The Technische Universität Berlin
Faculty IV Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
The Data Science and Engineering (DS&E) Master's Track: A Guidance Document (Version 4.5)

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Synopsis. The *Data Science & Engineering* (formerly, Data Analytics) *Master's Track*, enables students pursing a M.Sc. in Computer Science, Information Systems Management or Computer Engineering, to specialize in data science and engineering. To meet the track requirements, students must complete courses in three core competencies: (1) *data analytics*, (2) *scalable data management*, and (3) *a domain-specific application area* as well as complete a Master's Thesis in data science or data engineering. This guidance document offers students general advice in the selection of courses, the procedure to follow when identifying a thesis topic, and prospective career possibilities. Students who complete both their respective M.Sc. degree and track requirements, will receive – besides their M.Sc. degree – a *Data Science and Engineering Master's Track Certificate* issued by Faculty IV. ***Questions or comments concerning this document should be directed to tina dot schwabe at tu-berlin dot de.***

1. Motivation[1]

The last decades were marked by the digitization of virtually all aspects of our daily lives. Today, industry, government institutions and NGOs, and, of course, science and engineering face an avalanche of digital data daily. Partially due to a reduction in disk storage costs, a paradigm shift towards cloud storage services, and the ubiquitous availability of networked devices. At first glance, this appears to be favorable for our increasingly networked society. However, in many ways it is a burden.

Data (often appearing as 'raw data') is neither information, nor knowledge. Data is of great value, once it has been refined and analyzed, to address well-formulated questions, concerning problems of interest. It is only then that economic and social benefits can be fully realized. Modern big data analytics questions are often solved using techniques drawn from varying fields, including graph and network analysis, machine learning, mathematics, statistics, signal processing, and text processing, among others.

Currently, data scientists, well versed in (scalable) data analysis methods, scalable systems programming, and knowledge in an application domain are needed to derive insight from big data. Unfortunately, data scientists with skills in both scalable systems and (potentially domain specific) data analysis methods are few in number. They are expensive and in high-demand. Consequently, this limits the amount of value that can currently be generated from big data for society as a whole.

Moreover, despite the ever-increasing number of data science programs at universities worldwide and student enrollments, it will still be impossible to educate, so-called *Jack-of-all-trades*, given that the skills required are complex and diverse (as depicted in Figure 1). Prior to the rise of the term *big data*, only a few programmers with MPI expertise, predominantly located in supercomputing centers were sufficient in number. For many decades, software engineers and general users in varying domains did not have to worry about scalability issues in their computing systems, thanks in part to higher-level programming languages, compilers, and database systems. In contrast, today's existing technologies have reached their limits due to big data requirements, which involve data volume, data rate and heterogeneity, and the complexity of the analytics. Indeed, the need for more advanced analytics will go beyond relational algebra. They will need to employ complex user-defined functions and support both iterations and distributed state.

[1] *The motivation section was predominantly drawn from Prof. Volker Markl [1, 2].*

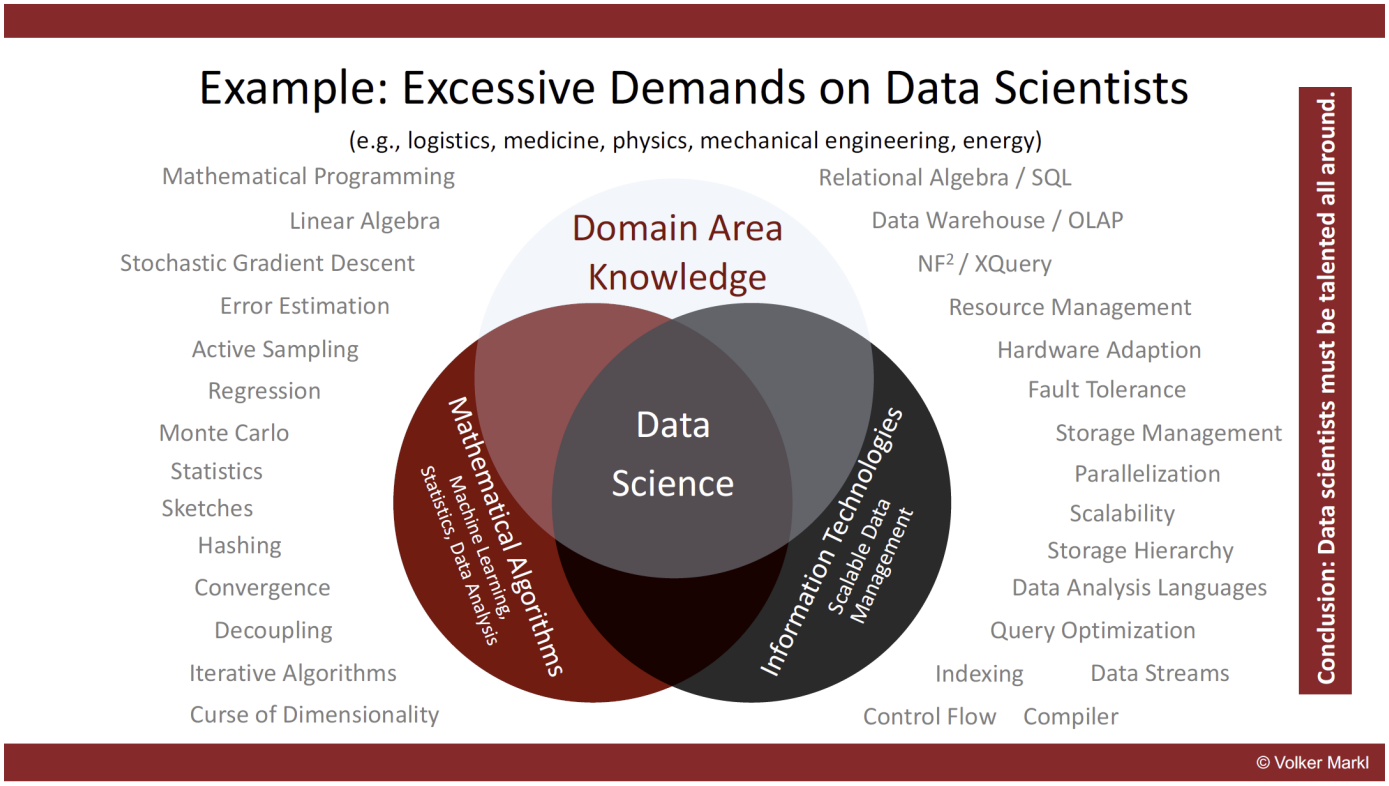

Figure 1. The vast array of demands placed on data scientists today.

In the era of many-core processors, cloud computing, and NoSQL, we must ensure that well-established declarative language concepts (inherent in relational database systems) make their way into big data systems. To make this a reality, the research community will need to address the related challenges. For example, (i) designing a programming language specification that does not require systems programming skills, (ii) mapping programs expressed in this programming language to a computing platform of their own choosing, and (iii) executing these in a scalable manner.

This means devising execution strategies that are distributed, parallelized, and support both in-memory technologies and out-of-core execution for data-intensive algorithms. To meet this challenge the compiler, data analysis, database systems, distributed systems, and machine learning communities, among others, will have to come together. We will have to develop novel scalable algorithms and systems that can organize the data deluge and distill information to create value.

Furthermore, the power of declarative languages, to enable *automatic optimization*, *parallelization*, and the *adaptation of a program to varying distributed systems* and *novel hardware architectures* (depending on data distribution, data size, data rate, and system load) must be preserved. In this way, we will overcome the current "stone age" in big data analytics. That is, algorithm specifications in systems that do not automatically optimize (e.g., MPI, MapReduce), imperative languages (e.g., C), object-oriented languages (e.g., Java), and relational-oriented languages (e.g., SQL, XQuery) with non-tunable external driver programs, and technical computing systems (e.g., R, MATLAB) that do not scale.

2. Detailed Descriptions of the Master's Track Rules

Please study the following subsections very carefully, most of your questions should be answered.

2.1 Qualification and Main Competence Areas. The Data Science and Engineering Master's Track qualifies students to pursue careers as a *Data Scientist*, *Data Analyst*, or *Data Engineer*. They will learn about data analysis methods, their application to real-world problems in varying domains, learn more about the internals of database systems, and develop programming skills with a focus on massively-parallel data processing systems.

2.2 Requirements. Students following the track should be enrolled in one of the following TU Berlin Master's Programs: *Computer Science* ('Informatik'), *Information Systems Management* ('Wirtschafts-informatik') or *Computer Engineering* ('Technische Informatik'). Their acceptance to the Data Science and Engineering Track is automatic.

2.3 Prerequisites. Students interested in joining the track should possess: (a) very strong English language skills, (b) programming skills in functional (e.g., Scala) and object-oriented (e.g., Java) programming languages, (c) fundamental skills in database management systems, and (d) knowledge in mathematical foundations (e.g., linear algebra, probability, statistics).

2.4 Credit Points (ECTS) and Track Structure. To earn a M.Sc. degree, students must achieve 120 ECTS. Of these, 90 ECTS must fulfill the requirements described below, to qualify for the track certificate.

Credit Points	Competence	Course	Notes[2]
24 ECTS	Data Analytics (DA)	Machine Learning 1 or Machine Intelligence I	*mandatory* course
		DA Elective 1	see Appendix A, Table 1
		DA Elective 2	
		DA Elective 3	
18 ECTS	Scalable Data Management (SDM)	Database Technology	*mandatory* course
		SDM Elective 1	see Appendix A, Table 2
		SDM Elective 2	
6 ECTS	Domain Specific Application (DSA)	DSA Elective	see Appendix A, Table 3
9 ECTS	Project	Project Elective	see Appendix A, Table 4
3 ECTS	Seminar	Seminar Elective	see Appendix A, Table 5
30 ECTS	Thesis	Master's Thesis	The thesis must be a *data science-oriented* topic, supervised by a TU Berlin Professor usually from Fak. IV.
Total: 90 ECTS			

2.5 Enrolling in the Track. To enroll in the track, students must join the "*Data Science & Engineering Track*" course located at https://isis.tu-berlin.de/course/view.php?id=50139. Students are advised to complete the Excel spreadsheet available for download from the abovementioned website and forward it on to Tina Schwabe (tina dot schwabe at tu-berlin dot de) for review.

2.6 Changes to the Track. Track requirements may change annually. Therefore, students are required to regularly monitor announcements posted on the ISIS *Data Science and Engineering* Track forum.

Appendix A. Representative List of Master's Courses Across Competence Areas

Special Instructions (Read Carefully):

1. Below we list a *representative* list of elective courses that should meet track requirements across varying competencies. If a student wishes to enroll in a course that is not explicitly listed in one of the tables listed below, then you are urged to reach out to *Tina Schwabe* via email or in person, to obtain assurance that the course meets track requirements, **prior to enrolling in the course**.

2. **TU Berlin's course catalog is fairly vast. Thus, we are unable to maintain an accurate record, in this document.** For example, regarding when a course will be offered (i.e., WiSe/WS or SoSe/SS), the specific target language used in class (i.e., EN or DE), or whether new courses will be coming online, among other things. Therefore, students are responsible to obtain the latest information. Students are urged to review the latest course offerings as contained in the Technische Universität Berlin *Course Catalog*: https://moseskonto.tu-berlin.de/moses/modultransfersystem/bolognamodule/suchen.html.

3. Unfortunately, **course schedules (i.e., day and time) are subject to change.** There have been instances where some courses are offered at the exact day and time. In these cases, students should seek to resolve scheduling conflicts by appropriately selecting their courses.

4. ***Project* / *Seminar* courses can only be applied to the *Project* / *Seminar* requirement, respectively.**

[2] Caveat: Courses listed in the appendices are suggestions. Be aware that some of the existing courses may be removed from the course catalog, while others may be added each term. It is the student's responsibility to request a review of their proposed plan each term.

5. ***Data Analytics courses*** should mainly be theory (foundations) courses.

6. **For a current list of courses students are advised to visit the following groups and their respective webpages.** Courses are primarily drawn from varying research groups in Fak. IV: a representative list is shown below. Note: We are unable to list all of the groups, since the list is dynamic and ever-growing. For an up-to-date list visit: https://www.tu.berlin/eecs/einrichtungen/professuren-fachgebiete.

Group	Professors
Agent Technologies in Business Applications & Telecommunication	Prof. Dr. Sahin Albayrak
Algorithmics and Computational Complexity	N.N.
Big Data Engineering	Prof. Dr. Matthias Böhm
Communication Systems	Prof. Dr. Thomas Sikora
Communications and Information Theory	Prof. Dr. Guiseppe Caire
Computer Vision & Remote Sensing	Prof. Dr. Olaf Hellwich
Data Integration and Data Preparation	Prof. Dr. Ziawasch Abedjan
Database Systems and Information Management	Prof. Dr. Volker Markl
Data Engineering for Machine Learning	Prof. Dr. Sebastian Schelter
Data Integration und Data Preparation	Prof. Dr. Ziawasch Abedjan
Distributed and Operating Systems	Prof. Dr. Odej Kao
Econometrics and Business Statistics	Prof. Dr. Axel Werwatz
Efficient Algorithms	N.N.
Embedded Systems Architecture	N.N.
Image Communication	Prof. Dr. Thomas Wiegand
Information Systems Engineering	Prof. Dr. Stefan Tai
Intelligent Systems	Prof. Dr. Marc Toussaint
Internet and Society	Prof. Dr. Bettina Berendt
Internet Architecture and Management	Prof. Dr. Stefan Schmid
Language and Communication in Biological and Artificial Systems	Prof. Dr. Fatma Deniz
Machine Learning	Prof. Dr. Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Learning and Communication	Prof. Dr. Wojciech Samek
Machine Learning and Security	Prof. Dr. Konrad Rieck
Scalable Software Systems	Prof. Dr. David Bermbach
Modeling of Cognitive Processes	Prof. Dr. Henning Sprekeler
Models and Theory of Distributed Systems	Prof. Dr. Uwe Nestmann
Network Information Theory	Prof. Dr. Slawomir Stanczak
Neural Information Processing	Prof. Dr. Klaus Obermayer
Neurotechnology	Prof. Dr. Benjamin Blankertz
Open Distributed Systems	Prof. Dr. Manfred Hauswirth
Quality and Usability Lab	Prof. Dr. Sebastian Möller
Remote Sensing Image Analysis	Prof. Dr. Begüm Demir
Robotic Interactive Perception	Prof. Dr. Guillermo Gallego
Robotics and Biology Laboratory	Prof. Dr. Oliver Brock
Service-centric Networking	Prof. Dr. Axel Küpper
Telecommunication Networks	Prof. Dr. Falko Dressler
Uncertainty, Inverse Modeling and Machine Learning	Prof. Dr. Stefan Haufe

Table 1. A Representative List of Eligible *Data Analytics* Courses.

Course Title	Module No.	ECTS	Professor
Machine Learning 2	40551	9	Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Learning Lab Course	40635	9	Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Learning Engineering	41143	6	Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Intelligence II	40549	6	Klaus Obermayer
Machine Learning for Computer Security	41101	6	Konrad Rieck
Smart Security Lab	41116	6	Konrad Rieck
Adversarial Machine Learning	41117	6	Konrad Rieck
Deep Learning 1	41071	6	Klaus-Robert Müller
Deep Learning 2	41072	6	Klaus-Robert Müller
Image Processing and Learning for Earth Observation (IPL4EO)	40937	6	Begüm Demir
Medical Image Processing	40882	6	Anja Hennemuth
Econometric Analysis of Longitudinal and Panel Data	70120	6	Axel Werwatz
Introduction to Financial Econometrics	70173	6	Axel Werwatz
Microeconometrics	70187	6	Axel Werwatz
Multivariate Statistical Learning	70190	6	Axel Werwatz
Time Series Analysis	70250	6	Axel Werwatz
Treatment Effect Analysis	70251	6	Axel Werwatz
Ökonometrie (Econometrics)	70198	6	Axel Werwatz
Natural Language Processing	41047	6	Sebastian Möller
Advanced Natural Language Processing	41270	6	Sebastian Möller
Digital Image Processing	40414	6	Olaf Hellwich
Automatic Image Analysis	40345	6	Olaf Hellwich
Applied Environmental Econometrics in R	70383	6	Astrid Cullmann
AI and Cybersecurity	40900	6	Sahin Albayrak

Table 2. A Representative List of Eligible *Scalable Data Management* Courses.

Course Title	Module No.	ECTS	Professor
MDS Management of Data Streams	40310	6	Volker Markl
DBTLAB Database Technology Lab	40037	6	Volker Markl
DMH Data Management on Modern Hardware	40804	6	Volker Markl
Architecture of Machine Learning Systems	41078	6	Matthias Böhm
Data Integration and Large-scale Analysis	41112	6	Matthias Böhm
Cloud Computing	40368	6	Odej Kao
Cloud Native Architecture and Engineering	40103	9	Stefan Tai
Algorithms for Distributed Systems	41127	6	Stefan Schmid
DEML - Data Engineering for Machine Learning	41221	6	Sebastian Schelter
MLMMI - Machine Learning Model Management and Inference	41289	6	Sebastian Schelter
Data Integration: Algorithms and Systems	41213	6	Ziawasch Abedjan
Scalability Engineering	41241	6	David Bermbach

Table 3. A Representative List of Eligible *Domain Specific Application* Courses.

Course Title	Module No.	ECTS	Professor
Digitale Märkte (Digital Markets)	70414	6	Nancy Wünderlich
Energy Economics - Energy Sector Modeling (EW-MOD)	70129	6	Christian Hirschhausen
Energy Systems - Technology and Innovation (EW-TAI)	70132	6	Christian Hirschhausen
Energy Economics	30024	6	Thomas William Brown
Corporate Finance and Investment Controlling	70254	6	Hans Hirth
Integriertes Informationsmanagement	70166	6	Rüdiger Zarnekow
IT-Service-Management	70175	6	Rüdiger Zarnekow
Patentrecht und Patentmanagement I (Patent Rights and Patent Management)	70000	6	Martin Sebastian Haase
Speech Signal Processing and Speech Technology	40721	6	Sebastian Möller
The Economics of Climate Change	60431	6	Ottmar Edenhofer
The Economics of Climate Policy	60773	6	Ottmar Edenhofer
Psychology for Engineers	50535	6	Eva Wiese
Energie und Ressourcen - Grundlagen	70125	6	Joachim Müller-Kirchenbauer
Introduction to Space Geodesy	61440	6	Frank Flechtner
Global Logistics Management	70143	6	Frank Straube
Bahnbetrieb	50169	6	Birgit Milius
Sustainable Production and Operations Management	70341	6	Thomas Volling

Table 4. A Representative List of Eligible *Project* Courses.

Course Title	Module no.	ECTS	Professor
BDSPRO Big Data Systems Project	40494	9	Volker Markl
ROC Foundations for Graduate Research in Data Management and Machine Learning Systems	41135	9	Volker Markl
Master Project: Distributed Systems	40552	9	Odej Kao
Machine Learning Project	40653	9	Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Learning and Security - Project	41102	9	Konrad Rieck
Project Large-scale Data Engineering	41086 (PJ)	9	Matthias Böhm
Project Machine Learning Systems	41341	12	Matthias Böhm
Project Deep Learning for Earth Observation	41012	9	Begüm Demir
Internet of Services Lab (Project)	40514	9	Axel Küpper
Data Science Project	40693	9	Sahin Albayrak
Intelligent Cybersecurity Applications	40901	9	Sahin Albayrak
Advanced Distributed Systems Prototyping	40984	12	David Bermbach
Advanced Cloud Prototyping	41153	12	Stefan Tai
Master Project: Large Scale Data Integration	41215	9	Ziawasch Abedjan
DEAI - Data Engineering for AI and ML	41345	12	Sebastian Schelter
Machine Learning in Medical Image Processing	40898	9	Anja Hennemuth
Advanced Edge AI Prototyping	41342	12	Stefan Schulte

Table 5. A Representative List of Eligible *Seminar* Courses.

Course Title	Module No.	ECTS	Professor
BDASEM Big Data Analytics Seminar	40353	3	Volker Markl
IMSEM Seminar on Hot Topics in Information Management	40001	3	Volker Markl
Seminar Large-scale Data Engineering	41086 (SEM)	3	Matthias Böhm
Machine Learning and Data Management Systems	41146	3	Matthias Böhm
Machine Learning and Security	41104	3	Konrad Rieck
Machine Learning in Science and Industry	41044	3	Klaus-Robert Müller
Machine Learning in Neuroscience	41148	3	Klaus-Robert Müller
Recent Trends in Vision-Language Models for Earth Observation (VLM4EO)	41274	3	Begüm Demir
Internet of Services Lab (Seminar)	41043	3	Axel Küpper
Master Seminar: Operating Complex IT Systems	40036	3	Odej Kao
Uncertainty in Machine Learning	41113	3	Stefan Haufe
Seminar Hot Topics in Computer Vision	40488	3	Olaf Hellwich
Machine and Behavior	41184	3	Oliver Brock
RDSEM Seminar on Responsible Data Engineering	41224	3	Sebastian Schelter
Research Seminar Data Engineering for Machine Learning	41279	3	Sebastian Schelter
Data Integration Seminar	41214	3	Ziawasch Abedjan
Research Seminar Data Integration and Data Preparation	41218	3	Ziawasch Abedjan

Appendix C. Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What is a track?

A1. In general, a track is a suggested sequence of courses that profile a specific specialization. Students who successfully complete the track will be awarded a certificate from Faculty IV. A certificate indicates that a student has followed a structured academic program with the intent to pursue specialization in data science.

Q2. Who can follow a track?

A2. By default, students enrolled in the Computer Science ("*Informatik*"), Information Systems Management ("*Wirtschaftsinformatik*") or Computer Engineering ("Technische Informatik") Master's programs are eligible to pursue the track. **Unfortunately, due to resource constraints, we are unable to consider other study programs at this time beyond the three mentioned above.**

Q3. Will my study period be extended, if I follow the track?

A3. No, neither the amount of ECTS credit points, nor the number of semesters will increase. Moreover, a longer study period will not lead to a disqualification from the track.

Q4. How to go about selecting a thesis topic?

A4. Students should speak with Senior Researchers, Postdocs, or PhD students, in the participating research groups, i.e. "Chairs," to identify an open thesis topic of mutual interest. For a list of representative data science-oriented publications have a look at [3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8], and for Master's Thesis topics see [9]. For a glimpse into ongoing research activities in big data/data science see [10]. For open problems and a vision of the future of computer science see [11, 12], respectively. For further discussion about the evolution of the field and varying applications across Germany see [13, 14], respectively.

Q5. What are my prospective career possibilities?

A5. Students who complete the data analytics track are prepared to pursue careers as *Data Analysts*, *Data Engineers*, or *Data Scientists*. For information about big data projects in industry within Germany have a look at [15]. In some

cases, students enter a PhD program with the aim to further specialize in a research topic, such as *deep learning* or *streaming systems*. Examples of recent (DIMA specific) PhD thesis topics, include [16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21]. Recent (ML/IDA specific) PhD thesis topics, include [22, 20]. For more about job opportunities and earning potential across Europe have a look at [24, 25].

Q6. If I still have questions or doubts, not answered yet?

A6. This document is assumed to be comprehensive. It should address the most relevant questions. In case of any doubt (e.g., you are enrolled in a different study programme) or concern, please contact Dr. Tina Schwabe (tina dot schwabe at tu-berlin dot de). Also, please look for announcements (e.g., the annual "*Data Science and Engineering Track Intro Presentation*") posted on the *Data Science and Engineering* Track forum in ISIS.

Q7. How do I obtain my certificate?

A7. You will need to present evidence (e.g., academic transcript) that you have met the track requirements. Once this has been verified, we will prepare your certificate.

Appendix D. Version History

Version	Authors	Date	Remarks
1.1	M. Schubotz, H. Hemsen, V. Markl	28.06.13	Initial version in German
1.2	M. Schubotz, J. Soto, V. Markl	31.07.15	Translation into English
1.3	M. Schubotz, J. Soto, V. Markl	16.01.16	Updates and Revisions
2.0	R. Kutsche, V. Markl, J. Soto	09.10.17	Full Revision, new version 2
3.0	R. Kutsche, V. Markl, J. Soto	05.03.19	Track name change, clarification on course selection.
4.0	V. Markl, J. Soto	07.10.20	Removal of courses that are no longer offered, replacement of broken links, removal of sample curriculum, insertion of the URLSs corresponding to the teaching webpages for varying university groups.
4.1	V. Markl, J. Soto	14.10.20	Revision of Q2 to limit the track to: CS, CE, ISM.
4.2	V. Markl, J. Soto, T. Schwabe	31.03.24	Overall revision of the whole document, e.g., App. A, 5. new, new person of contact, list of varying university groups updated (URLs where deleted; App. A, 6.), addition of new courses and removal of courses that are no longer offered (App. A, tables 1-5), replacement and updating of broken links.
4.3	V. Markl, J. Soto, T. Schwabe	14.11.24	Updates and revisions
4.4	V. Markl, J. Soto, T. Schwabe	30.09.25	Updates and revisions
4.5	V. Markl, J. Soto, T. Schwabe	09.10.26	Updates and revisions

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[21] *Query Processing on Heterogeneous Systems* (PhD Thesis), V. Rosenfeld, TU Berlin, December 2023.

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[23] *Debugging learning algorithms: Understanding and correcting machine learning models (PhD Thesis)*, C. J. Anders, TU Berlin, January 2024.

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