

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

**MASTER OF COMMUNICATION  
IN DIGITAL MEDIA**

# **Student Handbook**

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# University of Washington

## Master of Communication in Digital Media

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### Mission

The Master of Communication in Digital Media (MCDM) gives professionals the necessary tools to understand and leverage the fast changing world of media technology and distribution.

Digital media today is all-pervasive. MCDM students study the economic, political, social and cultural impact of these new communication technologies. In this way, they will learn *what* is driving this digital media revolution – and *why*. This is key intelligence for anyone looking to advance his or her career through the use of media innovation.

The program stays abreast with developments in the workplace through an international advisory board consisting of leading digital media communication professionals. Directed and taught by Department of Communication faculty and professionals in the field, it maintains the rigorous academic standards of the University of Washington Graduate School. Courses are based on the theory and practice of the communication discipline.

The degree program is based on three pillars:

- Social Media (community and distribution)
- Storytelling (effective content creation)
- Strategic business practices in digital media communication (revenue models, marketing and regulation)

### Media Space

MCDM students had a direct hand in the design and development of the program's space for innovation, collaboration and incubation of emergent ideas, strategies and products – the Media Space. Media Space provides both an online collaboration tool ([mediaspace.washington.edu](http://mediaspace.washington.edu)) and a physical conference space (Communication Building room 244). Media Space's goals are "the 3 Ms": to develop effective communication **Models**, measuring that effectiveness through appropriate **Metrics**, and exploring how to sustain these models through **Monetization**.

Media Space will serve two major roles aimed to provide students practical experience and alliances, according to initiatives on the part of students, faculty, and the community:

1. Media Space will serve as a laboratory for direct partnerships with companies and organizations that wish to “incubate” their innovations — forming independent research teams with MCDM students.
2. Media Space will act as a hub for the digital media community in the Puget Sound region — sponsoring events and lectures that help clarify how we can express ourselves through technology.

## Degree Requirements

To earn a master’s degree, students must complete a minimum of 45 credits, including three core courses:

- *Evolution and Trends in Digital Media and Technologies*
- *Strategic Research and Business Practice*
- *Digital Media Law and Policy*

The program is structured to allow students flexibility in pursuing their academic and professional goals. Students choose one of three degree completion strategies:

- 1) **Coursework only option:** Complete 45 credits of coursework. Forty (40) of these credits must be from the Digital Media curriculum; five credits may be elected from 400 and graduate (500) level courses outside the program, with approval through the Counseling Services Coordinator or the student’s faculty advisor.

To allow for group work, internships, and projects, students may also elect up to 20 credits among these courses:

### **COM 591 Independent Research (1-5 credits, max. 10)**

Research projects designed and led by students with faculty supervision. Students are encouraged to initiate small group independent research projects for this credit, and to seek out a faculty member to advise them.

### **COM 593 Communication Internship (1-5 credits, max 15)**

Provides students an opportunity to connect their scholarship with communities outside academia by engaging in a project that uses communication theory to inform practical work. The student will seek out a faculty member to advise them for this credit.

### **COM 600 Independent Study / MC Project (5 credits) (see #2 below)**

- 2) **Project or internship option:** Upon approval of a petition to the student's Supervisory Committee (see below), a student may carry out a final project worth 5 credits (**COM 600**), in addition to completing 40 credits of course work. If an internship is elected, it must involve a project.
- 3) **Scholarly research (modified thesis) option:** Upon approval of a petition to the student's Supervisory Committee, a student may complete 40 credits of course work and 5 credits of COM 600, involving scholarly research and writing.

## **Completion Time and Quarterly Credits**

The program may be completed in five quarters. Students are allowed up to six years to complete this professional master's program.

A full-time load is 10 credits per quarter. Because 45 credits are required to graduate, a student may take 5 credits one quarter and be considered full-time during this quarter. International students taking only 5 credits should contact the Counseling Services Coordinator, who will notify the ISO that the student is considered full-time by the department that quarter. Students on financial aid must email the Office of Student Financial Aid at [osfa@u.washington.edu](mailto:osfa@u.washington.edu) to notify the office of reduced credit load that quarter.

## **The Master's Supervisory Committee**

Each student working toward a graduate degree at the University of Washington should be guided by a faculty Supervisory Committee consisting of a chair and a second member. This committee serves an important evaluative and mentoring function for the student.

### **Appointment of Supervisory Committee**

#### ***Students electing Coursework Only Degree Completion:***

All students electing Coursework Only Degree Completion will have the following Supervisory Committee by default:

Committee Chair: Director of the MC in Digital Media program

Second member: Senior Lecturer in the MC in Digital Media.

Students may elect to create their own Supervisory Committee. Contact the Counseling Services Coordinator for assistance with this.

#### ***Students electing Project, Internship, or Scholarly Research Degree Completion:***

Students enrolling in COM 600 must seek out and obtain approval for their committee members prior to enrolling. The Supervisory Committee must consist of two members:

- The Chair must be a member of the Department of Communication graduate faculty. With approval of the Director of the Digital Media, a University of Washington graduate faculty member from another department may also serve as Chair.
- The second member must have at least a master's, a JD, or other terminal degree. He or she may be faculty from another department on campus or a professional in the workplace. If a proposed committee member is not a University of Washington faculty member, he or she must be approved before serving on the committee.

### **Roles of Supervisory Committee**

Mentoring, advising, and evaluative functions of the committee include the following:

- If COM 600: scholarly research, project, or internship/project is chosen, the committee will approve, supervise, and evaluate the project or scholarly paper.
- The Supervisory Committee approves the student's petition to graduate.

The chair must be able and willing to assume principal responsibility for advising the student, have adequate time available for this work and be accessible to the student.

The specifics of how often a committee meets and whether this meeting is in-person, by e-mail, or telephone are worked out between the student and the committee members.

***Checklist for selecting and obtaining approval of Supervisory Committee.***

Students electing Coursework Only Degree Completion will have as Chair the Director of the MCDM program and as second member the MCDM Senior Lecturer by default; they may select other faculty, as described above.

Students electing the COM 600 Project, Internship, and Scholarly Research Degree Completion option should follow these steps:

1. Seek advice, if needed. The MCDM Director, Associate Director, Senior Lecturer, and the Counseling Services Coordinator can all provide suggestions for appropriate faculty according to your project or research interests. You may also review faculty research interests on <http://www.com.washington.edu/Program/directory.html>
2. Obtain consent of committee members. Once you have decided on an appropriate committee, send an outline of the intended project to the prospective committee members to see if they are willing to serve.

The MC in Digital Media program does provide a stipend for committee members outside the Communication Department serving on our students' committee. They may contact the Counseling Services Coordinator for more information.

3. Obtain approval for faculty outside the Communication Department. Please provide the Counseling Services Coordinator ([cmumedia@u.washington.edu](mailto:cmumedia@u.washington.edu)) with the Vita of any proposed second member who is not a University of Washington faculty member or a chair who is a graduate professor from another department. The vita will be forwarded to the program director for approval.
4. Inform Counseling Services Coordinator of your committee members. Send the names and contact information of people who have agreed to serve on your committee (specifying who is chair) to [cmumedia@u.washington.edu](mailto:cmumedia@u.washington.edu).

## **Course of Study**

In collaboration with the student's Graduate Supervisory Committee, the student must fill out the Course of Study Form (see *Form A, Appendix*) and obtain signatures from his or her committee as part of the process of obtaining permission to graduate in the final quarter. This form is placed in the student's file for departmental records.

## **Course Descriptions**

### **Required core cores:**

#### **Evolution and Trends of Digital Media and Technologies (5 credits)**

Examines the emergence of digital communication from different disciplinary and theoretical perspectives.

#### **Digital Media Law and Policy (5 credits)**

Examines the conceptual/theoretical framework and social application of existing regulations and policies, with the aim of helping digital media professionals to meet the changing legal and policy environments.

#### **Research Strategies and Methodologies in Digital Media (5 credits)**

Introduces and compares basic methods of research in communication with a focus on digital media. Develops theories and skills applicable in business decision-making processes, as well as in scholarly research.

### **Electives:**

Each year, Special Topics in Digital Media communication are offered, in addition to the following courses:

#### **Writing and Presentation for Digital Media (5 credits)**

Applies communication theory and research tools to rhetorical and design choices in web page creation. Examines the emergence of digital media storytelling techniques, as well as ethical and technical challenges these tools present to media and society.

#### **Digital Media Message Design & Content Creation (5 credits)**

Applies communication theory to the identification, creation, and evaluation of digital media message design, to meet needs of the target audience. Introduces the theory and practice of hypertext and project management techniques to organize digital assets, allocate resources, and meet deadlines.

#### **Digital Media Economics & Management (5 credits)**

Emphasizes communication theory to analyze effective management of digital media enterprises, with practical application of economic theory to entrepreneurial strategies. Topics include analysis of the total business process,

patterns of ownership, merger and acquisitions, finance and accounting, human resources development, sales and marketing, and ethics.

**Digital Media Branding and Marketing (5 credits)**

Critically examines the role of advertising, marketing, and other promotional efforts in establishing the branding of digital media companies. By using communication theory to analyze successful cases of established and start-up digital media companies, participants identify practicable and effective strategies for brand building and enhancement.

**Global Digital Media Law, Policy and Ethics (5 credits)**

Examines the legal, social, political and policy environments of digital media laws, policies and ethics around the world. Offers a comparative perspective, which prepares for digital media managers to expand into other markets outside of their home bases.

**COM 591 Independent Research (1-5 credits, max. 10)**

Research projects designed and led by students with faculty supervision. Students are encouraged to initiate small group independent research projects for this credit, and to seek out a faculty member to advise them.

**COM 593 Communication Internship (1-5 credits, max 15)**

Provides students an opportunity to connect their scholarship with communities outside academia by engaging in a project that uses communication theory to inform practical work. The student will seek out a faculty member to advise them for this credit.

**COM 600 Independent Studies or Research (5 credits)**

After completion of 50% of the course work, students can choose to conduct a project or internship or scholarly research using digital media, subject to approval by the student's Supervisory Committee.

**Elective taken outside of the MC in Digital Media (MCDM) program.**

Students may take up to five (5) credits outside the M.C. in Digital Media program, in any department. These credits must be graduate level, 500 or above. You may search the Time Schedule for these courses at both <http://www.washington.edu/students/timeschd/> and <http://www.washington.edu/students/timeschd/95index.html> .

The Counseling Services Coordinator will assist you in finding courses to meet your goals..

### ***Checklist for Registering***

All registration is done through UW Educational Outreach, the fiscal conduit for self-sustaining programs:

UWEO

4311 11<sup>th</sup> Ave NE

Seattle, WA 98105-4608

Phone: 206-543-2310; 800-543-2320 Extension 2

[uweoreg@extn.washington.edu](mailto:uweoreg@extn.washington.edu)

Hours: Monday–Thursday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m, except the first two weeks of the quarter, in which the registration office is open until 7 p.m. Monday–Thursdays. Fridays: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

All tuition and fees are due at time of registration. Students must enroll before the first day of the quarter to avoid a late registration fee. (In special cases, students may petition to waive the late fee; contact the Counseling Services Coordinator for assistance with this.)

Here are the steps for registering:

1. Receive the MC in Digital Media Registration Form. This will be emailed to you by the Counseling Services Coordinator, usually about six weeks before the next quarter begins. This form provides the Registration numbers of the courses on page two, which must be given if you elect to register by phone.
2. Online registration will be available about a week after receipt of the registration form. The online registration address is:  
[http://www.outreach.washington.edu/evedeg/graduate/mcdm\\_reg.asp](http://www.outreach.washington.edu/evedeg/graduate/mcdm_reg.asp)
3. If you are receiving financial aid, fill out and sign the form on  
[http://www.evedegree.washington.edu/evedeg/payment\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.evedegree.washington.edu/evedeg/payment_agreement.pdf)

If you are receiving third party payment, such as by an employer, you must attach a purchase order or letter of authorization to bill from the employer.

4. Register either online or by mailing or faxing in the registration form (and if relevant the financial aid form), in-person, or by telephone at 206-543-2310; 800-543-2320 Extension 2. Again, if you register by telephone, you must provide course registration numbers from the registration form, page two.

***Checklist for enrolling in up to 5 credits outside of MCDM program:***

1. Inform the Counseling Services Coordinator of your choice. In some cases experience of former students and advice of your faculty advisor will be important in selecting the right course.
2. Obtain an add code Once you have found a course of interest, you must contact the instructor or department for permission and an add code to take the course. Sometimes the Time Schedule will provide a departmental e-mail to contact for permission. Otherwise, look in the faculty or office directory at <http://www.washington.edu/home/directories.html> for contact information.

Instructor permission is not required for Communication Department courses outside MCDM. Email [cominfo@u.washington.edu](mailto:cominfo@u.washington.edu) for an add code.

Some departments will require you to attend the first day of class and obtain an add code then if there is space. If you have already enrolled for at least one course for the quarter, you may add or drop courses for no fee during the first week of the quarter.

3. If the course is less than 5 credits, register in 1-2 credits COM 591, Independent Study or find another 1-2 credit course to make up the difference. You are required to earn 45 credits to graduate, so need to have an even 5 credits. The MCDM Director or Senior Lecturer will provide guidance in the work you can do to earn this extra 1-2 credits.
4. Register through UW Educational Outreach, as you do for all courses in the program. You will need to provide (either on the registration form provided you by the MCDM program or by telephone) the following information:
  - a. "Section Line Number" (SLN) found on the Time Schedule. This is a five digit number found just below the name of the course.
  - b. Name of the course, for instance: COM 561, Regional Systems
  - c. Instructor (last name only is fine)
  - d. Days and times meeting.
  - e. Number of credits



# Master of Communication in Digital Media

## Degree Completion Options Summary

	Option	Content/Description	Pedagogical objectives	Evaluation methods & criteria
<b>A</b>	<b>Coursework only</b>	Students complete 45 graduate level credits. Forty (40) of these must be from the Digital Media curriculum; five credits may be elected from graduate courses outside the Digital Media curriculum.	Assessment of knowledge acquired and applied through class projects, essays, and participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coursework evaluated by instructors must average at least a 3.0. Students must earn above 2.7 in a course to earn credit.</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	<b>Project</b> (5 credits COM 600 and 40 credits coursework)	<p>An M.C. project or internship project must demonstrate enrichment of the student's professional capabilities in his or her field of specialization, using communication theory to inform practical work. Examples of projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transferring a business practice now done manually to online.</li> </ul>	Practical application	<p><b>Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graded Credit/No Credit</li> <li>Project and project report of 10-15 pages reviewed by Supervisory Committee.</li> <li>Oral or e-mail presentation to Supervisory Committee.</li> </ul>
	<b>Internship with Project</b> (5 credits COM 600 and 40 credits coursework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opening up new communication channels with customers, both internal and external;</li> <li>developing an in-depth web-site.</li> </ul> <p>The project is at least 150 hours of work, including writing the report.</p>		<p><b>Internship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graded Credit/No Credit</li> <li>Project and project report of 10-15 pages reviewed by Supervisory Committee.</li> <li>Oral or e-mail presentation to Supervisory Committee.</li> <li>Letter of evaluation from Site Supervisor</li> </ul>
	<b>Scholarly research</b> (by petition only; 5 credits COM 600 and 40 credits coursework)	This paper must demonstrate basic scholarly abilities, including solid conceptualization, analysis, and writing. The paper must clearly define a problem to be investigated, demonstrate mastery of relevant academic literature, show competence in the appropriate methodology, and either present original research (specify the data needed, present data, discuss the results) or develop an application based upon previous research.		<p>Theory, original research or application, and scholarship</p>

## **Coursework Only Degree Completion Option**

Students must satisfactorily complete 45 credits of graduate coursework. Forty (40) of these credits must be in the curriculum of the Digital Media M.C. program. Students may take all 45 credits within the Digital Media M. C. program.

A student may elect to take one five credit graduate course outside the Digital Media program. See instructions on doing so earlier in this handbook.

## **Project or Internship Degree Completion Option**

An M.C. project must demonstrate enrichment of the student's professional capabilities in his or her field of specialization, using communication theory to inform practical work. Students may elect to complete a digital media project in a variety of contexts:

- as part of an internship with a company,
- as part of one's job
- as an independent project.

The project is expected to take at least 150 hours of work, including writing the report.

The written report should be ten to fifteen pages long and include the following:

- 1) Description of objectives of the project
- 2) Analysis of procedures and rationale for decisions made, with reference to communications theory
- 3) Evaluation of outcomes

Please see the box at the end of this section for an outline of the final project report.

Examples of projects include:

- transferring a business practice now done manually to online. For example, creating an online job application for firemen in Milpitas, CA reduced search time from months to literally hours;
- opening up new communication channels with customers, both internal and external;
- developing an in-depth web-site.

**Team projects or internships.** Students may work on a project or internship in teams, but each student will need to contribute at least 150 hours of work to the project and project report.

## Internship Projects

An internship can be a useful way to give students a fundamental understanding of the industry and to accelerate one's career path. An internship must include participation on a project and a final written project report in order to satisfy the requirement for earning the M.C. in Digital Media.

Accomplishing an internship project in one quarter's time is not always possible. In some companies, a three to six-month part-time internship will be necessary for the intern to develop the skills and knowledge of the company in order to participate in a project.

### ✓ **Checklist for finding an Internship**

Finding an internship requires footwork on the part of the student. The Digital Media faculty, staff, and advisory board will serve as resources in seeking out an appropriate internship opportunity, but the student must secure this position. Sometimes a good deal of research is required to find an opportunity.

1) First, you should clarify what you want to do. What skills do you have and what do you want to develop? What do you hope to accomplish in your internship?

2) Next, research opportunities. Look at the websites of companies you are interested in. The UW business school librarian could be a big help in helping you find appropriate companies (they use the database Hoovers Online at <http://premium.hoovers.com/subscribe/> ). If the company isn't already sponsoring internships, you can approach it with your proposals.

Another source to explore is UW Career Services at <http://depts.washington.edu/careers/job-intern/>. You would go to Husky job, in the box.

3) Prepare yourself by having your resume critiqued and by talking with a faculty adviser about possible directions.

4) Then prepare yourself for an interview with the help of your faculty advisor.

### **Criteria for Approval of Internship**

The student must submit the following information to the Director of the Digital Media program in order that the company chosen for the internship may be approved:

- 1) An annual report or brochure for the company
- 2) Size of the company (number of employees)
- 3) Number of hours the student will work on the site

- 4) Resume of proposed Site Supervisor (see below)
- 5) Is the Site Supervisor a family member or personal friend?

### ***Site Supervisor***

The company sponsoring the internship should appoint a supervisor to work with the intern. The supervisor's role is to provide needed on-the-job training for the student, orientation to the company, monitoring of the project, and a final letter of evaluation for the student to be submitted to the Chair of the student's Graduate Supervisory Committee.

The Site Supervisor can serve as the second member of the student's Graduate Supervisory Committee if she or he has a master's, JD, MBA, or other post-graduate degree and is approved to serve on the committee by the Director of the Digital Media program.

Note that the Site Supervisor may *not* be a close relative of the intern.

## **Project Report Table of Contents: A Format for Project/Internship Final Report**

- 1) Issues/Problems Examined:** What are the issues/problems being investigated?
- 2) Significance of the Project:**
  - a. Why is it an important issue?
  - b. What are the expected contributions from the theoretical/practical perspectives?
- 3) Literature Review:**
  - a. Has the issue/problem been examined before?
  - b. If yes, what are the previous findings?
  - c. If yes, what is new in your proposed re-examination of the issue/problem?
    - i. Do you add new dimensions to the previous studies?
    - ii. Do you suggest new theoretical/conceptual framework to examine the issue?
- 4) Research Method:**
  - a. Explain the research design
  - b. Describe implementation (data collection) methods, e.g., use of a survey, sampling method and sample size.
- 5) Findings:** What are the findings?
- 6) Recommendations:**
  - a. What are your recommended solutions to the issue/problem?
  - b. What further studies do you recommend as a follow-up in the future?

### **Attachments:**

Tables/Charts  
Appendices  
Bibliography

## **Project / Internship Completion Checklist**

1. Set up a Supervisory Committee. (See Supervisory Committee information earlier in this handbook.)
2. Obtain approval from Supervisory Committee for Project Proposal (Form B) or Project/Internship Proposal (Form C). These forms are located in the appendices of this Student Handbook. Samples of student project and internship proposals are included with these appendices.
3. Provide copies of approved Project or Project/Internship form to the following:
  - ✓ Your committee
  - ✓ Counseling Services Coordinator ([cmumedia@u.washington.edu](mailto:cmumedia@u.washington.edu))
  - ✓ Your supervisor at the company at which you are interning, if you have selected this option. The Project/Internship Proposal form serves as a contract for an internship project.
4. Decide which quarter to register. Students can begin the project or internship any time without first registering for COM 600 credits. It is recommended that students register the quarter they will complete the project, because students must be enrolled in at least two credits the quarter of graduation. Sometimes it is difficult to estimate the length of time a project will take.

If an internship project takes more than one quarter, students may enroll in COM 600 when beginning the internship and receive a grade of “N” (no grade, indicating that satisfactory progress is being made, but evaluation depends on completion). The “N” will be converted to a grade when the project report is approved. However, again, students must be enrolled in a course the quarter they graduate; an “N” does not count as being enrolled.
5. Submit **first draft** to committee members about five weeks before the end of the quarter.
6. Feedback to the first draft by committee members
7. Submit **second draft** to committee members by about three weeks before the end of the quarter.
8. Feedback to the second draft by committee members
9. **Presentation Meeting** with both committee members. The Counseling Services Coordinator can help in scheduling a room if needed.
10. Revision if necessary
11. Submit electronic copy of report to the MCDM program at [cmumedia@u.washington.edu](mailto:cmumedia@u.washington.edu).

## Scholarly Research Degree Completion Option

Students desiring to continue on to pursue a Ph.D. program will find that a thesis is not required for most programs. The M.C. in Digital Media program is not a thesis degree program. Your term papers and papers you present at conferences and publish during the program, along with references from faculty, will usually suffice to show your academic and scholarly abilities when applying for a Ph.D. program. However, you may elect to complete an independent scholarly research project for COM 600 credit, which is essentially a shorter version of a master's thesis.

The Scholarly Research provides graduate students an opportunity to consolidate the knowledge and skills gained during their graduate studies and to contribute to the field. The paper must demonstrate basic scholarly abilities, including solid conceptualization, analysis, and writing. It must clearly define a problem to be investigated, demonstrate mastery of relevant academic literature, show competence in the appropriate methodology, and either present original research (specify the data needed, present data, discuss the results) or develop an application based upon previous research.

The Scholarly Research paper differs from a master's thesis only in that:

- 1) It is about 35 double-spaced pages, rather than the 50 page average of a thesis;
- 2) Style formatting does not require approval by the Graduate School;
- 3) The student must take 5 credits of COM 600 rather than 9 or more credits of COM 700.

Types of scholarly research projects include, but are not limited to:

- Case study: a description and evaluation of a specific program, with analysis of successes and failures in the context of communications theory and literature.
- Policy analysis: to bring together existing and newly collected data in an well-organized manner to answer a policy question.
- Descriptive study: a qualitative or quantitative study to measure a need or problem and to assess possible solutions.

A scholarly research project is *not* a literature review or group project.

### Credit Requirement

Five (5) credits of COM 600 are required for those electing the thesis option of degree completion, in addition to 40 credits of coursework.

### ***Checklist for Completing the Master's Scholarly Research Paper***

1. Put together a Supervisory Committee. Read the section in this handbook on the Supervisory Committee for guidance.
2. Submit scholarly research Prospectus to Supervisory Committee (prior to registering for COM 600) Prior to registering, students develop and seek committee approval of a scholarly research prospectus. The prospectus is a narrative description of the research that the student intends to undertake, and it is usually developed in close consultation with the chair of the student's supervisory committee. Different committee chairs have different expectations for the precise preparation of the prospectus, so each student should discuss prospectus requirements directly with his or her committee chair. The prospectus must be approved by both committee members.

It is recommended to complete the scholarly research prospectus and have it approved no later than the quarter before graduation quarter so that the paper will be ready for committee review and oral defense before the end of the final quarter.

3. Register for Credits. In general, it is recommended that students enroll for the COM 600 credits the quarter they intend to complete their theses. Fair warning: Faculty are often not available during the summer quarter. If this is the final 5 credits before graduation and the student does not complete the work the student will have to enroll for two more credits the quarter he or she completes the work.

4. Review of Scholarly Paper by Supervisory Committee. When the scholarly paper is complete, students give one copy of the document to both committee members for review. Often the committee members will request revisions, so this should be done at least three weeks before the end of the quarter.

5. Revision of Scholarly Research Paper. The revised thesis is submitted, one copy to each committee member. Upon approval, the student is ready for his or her oral defense.

6. Oral Defense of the Scholarly Research Paper. Satisfactory completion of the scholarly research paper will culminate in an oral defense, typically lasting 1½ hours. Both committee members must be present for the defense. The Counseling Services Coordinator can help set up a room for this, if needed. The student will bring two bound copies of the scholarly paper to the defense: one for the committee chair and one for the second committee member.

7. Provide an electronic copy of the scholarly research paper to the MCDM program by emailing it to [cmumedia@u.washington.edu](mailto:cmumedia@u.washington.edu).

**Department of Communication Thesis Prospectus Guidelines**  
(adapted from <http://www.com.washington.edu/Program/Grad/prospectusguidelines.doc>)

**General Guidelines.** A prospectus is a chance for you to make certain that you, your chair, and your committee all understand and approve of the work you are about to undertake. The more detailed and precise the prospectus, the less chance there is for misunderstanding as you work on the thesis. Different committee chairs have different ideas for how many pages it takes to accomplish these tasks, and that also depends on the nature of the topic and the student's progress to date. In general, a prospectus is between 10 and 30 pages, including tables and references. To make sure that they understand what is expected of them, students should discuss the prospectus with their chair. Here are two possible models that you and your chair may wish to consider:

**Outline A**

1. Title Page: title, name, date, chair, committee, etc. (1 page)
2. Abstract: 100-200 word paragraph summarizing the prospectus. (1 page)
3. Introduction: explains the purpose and significance of thesis and previews the prospectus. (2-3 pp.)
4. Theory and Literature: reviews previous literature on the topic. (3-10 pp.)
5. Research Questions: specifies the hypotheses or questions to be addressed in the thesis, stating clearly how these relate to and move beyond the existing literature. (2-4 pp.)
6. Data and Methods: explains what methods you will employ to carry out your study. This includes a description of the texts, artifacts, or other data to be collected, how they will be obtained, and the methods that will be used to analyze them. (3-6 pp.)
7. Chapter Outline: A brief paragraph-format outline of each chapter to appear in your thesis (1-2 pp.)
8. References, Tables, etc. (2-5 pp.)
9. Timeline: Indicates the date by which each portion of the thesis will be completed, including a date by which the final draft will be given to the chair. (1 page)

**Outline B**

1. Title Page: title, name, date, chair, committee, etc. (1 page)
2. Abstract: 100-200 word paragraph summarizing the prospectus. (1 page)
3. Introduction: explains the exigency or need for an answer to a research question or questions. Introduces the ideas and concepts that readers will need to know about before they can understand and appreciate the author's analysis or criticism. (3-5 pp.)
4. Justification: explains the challenge or unresolved problem to be addressed and why it is important. The justification introduces the theoretical framework of the study and provides a preview of why its findings will be significant. (3-5 pp.)
5. Analysis: The product of a scholarly study is a set of claims or an argument (i.e., the conclusion). This is supported by whatever takes the form of evidence. It could be a textual reading, an ethnographic observation, readings of cultural texts, etc. This section will describe that portion of the thesis where its author does work that positions his or her readers to judge the study's claims or conclusions. (3-5 pp.)
6. Chapter Outline: A brief outline of each chapter to appear in the thesis. (1-2 pp.)
7. References to be used in the thesis. (2-4 pp.)
8. Timeline: indicates the date by which each portion of the thesis will be completed, including a date by which the final draft will be given to the chair. (1 page)

**Other Suggestions:**

- If you intend to use previously collected data in your thesis, be sure that your chair and committee members believe that the data are of sufficient quality and relevance for thesis work.
- If you will be doing empirical work, you should obtain approval from the Human Subjects Division [[link](#)] before collecting data (or analyzing data collected elsewhere).
- If you intend to use archival data or other documents or artifacts that must be retrieved from off campus, be sure to allow time in your schedule for obtaining these items. It may be necessary to schedule travel or make data requests far in advance.
- If you wish to see a useful model prospectus, you may request one from your chair or students who have already completed them. Prospectus authors are generally quite willing to share their writings with fellow students.
- Refer to a style guide when writing your prospectus (e.g., APA, Chicago, MLA). Your chair may advise you on an appropriate guide. If you will eventually seek to publish your thesis, it may be expedient to learn the style used by the journals you are most likely to submit to in the future.

## **MCDM PRACTICES AND PRINCIPLES**

The Master of Communication in Digital Media is a degree program for working professionals, intended to balance fundamental theory and concepts with practical tools. It focuses on the economic, political, social and cultural impact of new communication technologies and encourages students to apply these concepts to their spheres of interest.

Many of our students are looking to advance their careers – some within their present organizations, others in new professional directions. They want a new perspective on technology. Although a few may pursue additional studies after completing the MCDM, the MCDM is not integrated into the Communication Department doctoral program.

At the end of the program, students should be able to:

- Identify and analyze the impacts of current digital media technology on business and social institutions.
- Understand how to use digital media tools to create and convey a message.
- Apply new business and management models based upon or impacted by digital media.

The MCDM provides high quality instruction with conceptual and practical applications. As such:

- The course plan should clearly lay out expectations and learning objectives.
- Class projects should flow directly from larger learning objectives.
- Grading and workload (3 hours a week per credit hour including class time) at this grad school level should also reflect that most students are working full-time, which may require instructors to be realistic, and flexible, in their expectations.
- A 3.5 - 4.0 grade reflects a substantive ability to master the course content, reflect upon it critically, fully participate in class, and express oneself in a way that expands the scope of the content beyond how it has been traditionally understood.
- A 3.0 – 3.4 grade reflects the ability to assimilate course content, understand its implications, express oneself clearly, and obvious progress in learning.
- A minimum of 2.7 is required for each course that is counted towards the degree.
- Final grades should be submitted in a timely manner.

Our students are expected to:

- Write coherently and clearly, completing assignments on time and as directed.
- Not miss more than two classes a quarter, unless due to extreme circumstances.
- Engage as much as possible with colleagues and the instructor.
- Stay current with the latest developments in digital media.

## Graduate School Policies

Go online to <http://www.grad.washington.edu/area/currstuds.htm> for complete University of Washington Graduate School policies, as well as a wealth of other information. Following are two key issues for Master's students.

### Grade Point Average

Grades are entered as numbers, the possible values being 4.0, 3.9, . . . and decreasing by one-tenth until 1.7 is reached. Grades below 1.7 are recorded as 0.0 by the Registrar and no credit is earned. **A minimum of 2.7 is required in each course that is counted toward a graduate degree.**

A minimum GPA of 3.00 is required for graduation.

### Maintaining your graduate status

To maintain graduate status, a student must be enrolled on a full-time, part-time, or official On-Leave basis from the time of first enrollment in the Graduate School until completion of all requirements for the graduate degree. If a student plans not to attend any quarter (other than summer quarter), he or she must apply for official On-Leave status prior to the start of the quarter. Failure to do this will result in loss of graduate status, requiring the student to re-apply and be re-admitted to the program.

To be eligible for On-Leave status, the student must have registered for, and completed at least one quarter in the University of Washington Graduate School. The student must also have been registered or officially On-Leave for the immediate past quarter (except summer).

If a student has registered for any portion of a quarter, he/she may **NOT** go on On-Leave for that quarter unless he/she officially withdraws **before the first day of the quarter**. If student is enrolled, then he/she can go onleave the following quarter.

If a student who is On-Leave registers in any other status, i.e. Extension, Non-matriculated, Graduate Non-matriculated, etc., it will negate their official On-Leave status.

### ***Procedure for Approval of On-Leave Status***

Contact the Counseling Services Coordinator to be mailed the Petition for On-Leave Status form. It is also available at Registration Office 225 Schmitz and Graduate School, G1 Communications Bldg. A student's petition for On-Leave status must be approved by the MCDM Director and submitted to the Registration Office (225 Schmitz Hall) no later than the fifth day of the quarter. A nonrefundable fee is paid to the Cashier's Office (129 Schmitz Hall). With departmental permission, a student may go On-Leave for up to four consecutive quarters at one time or any part thereof. If a student wishes to extend that time, the student must complete another Petition for On-Leave form as well as paying another fee.

On-Leave status entitles students to use the University libraries and maintain access to their email accounts. They are NOT entitled to extensive faculty and staff counsel, examinations of any type (except for language competency), thesis/dissertation filing, University housing, student insurance, or any form of financial assistance. Students may use the Hall Health Primary Care Center on a pay-for-service basis and can pay to use the IMA.

### ***Re-enrollment Procedure***

If the student desires to return before his or her on-leave period is completed, all he or she needs to do is register.

### **Final Quarter Registration: Important!!**

A student must maintain registration as a full- or part-time graduate student at the University for the quarter the master's degree is conferred. Plan your curriculum carefully so that you are registered the quarter you plan to graduate. Completing an incomplete or your project does not constitute being registered. You must be registered for a minimum of 2 credits the quarter you graduate. For this reason, we advise you **not** to register for a project (if you have elected this option) until the quarter you know you will complete it.

### **Full-time Enrollment**

Full-time quarterly enrollment for graduate students is **10 credits**.

### **Repeating Courses**

Graduate students may repeat any course. Both the first and second grades will be included in the cumulative GPA. Subsequent grades will not be included, but will appear on the permanent record. The number of credits earned in the course will apply toward degree requirements only once.

## Probation and Drop Policy

A student may be put on probation under these circumstances:

- earning less than a 2.7 in any course
- earning a total GPA of under 3.0
- having excessive absences from coursework without instructor approval
- disruptive or inappropriate behavior in class

If a student does not correct these circumstances, he or she will be dropped from the program.

## Final Steps in Graduating

The following information should help you complete your Master of Communication in Digital Media.

First, a reminder: Plan your curriculum carefully so that you are registered the quarter you plan to graduate. Completing an incomplete course does not constitute being enrolled.

### Applying to Graduate

1. Ensure that the Digital Media Counseling Services Coordinator has on file your Course of Study form, approved and signed by your supervisory committee

2. Apply to graduate on the Graduate School's web site at:

<http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/mastapp.htm>

- To avoid a late fee the Master's Degree Request must be filed before the end of the seventh week in the quarter.
- If the Master's Degree Request is filed during weeks eight and nine it is considered late and the student must pay a late fee.
- If the Master's Degree Request is filed during weeks ten and eleven it is not accepted. The system is closed
- In summer quarter, the Master's Degree Request should be filed during weeks one through six. Week seven is considered late and the student must pay a fee. A request filed in weeks eight and nine is not accepted. The system is closed.

If you do not finish the quarter you applied, *you must submit another application* on the Graduate School's web page.

Apply by the deadline! Without these forms in your file, the Department will withhold your warrant. You will have to then register for two more credits the following quarter and graduate a quarter late, something you will naturally want to avoid.

## **Taking the Final Steps**

1. Return any materials that you have borrowed from the library
2. Remember to come to the end-of-year graduation party the Department holds to honor all of you who have completed this process!!

## **Appendices**

Form A  
Project Proposal

Form B  
Internship Project Contract





## MCDM Project Proposal

This may be sent as an email and approval given by email, cc'ed to Counseling Svs. Coordinator

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Project description (*Please attach a sheet of information* including information on company involved, if any, product which will be developed, steps projected to complete or advance the product, and extent of contribution to the product by the student. )

Learning objectives

Timetable

Criteria for Evaluation

Approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, Supervisory committee chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, Supervisory committee second member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Sample Project Proposal**

### **Student**

D. Travers Scott, Cohort III

### **Submitted**

May 01, 2004

### **Project Description**

As the project component of my Master of Communication in Digital Media degree, I propose to conduct a content analysis research study. For three months, I would record the occurrence of stories appearing *both* in the most influential U.S. news blogs and also as leads in the major U.S. newspapers of record. The dates of each story's first appearance in each medium will be compared to ascertain the direction of influence between blogs and newspapers.

### **Relevance of Study**

Blogs and blogging are currently a topic of great interest in fields such as journalism, communications technology, and media. Yet, despite some notable cases of their influence on mainstream media, there is a lack of data and no consensus on whether they *influence* or *reflect* mass media news. It is unclear whether the notable cases of blog influence are predictive, or merely anecdotal and atypical. Furthermore, research thus far in this emerging area of study seems skewed toward cultural studies rather than a social science approach. My project would provide information on the function of blogs in the news media and also add much-needed social science data to the research on this emerging digital medium.

### **Learning Objectives**

- To learn the history of blogging, with an emphasis on its relation to news media
- To examine the relationship between the appearance of stories in the most influential news blogs and appearance of the same stories in major, agenda-setting U.S. newspapers
- To gain the experience of carrying to completion a social-science research study

### **Research Question**

Do blogs report stories first (independent variable) and influence mainstream news' choice of stories (dependent variable)?

## Project Plan

### 1. Literature Review:

- Encompass historical, cultural, and theoretical issues, as well as any existing research.
- Also research appropriate conferences and publications for eventual submission.

### 2. Research Design:

- Refine, compare, and choose from existing measurement tools and opinions in order to determine which are the top agenda-setting U.S. newspapers and most news influential blogs. Use this information to finalize population, unit of analysis, and sample.
- Determine whether to measure newspapers in print and/or online, and which edition(s)/postings.
- Develop schedule for daily reviewing blogs and newspapers for maximum accuracy in time-zone and news-cycle alignment.
- Develop coding forms and database for content analysis.
- Estimate costs, budget.

### 3. Data Collection:

- Track daily the subject of front/home page stories on each newspaper.
- Track daily the subjects discussed in each blog.

### 4. Data Analysis:

- Reduce data to only stories that appeared both in newspapers and blogs.
- Chart dates of story appearances in each medium to ascertain if one precedes the other.

### 5. Presentation of Findings: Paper, website, and presentation formats.

### 6. Submission of Findings: Conferences, publications.

## Timetable

	06/04	07/04	08/04	09/04	10/04	11/04	12/04	01/05
Literature Review								
Research Design								
Data Collection								
Data Analysis								
Presentation of Findings								
Submission of Findings								

## Criteria for Evaluation

1. Appropriateness of the research design and the analysis of the results
2. Effectiveness in communicating findings across the presentation media
3. Acceptance for publication and / or presentation



## MCDM Internship Project Contract

This may be sent as an email and approval given by email, cc'ed to Counseling Svs. Coordinator

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
telephone                      fax                      email

Company Name/Division \_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
telephone                      fax                      email

Graduate Supervisory Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
telephone                      fax                      email

### ***Criteria for Approval of Internship***

The student must submit the following information to the Director of the Digital Media program in order that the company chosen for the internship may be approved:

- 1) An annual report or brochure for the company
- 2) Size of the company (number of employees)
- 3) Number of hours the student will work on the site
- 4) Resume of proposed Site Supervisor (see below)
- 5) Is the Site Supervisor a family member or personal friend?

Internship responsibilities and Project description (*Please attach a sheet of paper with a detailed description. Include approximate hours you will work—an internship/project must consist of at least 150 hours work including writing the report. Include the product which will be developed, steps projected to complete or advance the product, and extent of contribution to the product by the student*) )

Internship payment by company (if part of the agreement):

Learning objectives

Timetable

Criteria for Evaluation (usually this will include a letter of evaluation from the site supervisor)

Intellectual property provisions (please specify, for instance: must the intern agree to keep information gained during the internship confidential; who will have rights to inventions and copyrights created during the internship?)

Approval:

_____	_____	_____
Name, Intern	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Name, Site supervisor	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Name, Supervisory committee chair	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Name, Supervisory committee second member (if second member is the site supervisor, please note that here)	Signature	Date

## Sample Project/Internship Proposal (3 Month Internship)

Student name: Jodi Davis  
Web Specialist Intern

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### 1. Learning objectives.

- To understand the workings of a digital media company.
- To understand the process of media streaming.
- To understand basic marketing techniques and strategy.

### 2. The Company

#### *Real Networks – The Ubiquity Evangelist Team (Strategic Relations)*

*Real Networks* develops end-to-end solutions that allow everyone — from Fortune 500 companies with locations worldwide to individuals at their desktops or other Internet-enabled devices — to create, send and receive audio, video and other multimedia services over the Internet (RealOne Player @ [www.realone.com](http://www.realone.com)).

#### *The Ubiquity Evangelist Team (Strategic Relations) is:*

Dedicated to promote Real Network's corporate and divisional goals by ensuring the ubiquity and usage of Real's formats, technology, products and services through effective evangelism and strategic business relationships.

### 3. Responsibilities

#### **Position Description --** Web Specialist Intern, Strategic Relations

The Web Specialist Intern will be involved in an extensive Branding and Links program targeting the top 300 sites with streaming media. This intern will be responsible for surveying a large and ever growing list of sites to monitor the following: streaming formats offered, versions of formats used, and ensuring the graphics and to download player links are correct. This job will require a tenacious spirit, excellent customer relation skills and a very organized, systematic modus operandi. We are looking for a graduating student (or one capable of working a 40 hr work week) who will have a degree in business, computer science, or a related field. The ideal candidate must be web savvy; have knowledge of HTML, Power Point, and Excel; and have interest in digital media. Excellent verbal and written communication skills are required as well.

## Branding and Links – Project Description

- Identify and contact leading (top 300+) digital media sites
- Discuss ways to enhance media experience through the use of Real technology
- Increase traffic to Real.com and usage of RealOne Player through increased content availability and use of latest technology and formats
- Work with Real.com team to determine most optimized means for generating subscription sales and Player downloads
- Promote additional benefits and opportunities for working with Real (OpenPass, Mobile Onramp, Helix, etc.)
- Collect and measure information provided by both customer feedback and performance data (ie. Traffic, installs, subscriptions, etc.)
- Enhance Real Networks customer experience and perception

## Branding and Links – Target Results

- Increase in traffic to real.com from referring sites
- 20% increase in downloads & installations of RealOne Player
- 20% increase in up-sells to subscriptions through both direct and post-install channels from referral sites
- Develop opportunities for other Real Networks' products and services (i.e. Helix Universal Server, Helix Producer, OpenPass, RBN, etc.)
- Identify new content and promotional opportunities
- Improve & develop long-term relationship with current customers and prospects

## Miscellaneous tasks

- 2-3 pane authoring (through use of .ram, .smil, and .rm files)
- Some HTML in building content portions of the related pane info
- Video encoding for the RealOne Player (Real 8, and Real 9)



## Example:

Two - three pane authoring consists of the media window in the left hand window, a related information page (about the media playing) in the right window and an explore window in the bottom, which allows user to surf the web.

#### 4. Timetable.

Below is a proposed weekly work schedule for the 12-week (3 month) internship.

- i. 40 hours a week: for a total of 480 hours during the internship.
- ii. Minus 1 week for a pre-planned vacation
- iii. = Total of 440 hours

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5

#### **First 6 weeks – Preparation**

- Create Frequently Asked Questions list
- Create Email Templates.
- Setup Siebel Training
- Gather leading sites
- Siebel Training
- Install Siebel software
- Development Measurement and Reporting Process
- Meeting with Sales Operations
- Obtain Unique Player Dist Code to track traffic (installs, downloads, etc.)

#### **Last 6 weeks – Implementation and Results**

- Initiate contact via email (then Phone)
- Provide updated links and logos to sites
- Report Findings on custom spreadsheet
- Maintain feedback loop (registration, etc.)
- Create reports based on feedback
- Measurability – is the project successful?
- Reporting and Measuring
- Weekly email reports within Evangelist Team
- Monthly meeting reports with Sales Operations and Evangelist Team
- Ongoing feedback process with sales
- Communicate current customer and new prospect information