Social Data Science, MA

ASSTCMA

Social media manipulates opinions and influences people's views of the world. Gain a deeper understanding of the technology that powers social media's grip on society, and learn tools and insights to quantify those effects.

Program description

Degree awarded: MA Social Data Science
The MA degree program in social data science is designed for those interested in the social implications of big data and the ways that data science can provide insight into the understanding of social systems.

The program combines a thorough grounding in digital social science with the skills needed to analyze social data. This unique combination allows graduates to understand and contribute to building ethical social platforms, to manage creative communities, and to understand network-mediated social change. Graduates are prepared to advise institutions, businesses and government agencies on appropriate policies and to draw on large-scale trace data to help address significant social issues.

Artificial intelligence and algorithmic structures of social interaction represent significant challenges to society, and questions of equity, privacy and autonomy have become a recurring public concern. These technologies also may provide the keys for addressing substantial social issues. The critical analysis of these socio-technical systems requires both technical abilities and an understanding of social theory.

ASU offers a Master of Arts in social data science for those interested in engaging research at the intersection of data and society, preparing them to become leaders in the field. Students in the program work through a series of courses that provide a grounding in social theory and digital research methods, and they produce work that exemplifies their understanding of the state of the art in applying social data science within organizational and community contexts.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences](#)

- **Location:** West Valley or Online

Accelerated program options

This program allows students to obtain both a bachelor's and master's degree in as little as five years. It is offered as an accelerated bachelor's plus master's degree with:

Biology, BA

Environmental Science, BA

Psychology, BA

Psychology, BS

Acceptance to the graduate program requires a separate application. Students typically receive approval to pursue the accelerated master's during the junior year of their bachelor's degree program. Interested students can learn about eligibility requirements and how to apply.

Degree requirements

30 credit hours including a thesis, or
30 credit hours including the required capstone course (STC 570)

Required Core (18 credit hours)
STC 501 Theories of Data and Society (3)
STC 510 Data Wrangling (3)
STC 527 Ethics and Policies of Social Data (3)
STC 537 Technologies of Community (3)
STC 550 Computational Social Methods I (3)
STC 551 Computational Social Methods II (3)

Electives (6 or 9 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (3 or 6 credit hours)
STC 570 Social Data Projects (3) **or**
STC 599 Thesis (6)

Additional Curriculum Information
Students complete either a three credit hour capstone course (STC 570 Social Data Projects) or a six credit hour thesis (STC 599). Students who choose to complete the capstone course will complete nine hours of electives. Students who choose to complete a thesis will complete six hours of electives.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in any field from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. statement of purpose
4. an academic writing sample (preferred) or professional writing sample
5. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of their current residency.

The statement of purpose should describe the applicant's educational background, scholarly interests, and academic and professional goals.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Attend online

ASU Online

ASU offers this program in an online format with multiple enrollment sessions throughout the year. Applicants may [view the program's ASU Online page](#) for program descriptions and to request more information.

Career opportunities

Graduates of the Master of Arts program in social data science are well-positioned for research roles in businesses, nonprofits and government organizations; to work with organizations to help them make ethical and effective use of social data; and for consulting roles regarding broader issues of social change and networked technologies. They also may continue on to doctoral work in cognate fields.

The program deliberately seeks to be more reflective of the diversity of those who are affected by datafication and to actively promote the careers of professionals who are underrepresented in data-related fields.

Career examples include:

- chief information officer
- communications director
- community manager
- data journalist
- intelligence or policy analyst
- program or project manager
- public affairs specialist
- research and data analyst
- social media manager
- social strategist

Contact information

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Admission deadlines