Program Welcome

Welcome to the ST/CDS program in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. We are truly excited for you to join us. This is a transitional period, as we take up significant changes to our curriculum, add new faculty, and deal with the outcomes of a global pandemic. But those challenges also bring opportunities, and your joining the program means new opportunities for you, and for our scholarly community.

Datafication is affecting every facet of our social, business, political, and personal lives. Everyone is trying to come to grips with it as it applies to their own organizations and lives. This program is designed to make you an expert in the ways in which data can be used and misused. Rather than just trying to adapt to the new opportunities and threats that big data brings, it means you are capable of leading change and shaping our future datafied landscape. That future should mean professionals who are aware of the ways in which inequality is coded into algorithmic culture, and are prepared to change that.

This also means that you should be ready to carve your own path. Early on in the program you should be thinking about the kinds of knowledge and abilities you need in order to accomplish your goals. I and the other faculty of the program are ready to help you figure that out. By the time you graduate, you will have demonstrated a set of competencies and knowledge that will make you a rarity: someone who is able to cross the technical and scientific with the organizational and deeply human.

In this program you will be working closely with top scholars in the field. Take advantage of this opportunity to not only learn from them in classes but to meet with them during office hours, in labs, and elsewhere. Get to know all the members of the scholarly community—faculty, staff, students, and alums—because all will contribute to your education and success.

This handbook has been prepared to assist you in navigating the challenging realm of graduate studies. It is meant to be a handy basic guide to procedures. If you have questions about anything, please contact me or the graduate advisors at New College and at ASU Graduate College.

Welcome aboard!

Alexander Halavais
Graduate Director, Master of Arts in Social Technologies
May 2020
Graduate Student Responsibilities
As a member of a scholarly community, graduate students take on a much more proactive role than they may have had in their undergraduate program. The faculty, staff, and administration are here to advise you and help you to succeed, but you are ultimately responsible for the education you receive in this process.

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the requirements and policies of the program, the New College, the Graduate College, and the university. Please communicate with your advisors and faculty to make sure you have a clear understanding of the requirements and expectations of students in the program.

Keeping up lines of communication is essential. Be sure to check regularly your university email and check your My ASU account for the most up-to-date information regarding your status, holds, items to attend to, events, and other important information.

Students who are engaged in research must communicate with their academic advisors to ensure compliance with university regulations with regard to human subjects, as well as adhering to the field’s ethical expectations, and to the ethical expectations of the program. It is vital that students understand the Student Code of Conduct and expectations of academic integrity that appear later in this handbook.

Just as important as these responsibilities are the expectations of students that they act as advocates of their own learning, and engage in the resources made available to them as students at an innovative and engaged research institution. This handbook lays out the skeleton for a program: the courses, the expectations, and the processes. But the most successful students will build on this skeleton to engage in work that is purposeful, meaningful, and socially relevant. Graduate students are expected to exercise a significant degree of autonomy and cut their own paths: the most successful students in the program do not ask what is expected of them, but use the program as a platform to build a better version of themselves.

Faculty Responsibilities
The core and affiliate members of the ST/CDS faculty, as well as the other faculty at ASU, are dedicated to your learning and success. It is our responsibility to share our knowledge and guidance in a way that will help you to grow as a scholar and a professional. That means we will make certain that we are presenting the most current and appropriate thinking in our field, help guide you toward resources that will help you become experts in your own right, and make ourselves available to you to help you in your learning path. By doing so, we hope to continually create a community of respect, learning, and socially-relevant discovery.

Organization
The MA in Social Technologies/Critical Data Studies is offered by the faculty in Critical Data Studies and other faculty in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS). The School is one of three schools in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University.

The Graduate Director is responsible for overseeing the program and ensuring that it is delivered according to university requirements and is adequately supporting the needs of students. The Graduate Director answers to the Director of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Dean of the New College, but is primarily responsible for the success of the program and its students.

When you enter the program you will be assigned a faculty member as your Faculty Advisor. Think of this person as your scholarly contact--someone who can provide advice and guidance and a primary point of contact. Particularly when it comes to questions about the field or expectations or sources of knowledge or practices, your faculty advisor is your first point of contact.
Graduate advising provides advice for graduate students across New College. It is there to provide the best advice regarding university procedures such as interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) completion, course registration, and navigating the Graduate College policies through your program completion. As a program and faculty, we are smaller and more agile than many at the university, and all of us are here and ready to help you succeed. Come talk to us!

**Locations**
Arizona State University is located in the Phoenix Metro area, with campuses across the Valley of the Sun. The New College is located on the West Campus, which is about ten miles northwest of downtown Phoenix. The offices for the core faculty, the advising offices, and administrative functions are located in the Faculty/Administration Building on West Campus. Courses for the program are generally scheduled on the Downtown Campus or on West Campus.

**Admission**
Admission to the MA program is offered in Spring and Fall Semester. The program uses a rolling admission deadline. Please refer to the Graduate Degree Search website for up-to-date admission information and deadlines.

**Tuition Costs and Financial Aid**
Tuition is set by ASU and the Arizona Board of Regents every year. You can see the general tuition and fees chart by clicking here, or calculate your specific tuition costs by visiting ASU’s tuition calculator. Through the Western Regional Graduate Program, out-of-state residents from participating states may be eligible to pay only in-state tuition rates.

**Flexible Attendance**
The MA ST/CDS is designed as a “campus immersion” program, with courses scheduled for regular meetings on ASU campuses. Several of our courses, especially in the summer, are offered online instead. However, the 2020 pandemic has meant rethinking how to be flexible and offer access from a distance for those who are unable to attend a course in person for one reason or another. From 2021 forward, our intention is to make accommodations for those who may be isolated and unable to attend campus meetings, by providing means to attend virtually and participate in other ways. And naturally, we are able to make ourselves available for meetings via the internet when it is impossible to come to our offices.

Please note that we remain guided by the policies of the Graduate College in this regard.

**Program Description**
This program is designed to prepare a new kind of scholar and practitioner: one that understands the ways in which data-driven approaches affect organizations and society as a whole. This requires an understanding of data science combined with social theory that helps to explain the practical, ethical, and social dimensions of the issues of data in society. Many programs make use of data science approaches, and some critically examine the flows of data in society—we do both.

There is a dire need for those who can connect data science with organizational needs, specifying the ways in which data can most effectively be applied to solve problems, and anticipating the ways in which it may cause new problems. Graduates of the program should be well-positioned to engage in research roles in businesses, non-profits, and government organizations, as well as moving on to doctoral study for those who are so inclined. The program also deliberately seeks to make the field more reflective of the diversity of those who are affected by datafication, and actively promotes the careers of professionals who are underrepresented in data-related fields.
The curriculum consists of a total of 33 credits. These include required courses in the theory, research, and application of social data. Most students will complete the program with a capstone projects course, in which they add a final applied project to their required portfolio. However, those who intend to continue on to a research Ph.D. may instead opt to work with faculty on a research thesis.

Program Learning Outcomes
1. Students will be able to articulate the relationship of social data to the ways in which communities evolve and learn.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to select, acquire, archive, and manipulate social data in effective and ethical ways.
3. Students will select research designs that are appropriate to the questions they seek to answer, drawing on computational and traditional social science methodologies.
4. Students will show their ability to analyze policies and their effects on organizations and individuals, including the ways in which they may promote or constrain social justice.
5. Students will demonstrate excellence in communicating complex systems, including data-driven and algorithmic processes, to a variety of stakeholders.

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements
Students are required to complete a total of 33 credits of study, or 11 courses. The culminating event requires a portfolio that highlights and contextualizes the student’s best work in the program. The required courses comprise of:

STC 501: Theories of Data & Society
STC 510: Data Wrangling
STC 512: Data, Places, People, and Things
STC 527: Ethics and Policies of Social Data
STC 528: Communicating Data Science*
STC 536: Networked Publics
STC 537: Technologies of Community
STC 539: Social Search & Filtering
STC 550: Computational Social Methods I
STC 551: Computational Social Methods II
STC 570: Social Data Projects*

* STC 599 Thesis track: Students may optionally complete a research thesis, with the agreement of the director and a thesis committee and replace STC 528 and STC 570 with six thesis credits.

Program Course Descriptions
STC 501: Theories of Data & Society (3). Surveys the development of social theory with regard to structures of knowledge and data exchange. Prepares students to engage in theory building and deploy theoretical frameworks that inform and support their social research.

STC 510: Data Wrangling (3). Provides a technical grounding in the processes of extracting, processing, and combining data for the purposes of understanding social and institutional changes. Introduces structures of the web, programming for the extraction of data, storing data effectively, and basic tools for manipulating, visualizing, summarizing, and transforming collected data.
STC 512: Data, Places, People, and Things (3). While the Web continues to be our front door to networked data, the fastest growing segment of internet traffic is produced and consumed by sensors and embedded systems. Examines the ways in which these data may be acquired and used, and how new locative technologies may be prototyped to help understand their social impact.

STC 527: Ethics and Policies of Social Data (3). Explores the applied ethics of data, and how this relates to public policy, both from a social and an institutional perspective.

STC 528: Communicating Data Science (3). Making use of data means more than just designing algorithms that work consistently. Big data is useless if it cannot be effectively communicated to those who need it, whether that is policymakers, managers, or the public at large. Participants in this course will acquire techniques that allow them to effectively communicate complex data in writing, verbally, visually, and through interfaces.

STC 536: Networked Publics (3). Traces the move from mass society to networked society and the changes this has led to in the public sphere, political participation and systems governance.

STC 537: Technologies of Community (3). Examines the ways in which communities form, manage themselves, and improve through the use of networked technologies.

STC 539: Social Search & Filtering (3). Traces the role of search (and search engines) in the development of networked knowledge; how this biases social access to information; and the technologies of filtering, ranking and sorting that increasingly affect social access to information.

STC 550: Computational Social Methods I (3). Provides a foundation in the structure of scholarly inquiry and research design in the context of data and society.

STC 551: Computational Social Methods II (3). Extends exposure to advanced computational methods in the practice of social science.

STC 570: Social Data Projects (3). Participants collaborate on a substantial project relating to social use of data. In the process they bring to bear their theoretical and technical skills and demonstrate professional interaction and communication skills. Participants will also produce a required public portfolio of their work during their graduate program.

STC 599: Thesis (6). Supervised research focused on preparation of a thesis, including literature review, research, data collection and analysis, and writing.

Plan of Study
In a graduate program, the specific courses that will count toward your degree must be approved by your faculty advisor and the program director. The list of these courses is called an interactive Plan of Study (iPOS). This is filed online through the MY ASU interactive Plan of Study (iPOS). You must complete this document by the end of your first year of the program. The Plan of Study in MA in Social Technologies offers only one selection, and that is the option of completing a research thesis instead of the capstone. This means that you should have a conversation with your faculty advisor and graduate advisor about whether you are interested in pursuing this option during your first year in the program.

After you submit your iPOS, your faculty advisor will approve it. You can track the approval process online through your My ASU account. When we evaluate your iPOS, we will look to see that you have met the program requirements described above. In addition, we will check to make sure that you are following the additional university rules below:

1. 33 hours of total coursework
2. You must be enrolled in at least one credit hour of instruction that appears on iPOS each Fall/Spring term (see ASU Graduate College policy on Continuous Enrollment)
3. 3 to 6 hours of culminating experience options
4. B or above in all courses and in culminating experience

All courses that appear on your iPOS are applied toward your MA degree and are ineligible to be applied toward a future graduate degree. As such, we recommend listing only the 33 credits required for the MA degree on your iPOS. Any additional/excess credits you have earned could then theoretically be used toward a different degree program at ASU.

The iPOS is binding once submitted so it is important that you give it due consideration before submitting. However, it also is amendable and can be changed as necessary when you progress through the program. Students may need to change their iPOS. When changes are necessary, they can be made through the same system used to submit the iPOS initially (i.e., your My ASU account).
Academic Advising
For updated information on advising, please visit: https://newcollege.asu.edu/advising/graduate and click on the MA Social Technologies link.

Staff Advisor
We are here to help! The staff advisor can be reached at 602.543.3000 or ncgradadvising@asu.edu with questions related to policies and procedures to help you navigate graduate school successfully.

Faculty Advisor
Your faculty advisor can serve as a scholarly resource, helping you to understand the process of graduate education, and how to integrate it with your career and other opportunities. The interactions you have with the academic community outside the classroom are at least as important as the coursework you engage in. During the first week of courses, you will be assigned a temporary faculty advisor and you can set up a meeting. You are welcome to stay with this advisor or, if mutually acceptable, switch to another advisor during your program.

Those who decide to engage in a thesis project will be required to add additional committee members to advise their thesis.

Program Faculty
The primary faculty are drawn from the Critical Data Studies group, but faculty from around the university participate in our research and can serve as a resource or on thesis committees.

Core Faculty
Alexander Halavais, Ph.D. (Associate Professor), Director: Learning Communities, Datafication
Nicholas Proferes, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Power and Ethics in Socio-Technical Systems
Shawn Walker, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Political Participation, Data Science

Affiliate Faculty
Pauline Hope Cheong, Ph.D. (Professor): Authority and Community, Religion, Globalization
Kelley Cotter, Ph.D. (Postdoc): Algorithmic Literacy, Digital Inequality, Digital Culture, Platforms
Marisa Duarte, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Information Science, American Indian Studies, Borderlands
Nicholas Duran, Ph.D. (Associate Professor): Cognitive Science, Dynamical Systems Theory
Edward Finn, Ph.D. (Associate Professor): Algorithmic Culture, Digital Humanities
Sarah Florini, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Digital/Social Media, Migration, Race, Ethnicity, & Culture
Dawn Gilpin, Ph.D. (Associate Professor): Organizational and Issue Identity, Social Media
Zachary Horne, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Cognitive Science, Bayesian Statistics
K. Hazel Kwon, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor): Social Networks, Social Crisis
Yasin N. Silva, Ph.D. (Associate Professor): Social Networks, Big Data, Databases
Michael Simeone, Ph.D. (Associate Research Professor): Collaboration, Computational Linguistics
Vince Waldron, Ph.D. (Professor): Family Communication, Workplace Communication
Greg Wise, Ph.D. (Professor): Cultural Studies and Technology
Culminating Experience & Graduation Process
Completing the MA degree requires successful completion of the required coursework and the completion of a digital portfolio. In addition, for those interested in continuing on to a Ph.D., or planning on a research-intensive career, there is the option to complete a research thesis.

Program Portfolio
You will have multiple opportunities throughout the program to create work that you will include in your digital portfolio. This work will serve as evidence that you have mastered particular skills, competencies, and knowledge expected in the program. In your final semester of the program you are expected to select from these works a public showcase of your best work in the program, work that demonstrates that you have mastered the breadth of the material in the program, and excelled in some subset of these areas.

You will be introduced to the portfolio process in your first course and guided through the process throughout. You should take the opportunity to meet with your advisor periodically to discuss the work in your portfolio. More specific requirements for the portfolio are available in the Portfolio Requirements document. The acceptability of this portfolio will be determined by the instructor of the Social Data Projects (STC 570) course, in consultation with the core faculty of the program.

Capstone Course
During the final semester of your program, one of your courses will be the Social Media Projects (STC 570) course. This course serves as a bridge back into professional practice and has three core objectives. One of these is to engage in a substantive, team-based social data project within the community. This should bring your competencies and knowledge to bear in a legible way, and is likely to represent another element in your program portfolio. The second, as part of this project, is to provide you with some of the elements that might be expected of professionals in the field: including communicating effectively, maintaining a professional personal brand, and managing a project. Finally, the course will provide an opportunity to review, revise, and present your program portfolio. At the end of the course, these portfolios will be evaluated by the instructor and core faculty in the program, and an acceptable program portfolio is required to pass the capstone course, and to receive your degree in the program.

Thesis Option
If you are interested in producing a research thesis, you should speak with your advisor early in your program about your interest. Once you identify a topic and a faculty committee to work with, you must submit an approved thesis proposal no later than two weeks prior to the start of your third semester. You also must complete STC 551 before your proposal may be accepted--this may extend your program to two years in some cases, depending on when you enter the program.

If approved, you will work on the thesis during your final semester of coursework, enrolling in six credits of thesis supervision rather than the Communicating Data Science (STC 528) and Social Data Projects (STC 570) courses.

If students have already completed 6 hours of STC 599 before completing the thesis they must register for 1 hour of STC 595 Continuing Registration in subsequent semesters. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 1 hour of STC 595 for each additional semester necessary for completion of the thesis. Students must complete their thesis within 3 hours of STC 595 Continuing Registration. This equates to either 3 additional semesters or 2 additional semesters and a summer session. In the event that there are extenuating circumstances that prevent students from meeting this deadline, students may petition their graduate committee for an extension. When necessary students should consult the Director and their thesis advisor for more information about petitioning for an extension to complete the thesis.

Students should also, as necessary, amend their iPOS to reflect thesis credits. Students can apply to write a thesis either prior to or after they have completed and filed their iPOS. When a student's application to write a thesis is
approved prior to submitting the iPOS the student should incorporate 6 hours of STC 599 (Thesis) into the iPOS. If the POS has been already been submitted, the student simply needs to amend the existing iPOS by including 6 hours of STC 599 (Thesis) and by removing 2 courses (STC 528 and 570) previously included on the iPOS. Students should also list their graduate thesis committee and the advisor on the iPOS.

To complete a thesis, students must:

- Incorporate the feedback of their graduate committee
- Complete any necessary human subjects protocol
- Collect data
- Write the manuscript and complete revisions
- Follow the submission guidelines and calendar
- Schedule an oral defense via My ASU with Graduate College and submit the thesis for format approval at least 10 working days before the defense
- Participate in a public defense of the thesis
- Publicly archive the thesis

**Graduation Process**

You must complete your culminating activity (either STC 570 or your thesis defense) in the semester in which you intend to graduate. You should, during this semester, apply for graduation through your My ASU account online. Be mindful of the dates and deadlines established by ASU Graduate College. Be sure to discuss these dates, particularly in the case of a thesis, with your faculty advisor, committee, and graduate advisor.

**Department & University Policies & Procedures**

Graduate students are expected to review and be familiar with all University Policies that impact their degree progress.

- ASU Academic Calendar (registration)
- ASU Graduate College Policy
- Pre-admission credits
- Continuous enrollment policy
- Leave of absence information

**Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

As a graduate student it is your responsibility to be aware not only of your program’s requirements, but also policies set in place by the Graduate College. Students are required to be aware of and understand the current ASU Graduate Policies and Procedures, the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, as well as any policies outlined in this manual.

In addition to requirements outlined in New College Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies students must achieve a grade of “B” or higher in all required courses that appear on the approved Plan of Study (required courses are listed in the ASU Academic Catalog). A student who receives a B- or lower in a core course in their program must repeat the course in a regularly scheduled (not an individualized instruction) class. Although only the “B” or higher can be included on the iPOS GPA, both grades will be used to compute the Cumulative GPA and the Overall Graduate GPA.
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.

Students are expected to regularly check their ASU email accounts for messages from the university and New College. Students also are expected to regularly check their My ASU 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 highest standards of academic integrity and compliance with the university’s Student Code of Conduct are expected of all graduate students in academic coursework and research activities. The failure of any graduate student to uphold these standards may result in serious consequences including suspension or expulsion from the university and/or other sanctions as specified in the academic integrity policies of individual colleges as well as the university.

For more information please visit: https://graduate.asu.edu/policies-procedures.

Editing & Assistance
You are expected to indicate when work you have submitted for credit has received help from others. You are expected to ask for and receive help from others for your writing, and in some contexts for other elements of your work, while the work itself must remain substantially your own, and the help must be acknowledged or cited. For example, for a writing assignment you might go to the Graduate Writing Center for help. This is not only acceptable, it is encouraged. But you should indicate that you received assistance in the writing. If you are writing a thesis, you may be encouraged to seek copyediting from a professional, which again is acceptable if the ideas and work remain your own, and if the assistance is acknowledged. Likewise, if you have a friend who is a graphic designer and develops icons for a phone app you submit for credit, be sure to indicate which parts of the project they contributed, so you can be assessed and receive credit for your own work. While work from one course can and should build on work from other courses, you may not submit a substantially similar assignment for multiple courses. If you have any questions at all about this do not hesitate to talk with your instructors, your advisor, or the director—all are happy to clarify your responsibilities in a specific case.

Funding for Travel
We encourage our students to present research at national and international academic conferences. A number of options exist for funding travel to these events.

1. **MA program funding.** The MA program makes limited funding available (maximum of $300 per year) please review your program advising website for more information.

2. **ASU Graduate College Travel Grants.** ASU’s Division of Graduate College makes a limited number of travel grants available to students presenting at conferences. These grants typically cover airfare from Phoenix to the conference location. This award has four application deadlines per year and must be applied for well in advance of the travel date. Applications must be submitted to the director of the graduate program. See https://graduate.asu.edu/awards/travel for more information and deadlines.

3. **Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) Travel Grants.** ASU’s graduate student association offers a variety of travel awards available. Individual travel awards (to conferences) are up to $950 and have a monthly application deadline. Group travel grants are for teams of student researchers presenting a symposium or other group project. Interview travel grants are need-based grants made available to
students who require funds in order to travel to an academic interview (e.g., at a PhD program). Details and application materials can be found at http://gpsa.asu.edu/funding.

University & Campus Resources
There are a number of resources available in the program and through the university.

New College/West Campus – Academic
- Fletcher Library
- ASU Library now has an online tutorial version of "Library 501: What Grad Students Need to Know about the Library" workshop available for online students and anyone else for whom it might be useful. The Library 501 tutorial can be found on our tutorials page: https://lib.asu.edu/tutorials or at bit.ly/Library501Tutorial. Student can see the full slate of workshop offerings here: libguides.asu.edu/grad/workshops
- Graduate Academic Support Services— in-person (all campuses) and online, no-cost writing assistance and statistics tutoring (most services free except for special sessions, refer to website for more details)
- SAM Lab – resources for receiving assistance for statistics and methodology courses and research; in-person (West campus), online, and phone appointments available.
- Career & Professional Development Services – resource for finding jobs and internships, career advising, and more; online services available

New College/West Campus - Amenities
- Dining Options
- Banks
- Parking & Transit

University Services
Student support:
- International Student Services
  1. International Teaching Assistants
- Housing
- Health
- Counseling
  1. Graduate Wellness Resources
  2. 10 Best Practices in Graduate Student Wellbeing
- Disability Resources
- Veterans
- Graduate and Professional Student Association
- Educational Outreach & Student Services (Dean of Students Office)
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Graduate Student Diversity Resources

Business and Finance services (e.g, student accounts, ID cards).

Contact information
- Provost’s Office
- Graduate College
- GPSA Outreach
• IT Help Office
• Emergency services

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