



**Arizona State University**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN  
DIGITAL AUDIENCE STRATEGY  
STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2018-2019**

Arizona State University  
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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Arizona State University's Master of Science in Digital Audience Strategy program and to the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication! You are now part of an incredible network of strategic thinkers, effective storytellers and impactful leaders who are driving digital communication forward.

Search engines, smartphones and social media have forever changed the way people consume messages online, and competition for audience attention is at an all-time high. Organizations in every industry need strategists who can combine audience research and data with innovative and creative content to connect the right messages to the right audience—and this program will prepare you to do just that. You will work side by side with industry veterans, top scholars and your fellow students to learn the theories, tools and tactics that propel audience growth, and you'll put them to practice by working with real clients. You will nurture the leadership skills that will help you successfully grow audiences wherever you go next.

This handbook lays the foundation for your success within this program. It sets shared expectations for ourselves as learners, communicators and colleagues. It also outlines the standards and policies set by the Cronkite School and ASU's [Office of Graduate Education](#).

Read it. Save it. Ask questions about it if policies seem unclear. It is your responsibility to make sure you are following it in letter and in spirit.

I look forward to working with you to achieve your goals in this program and beyond.

Sincerely,



Jessica Pucci  
Director of Digital Audience Programs

## GRADUATE STUDENT PLEDGE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit myself to meeting the highest standards of excellence, ethics and integrity, according to:

- [The Society for Professional Journalists Code of Ethics](#)
- [Cronkite School Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Cronkite Social Media Guidelines](#)
- This Graduate Student Handbook

By signing below, I also affirm the following:

1. I take pride in my work. I dedicate myself to developing as a journalist, multimedia storyteller and industry leader.
2. I take pride in my professionalism. I show up on time, meet deadlines, communicate clearly and openly, cultivate enthusiasm and give maximum effort to my work.
3. I respect my sources and the communities I cover. I commit myself to seeking a wide range of perspectives.
4. I uphold the journalistic principles of fairness, accuracy, independence, accountability and transparency.
5. I recognize that my classmates, teachers and mentors are critical to my success in this program and the rest of my career. I treat each one with respect and offer support whenever I can.
6. I acknowledge I will have access to sensitive client accounts, passwords and user data, and I will protect any and all client and audience information. That means I may not access these accounts outside the scope of my work or share passwords with anyone outside of this program. If I have any questions about access to or use of accounts or data, I will ask Cronkite faculty for clarification.
7. I appreciate that, as a student at the Cronkite School, I have the opportunity to drive innovation and shape the future of media, communication and public discourse. I am prepared to experiment, adapt and support my Cronkite colleagues in doing the same.



8. As a member of the Cronkite School community, I bring a sense of curiosity and a spirit of collaboration to all that I do.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## MyASU

Your my.asu.edu portal is your go-to place for information about courses, transcripts, transportation, student success and support, finances, university policies and the academic calendar. Please take time to familiarize yourself with these areas:

**Profile:** Update your address, phone number, email information, or add guests, such as a parent, so they can look FERPA-protected information including grades.

**My Classes:** Click on the name of each course to access the corresponding Blackboard content. This is where you will see the syllabus, find links to readings and submit assignments. Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the structure of each course.

**Final Transcript:** If you sent in a transcript for admission to the program before you graduated, send your final transcript with your degree posted.

**Academic Integrity Module:** ASU Graduate Education module reviewing academic integrity expectations. Please complete as soon as possible. Please note, this module explains the university-wide policy. The Cronkite School academic integrity policy includes additions specific to journalism students. Please be familiar with both policies.

**Academic Calendar** (bottom right box): This has important dates you need to monitor, including when classes begin, last day to register or drop/add classes, tuition and fee payment deadlines, holidays, withdrawal deadlines, schedule of classes available and when to enroll.

**Student Services:** This includes Health and Wellness Resources, such as health insurance, counseling, disability services; Student Success and Support, such as disability services, tutoring and student success services; and Job & Career Services. Please note these job resources are university-wide and not specific to the Cronkite School.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

All students are expected to adhere to the Arizona Board of Regents Student Code of Conduct and university policies and procedures:

<https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct>  
<https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/PoliciesAndProcedures>

Students are expected to regularly check their ASU email accounts for messages from the university and the Cronkite School. Students also are expected to regularly check their MyASU priority tasks for messages and holds from the university. Students are responsible for managing their tuition payments, finances and tracking university academic calendar deadlines.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The Cronkite School has a zero tolerance policy toward academic dishonesty that is enforced within every course and educational activity offered or sanctioned by the school. Any allegation of academic dishonesty will be referred to the school's Standards Committee for review and recommendation to the dean of the school. If any student is found to have engaged in academic dishonesty in any form – including but not limited to cheating, plagiarizing and fabricating – that student shall receive a grade of XE for the class and will be dismissed from the school. There will be no exceptions.

International students who violate academic integrity policies may be dismissed immediately. Being withdrawn from a degree program can have immediate consequences regarding visa status, and dismissed students are required to leave the country immediately per immigration and visa rules.

At the beginning of every Cronkite class, each student will be given a copy of the full academic integrity policy, along with accompanying information on plagiarism. Students must sign a pledge that indicates they have read and understood the material and agree to abide by the policy.

The policy, along with guidance on how to avoid plagiarism and fabrication, can be found at [http://cronkite.asu.edu/assets/pdf/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy.pdf](http://cronkite.asu.edu/assets/pdf/Academic_Integrity_Policy.pdf).

## PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

In addition to academic integrity commitments, students in Cronkite School programs must abide by the highest levels of journalism ethics. This includes following the core principles of the [Society of Professional Journalist's Code of Ethics](#), including seeking and reporting truth, minimizing harm, acting independently accountability and transparency. The [Cronkite School Social Media Guidelines](#) are based on these principles. Students are responsible for reading these policies and abiding by them.

## DEGREE OVERVIEW

### Master of Science in Digital Audience Strategy

Degree requirements

The Master of Science in Digital Audience Strategy Degree is a 30-credit-hour program. This includes 21 credits of required core courses, 6 credits of electives, and a 3-credit required capstone course. (See Appendix A for course specifics)

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS KEY POLICIES

All graduate students are expected to make systematic progress toward completion of their degrees. Students are responsible for verifying and tracking satisfactory progress policies as required by their degree program and Graduate Education. If a student fails to satisfy the requirements, the student may be dismissed from his/her program based on the academic unit's recommendation to Graduate Education.

These policies are detailed on the university's Graduate Education website:  
<https://graduate.asu.edu/key-policies>.

## PLAN OF STUDY

The plan of study (iPOS) functions as a contract between the student, the academic unit, and Graduate Education.

Cronkite School students must submit an iPOS before enrolling for their third semester. Graduate Education will place an enrollment hold on a student's account if he/she has not submitted an iPOS by this time.

Only coursework applicable towards a student's degree must be listed on the iPOS. Detailed instructions on how to file the iPOS will be sent to students in their second semester in the program.

The MS-DAS degree may be completed in as little as three semesters. Students may start coursework in the fall, spring or summer semester. (See Appendix A for courses)

All fall and spring semester online courses take 7.5 weeks to complete. Session A courses are taught in the first 7.5 weeks of a regular semester and Session B courses are offered in the second 7.5 weeks of a regular semester. Summer courses are completed in 6 weeks.

## GPA AND COURSE GRADES

Cronkite School students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) overall and in courses included on their plans of study. Courses taken as an undergraduate at ASU and reserved for use in a graduate degree program are included in the GPA.

If a student's GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be notified in writing and placed on probation. If the student's GPA is not raised to at least a 3.0 by the end of the next semester, a recommendation will be made to Graduate Education to remove the student from the Cronkite School's master's program.

Students must earn a B (3.0) or better in MCO 561 - Defining the Digital Audience before enrolling in MCO 562, 563, 564 or 565.

To receive their degrees, students also are required to earn at least a B (3.0) in MCO 566 - Digital Audience Management (Capstone). To enroll in the MCO 566 (Capstone), students must earn a B (3.0) or better in MCO 561, and a C (2.0) or better in all other courses.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

Students who receive an “Incomplete” grade in a graduate-level course (500-level or above) must complete the necessary work within one calendar year. If the incomplete is not removed within one calendar year, it will become part of the student’s permanent transcript and cannot be used on a student’s plan of study. To receive credit for the course, the student must repeat the course by re-registering, paying fees and fulfilling all course requirements. This may also delay or prevent a student’s graduation.

Students with more than one “Incomplete” at any time will be considered “failing to make adequate progress,” and will be notified and placed on probation. If the student does not complete the work to remove the incomplete and earn a letter grade by the end of the calendar year, a recommendation may be made to Graduate Education to remove the student from the program.

With 400-level courses taken for graduate credit, students are required to complete the necessary work to remove an “Incomplete” grade within one calendar year. If the “Incomplete” grade is not removed within one calendar year, the “I” will become an “E.” An “E” cannot be used to meet the requirements for a graduate degree, but it is used to calculate the student’s GPA. Students may retake the class to earn a higher grade, however both the “E” and the new grade will be used in calculating the student’s GPA. If this results in the GPA falling below 3.0, a recommendation to withdraw the student from the master’s program will be made to Graduate Education.

## CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Once admitted to a graduate degree program, students must be registered for a minimum of one graduate credit hour during all phases of their graduate education.

Graduate students planning to discontinue registration for a semester or more must submit the Maintain Continuous Enrollment request form (<https://graduate.asu.edu/file/maintain-continuous-enrollment-masters-and-certificate>). This request must be submitted and approved before the anticipated semester of non-registration. Students may request to maintain continuous enrollment without course registration for a maximum of two semesters during their entire program.

Students should contact their adviser as soon as possible if they will not be able to meet continuous enrollment.

### Maximum Time Limit

All work toward a master’s degree must be completed within three consecutive years.

## DEADLINES

Your success in journalism and communications will require you to consistently meet deadlines and scheduled meetings. To this end, the Cronkite School has a strict deadline policy. No work will be accepted past the set deadline. Work even one minute late will receive a zero. Please allow enough time to account for potential technical problems submitting work online.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress as previously described will be placed on academic probation and notified by mail and email. Details for each situation will be provided in the letter notifying the student that he/she is on academic probation.

Graduate Education will conduct a GPA audit at the end of each semester. Any graduate student with a cumulative GPA below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation. The student will receive a notification on their MyASU and an email from the Cronkite School. Typically, students on academic probation will have one semester to be reinstated to good standing.

Students on academic probation may be withdrawn from their academic program upon recommendation of the Cronkite School to university Graduate Education.

For students placed on probation the previous semester who have met the condition of probation, the Cronkite School will send a letter of reinstatement.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

Students are not permitted to transfer coursework from another institution or from another ASU program

## GRADUATION AND DEGREE CONFERRAL

Students must apply for graduation at the beginning of the term in which they plan to graduate. You can apply for graduation through your MyASU. You can find that in My Programs, under the graduation tab.

If a student chooses not to attend the graduation or commencement ceremonies, they must still apply for graduation to earn their degree.

Students who do not complete all requirements in the semester they intend to graduate will need to reapply for graduation the next semester; the application will not be automatically renewed.

Students must have their IPOS approved before they can apply for graduation. The application to graduate should be submitted online before the application deadline to avoid late fees. For more information, please visit <https://students.asu.edu/graduation-apply>.

## **GRADE APPEALS**

Students with questions or concerns about specific grades should first consult the course's instructor of record. If the student does not reach a satisfactory resolution with the instructor, the student may appeal to the Cronkite School Standards Committee by submitting a letter of appeal to Assistant Dean Rebecca Blatt (rebecca.blatt@asu.edu). The Standards Committee will review appeal letters, request information from the instructor and meet with the student before submitting a recommendation to Dean Christopher Callahan for review. Dean Callahan makes all final determinations on grade appeals.

The Cronkite School Standards Committee does not review the quality of particular assignments. Instead, the committee focuses on fair and appropriate application of university, school and course policy. Students submitting grade appeals should provide documentation of a situation they believe involves unfair or inappropriate application of policy, such as those included in the course syllabus.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY HEARING PROCESS**

All Cronkite School instructors are required to forward any potential violation of the school's Academic Integrity Policy to the Cronkite School Standards Committee for investigation and review. The Standards Committee, chaired by the assistant dean, reviews evidence provided by the instructor and invites the student accused of a violation to submit a written statement outlining any relevant information or evidence. The student then has a right to meet with the Standards Committee in person or by phone to discuss the case.

After completing its investigation, the Standards Committee writes a report of findings and a recommendation to be presented to Dean Christopher Callahan for review. Dean Callahan makes all final decisions about any actions taken in academic integrity cases.

## STUDENT SERVICES

The charter of Arizona State University declares that the university is “measured not by whom we exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed.” The university and the Cronkite School are committed to providing every resource possible for online students to succeed academically, personally and professionally.

Rebecca Blatt, Cronkite School assistant dean, and Aric Johnson, Cronkite School graduate program recruiter and adviser, are responsible for ensuring a supportive, inclusive learning environment and a valuable academic experience for master’s degree students. Please contact them with questions or concerns about the program or ASU resources.

### **Student Success Services**

The Cronkite School and ASU Online are committed to your success, which goes far beyond grades. Find tips for effective online learning here: <https://asuonline.asu.edu/newsroom/online-learning-tips> And learn more about the resources we offer online students--including success coaches, who are your own personal cheerleaders!--here: <https://asuonline.asu.edu/future-student/support>

### **Online Tutoring**

Students who seek support with writing or course concepts may pursue online tutoring. Tutoring is live, free and available to all ASU Online degree students. For more information, visit: <https://tutoring.asu.edu/student-services/online-tutoring>

### **Online Student Clubs**

ASU Clubs connect online students from all over the world who share common interests, degree programs and school spirit. Learn more about engaging with your classmates in online clubs here: <https://asuonline.asu.edu/future-student/community/asu-clubs-join-today>

### **Financial Services**

For all financial questions, please contact ASU Financial Aid and Scholarship Services: <https://students.asu.edu/financialaid>

### **Veterans and Military**

The Pat Tillman Veterans Center provides guidance and support for students who are veterans, active-duty military or military dependents. The Downtown Phoenix Tillman Veterans Center is located in the University Center Building Room 130. For more information, please call the office at 602 496-0152 or visit: <https://veterans.asu.edu/>

### **International Students**

ASU's International Student and Scholars Center can provide support and answers to questions about visas, employment, scholarships and travel. To find more information or schedule an appointment with an ISSC adviser, visit the website: <https://issc.asu.edu/>

### **ASU Counseling Services**

[ASU Counseling Services](#) provides confidential, time-limited counseling and crisis services for students experiencing emotional concerns or other factors that affect their ability to achieve their goals. Support is available 24/7.

#### **In-person counseling: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

ASU Counseling Services, Downtown Campus  
Historic Post Office Building  
522 N. Central Avenue  
Suite 208  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
602 496-1155

#### **After-hours/weekends**

Call EMPACT's 24-hour ASU-dedicated crisis hotline:  
480 921-1006

#### **For life threatening emergencies**

Call 911

### **Disability Resources**

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA) of 2008, professional disability specialists and support staff at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

[Qualified students with disabilities may be eligible to receive academic support services and accommodations](#). Eligibility is based on qualifying disability documentation and assessment of individual need. Students who believe they have a current and essential need for disability accommodations are [responsible for requesting accommodations and providing qualifying documentation](#) to the DRC. Every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Qualified students who wish to request an accommodation for a disability should contact the DRC by going to <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc>, calling (480) 965-1234 or emailing [DRC@asu.edu](mailto:DRC@asu.edu). To speak with DRC office specific to ASU Online located on ASU's Downtown Phoenix campus, please use the following information: (Voice) 602-496-4321; (Location) University Center Building, Suite 160.

## **Title IX**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at

<http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>.

## **APPENDIX A: MSDAS COURSES**

<b>Required Core Courses - 21 credits</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
MCO 561	Defining the Digital Audience	3
MCO 562	Search Engine Strategy for Digital Audience Acquisition	3
MCO 563	Social Media Campaigns and Engagement	3
MCO 564	Digital Audience Research and Behavior	3
MCO 565	Digital Audience Analytics	3
MCO 556	Media Entrepreneurship	3
MCO 503	Media Law	3
<b>Electives - 6 credits</b>		
MCO 510	Data Journalism	3
WPC 504	Basics of Understanding Facts: Statistics for Managers	3
MCO 494	Topic: Technology, Digital Media and Social Issues	3
TWC 551	Copyright and Intellectual Property in the Electronic Age	3
NLM 520	Financial and Resource Management	3
MGT 501	Basics of Leading People, Teams and Organizations	3
TWC 544	User Experience	3
	Additional special topic courses may be offered. Other electives may be allowed with departmental approval.	
<b>Required Capstone - 3 credits</b>		
MCO 566	Digital Audience Management	3
<b>Total required credit hours – 30 credits</b>		

## DESCRIPTIONS

<b>Required Core Courses - 21 credits</b>		
<b>Course</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
MCO 561	<b>Defining the Digital Audience</b> Who are the people who make up digital audiences? How do digital audiences behave? And why is it important to research, identify and monitor digital audiences and their engagement with your organization? Covers the very essence of the digital audience, exploring how community, consumer, social psychology and theory converge on digital platforms and social networks. Through case-study analyses, teaches how audiences differ across industries and platforms, the elements that engage or dissuade users, and how organizations use audience data to manipulate growth strategies.	3
MCO 562	<b>Search Engine Strategy for Digital Audience Acquisition</b> How to attract and grow audiences through strategic use of search engine marketing. Includes user search behavior, SEO (search engine optimization), tagging and coding for on-page SEO, SEM (search engine marketing), keyword research, competitive analysis, domain authority and pay-per-click advertising.	3
MCO 563	<b>Social Media Campaigns and Engagement</b> How to attract, engage and grow audiences on social media platforms through both organic and paid social media campaigns. Includes evaluating an organization's existing social media audience, identifying opportunities for audience growth across social media platforms, designing and generating content for specific platforms, measuring the impact of social media content, and developing an organizational strategy for managing social media across an enterprise.	3
MCO 564	<b>Digital Audience Research and Behavior</b> Provides skills to undertake research on digital audiences, customers, viewers, influencers and others with whom an organization seeks to communicate or build relationships. Digital data have profoundly reshaped how organizations mine and interpret audience data. Digital audience research as a subset of social research. Overviews both traditional and newer research methods for developing audience insights.	3



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MCO 565	Digital Audience Analytics Provides skills to access, manipulate and translate audience data. How to mine data from websites, social networks, apps, email campaigns and video platforms, and how to use analysis tools and techniques to translate metrics into valuable, actionable insights that drive engagement strategies and business decisions. Works with real audience data to receive hands-on analysis and reporting experience.	3
MCO 556	Media Entrepreneurship The goal of this course is to familiarize students with media entrepreneurship and innovation in a quickly changing digital media environment. Students study the principles of entrepreneurship and innovation, assess their own tolerance for risk, evaluate opportunity and market conditions, and learn about various revenue models for entrepreneurial enterprises.	3
MCO 503	Media Law This course teaches an understanding of laws associated with freedom of expression in the U.S. and how such laws vary in other countries. Students examine court cases related to freedom of expression and look at legislative and administrative regulation of mass media in the U.S. and elsewhere. Included are consideration of laws related to privacy, libel, defamation, obscenity, public records, trials, public meetings and intellectual property rights.	3
<b>Electives - 6 credits</b>		
MCO 510	Data Journalism Students learn how to use data to tell stories, negotiate with government officials for public records and use the Internet and other online sources to find information and sources for stories. Students use computer spreadsheets, database software, mapping programs and statistical techniques and explore how these tools can be used across a wide variety of beats and stories.	3
WPC 504	Basics of Understanding Facts: Statistics for Managers This course covers the fundamentals of statistical analysis in making management decisions. Students learn basic statistical concepts and applications, employ linear models to make decisions in uncertain situations, interpret data and write conclusions in non-statistical language, and produce and interpret outputs in Excel.	3
MCO 494	Topic: Technology, Digital Media and Social Issues Communication and information technologies have become defining parts of our everyday life. This course provides an overview of recent social, cultural, and political issues surrounding technology and digital media.	3

	Students will examine the ways in which new technologies and media influence the shaping of social, cultural, and political landscapes, communities, and our social interactions. The focus of this course is on social practices rather than the medium itself.	
TWC 544	User Experience Explores principles, techniques and tools of user experience (UX), including user and task analysis, user-centered design and usability testing.	3
TWC 551	Copyright and Intellectual Property in the Electronic Age Explores issues related to copyright and intellectual property laws; emphasizes electronic environment.	3
NLM 520	Financial and Resource Management Students develop an understanding of key and critical financial management issues and practices for nonprofit organizations.	3
MGT 501	Basics of Organizational Theory and Behavior Allows students to understand the human side of organizations through management theories and applications. Develops knowledge and skills for successful management of self and others.	3
	Additional special topic courses may be offered, and other electives may be allowed with departmental approval. Some courses in other ASU schools may require special approval from the unit offering the course.	
<b>Required Capstone - 3 credits</b>		
MCO 566	Digital Audience Management Challenges students to synthesize their digital audience knowledge and skills acquired in previous courses through a culminating experience. Working with a real client and live, ever-changing data, students work to increase and engage the client's digital audience, executing a growth campaign from audience identification, targeting and strategy development to implementation, engagement and measurement.	3
<b>Total required credit hours – 30 credits</b>		

Class offerings and numbers subject to change.  
Please consult the ASU Class Search online to view most up-to-date course offerings.