

Software Licensing for Data Analysis

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The Academic Computing Advisory Committee (chaired by Dean Eckman) and the Information Technology Leadership Council (Chaired by David Chun and Luis Vidal) have found that there have been several requests for site licenses for software programs used during data analysis, with SPSS (statistical analysis), Mplus (data models), and NVivo (qualitative text analysis) coming up most frequently.

The following table provides information on each software program and its current status regarding licensing:

Software Program	UM Computers	Students	Student Public Labs	Digital Scholarship Lab
JMP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes†
Maple	Yes	No	Yes	Yes†
MATLAB	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes†
Mathematica	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes†
Mplus	No	No	No	No
NVivo	No	No	No	Yes†
R / R Studio	No	Yes*	No	Yes
SAS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SPSS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Stata	No	No	No	Yes†

*free, open-source

†starting Summer 2018

At Richter Library, we have observed similar patterns and fielded requests for licenses for software programs. Through the administration of the Digital Scholarship Lab and over 300 consultations this academic year—and feedback from faculty members, students, and the Graduate School—, we have identified areas of need. At our university, there is great variation in the software programs used during the research process, with R/R Studio the predominant statistics program at RSMAS, SPSS widely used at the Miller School of Medicine, and SPSS/SAS/Stata/R all used at the Gables Campus, with usage largely dependent on the instructor or department.

In our goal of broadening software support, we are in conversation with departments and faculty members who agree that there is great need for SPSS licenses for students (currently we provide licenses for faculty and staff), and need for a “middle-level” amount of NVivo licenses for qualitative researchers. Next steps might involve building a complete picture of the scope of need on our campuses. One action could be to develop a plan for the administration of “middle-level” licenses (neither department nor campus-wide), with the UM Libraries—or another unit—responsible for the administration of licenses. A second action could be to conduct a University-wide needs assessment that is co-coordinated between interested parties.