experience before graduate would help a lot!

DO NOT FOCUS TOO MUCH ON GRADES! RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND WORKING EXPERIENCE ARE MORE IMPORTANT IF YOU WANT TO FIND JOBS AFTER GRADUATION.

Don't stress so much. Make friends or at least get to know everyone in your program, especially those who come from different backgrounds than your own. Go to office hours! Don't be afraid to ask questions. Work with all your classmates but choose your study buddies wisely - make sure they learn at the same pace as you. Absorb as much statistical theory in your classes as you can, and then work hard on your programming/hands-on skills whenever you have time. If you come from a non-stats/math background, understand that many of your classmates have learned some parts of course material before, and you will catch up. Be patient with yourself.

Take as many interesting classes as you can!

(1) Enjoy the journey (2) Focus on learning, not grades (3) Develop your computing skills

Master as many programming languages as you can and do not slack when it comes to writing. Being able to correctly articulate your findings is just as, if not more, important than your actual modeling results.

If you get involved in data science don't forget about theory

Networking and study hard

internship experience is important

Make a study plan for your future career path

Need to learn more about industry and looking for internship actively

Be passionate and find a good advisor. Don't lose sight of why you are pursuing a higher degree of education.

Find a project you are interested in and analyze it continuously throughout your graduate studies, applying all the new models and tricks to your data. The extra practice will help significantly.

Do an internship. The work experience trumps the degree in a job search.

Learn how to communicate effectively in addition to learning the material in your courses.

Be you.

LEARN TO PROGRAM, preferentially in a language (e.g., R) rather than a keyword-based (e.g., SAS) environment. Know when statistical tests/methods are (in)appropriate to use. And learn to write well in English.

It's a good major concerning the big data era that we are in and good luck to all of us statistics people.

Get field experience, especially if you're planning on going outside of academia

Learn as many programming languages as possible, practice soft skills as much as the harder ones.

Learn to program in Python and C/C++

Try to do some sort of Statistics consultation work, Try to do an internship, Teaching undergraduate statistics classes trains you to talk and explain statistics concepts, outputs to non-statisticians.

Use your friends in the program

Start with the definition and visualise the concept and see the picture.

don't limit your studies/range of content to your classes, be sure to branch out and absorb as much info/skills/knowledge as you can in and out of class

If you are going into the job force, an internship is more important than a thesis.

Study!

If you want to do applied stats, try your best to learn analyzing skills.

Learn SAS. Go to an affordable school for a masters degree.

My advice to other current statistical students would be to tell them that everything matters in statistics and everything really is connected. When you first start you can sometimes fail to realize how influential simple topics are and how big they later become. Having a strong base and truly knowing the basics will help you go far and become a better statistician.

If you're interested in getting a job immediately afterwards, try to gain more experience to build your resume.

Learn both R and SAS; Work hard on every subject

be willing to spend more time exploring data before building any models and making any inferences

N/A

Get that money

Take more CS classes

Take more programming classes or learn coding on your own

Getting into data science is harder than you think, if that's why you're a current statistics student. I do think getting a masters degree from a reputable school, not some of the expensive new data science programs, is helpful, but you may have to try for a software engineering or data analyst position to actually get into a data scientist position.

Don't let education get in the way of your learning.

Start your job search early. Choose courses focusing on application.

Do as many real-world analyses/studies as possible. Fewer esoteric homework assignments.

Erase chalk/white boards in an up and down motion, because side-to-side makes your butt wiggle.

Even though it's often the focus of your classes, throwing the data into a model is just the cherry on top at the end of a project. The meat is often dealing with the data itself; scrubbing, manipulating, transforming, choosing what information to use and which observations to use, etc., so that your end result is as clear and unambiguous as possible.

Get more inter expenses. Ability to do EDA is more important than advanced modeling.