M.S. in Digital Marketing and Media

Course Descriptions

MAR 5100 Communications

Oral and written communication skills are critical to success in the marketing field. This course presents communication as integral to management and marketing strategy. This course introduces the basics of communication strategy: audience analysis, communicator credibility, message construction, and delivery. It will enhance your abilities to design effective messages, from concept to delivery.

Industry Application: Strategic communication skills distinguish marketers who influence decisions from those who simply relay information. At technology companies like Apple and Google, product marketers must communicate value propositions to diverse audiences from engineers to executives to consumers. Advertising agencies require creatives who translate brand strategy into compelling messaging across channels. Marketing teams craft communications that shape perception during crises and product launches. The emphasis on both oral and written communication addresses reality: marketers constantly pitch ideas internally, present strategies to clients, and create content for audiences. What separates effective marketers is the ability to adapt messages appropriately—technical depth for product teams, emotional resonance for consumers, and ROI focus for executives.

MAR 5507 Consumer Behavior and Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has changed the conversation in consumer-focused marketing, and companies are successful when they use CRM to optimize the identification, acquisition, growth and retention of desired customers. This course provides students with a practical understanding of the issues that affect B2C and B2B relationships, including the psychological, social and cultural drivers of consumer behavior. Students master best practices for successful CRM including a company's response to consumer preferences, funnel management, messaging and sales activities, CRM systems and effective data management and application across the organization.

Industry Application: Understanding consumer psychology and implementing effective CRM systems directly impacts customer lifetime value and acquisition costs—metrics that determine marketing ROI. E-commerce companies like Amazon and Shopify use behavioral insights and CRM data to personalize experiences that drive repeat purchases. Consumer packaged goods companies including Procter & Gamble and Unilever apply psychological principles to influence

purchasing decisions across retail channels in an ever-evolving media landscape. Financial services firms leverage CRM systems to identify high-value customer segments and optimize cross-selling strategies. The integration of behavioral drivers with CRM technology addresses the reality that effective marketing requires both understanding why customers act and having systems to act on those insights. Marketing automation platforms at companies like Salesforce and HubSpot enable personalized customer journeys, but successful implementation requires marketers who understand the psychological foundations of customer relationships rather than just operating software.

MAR 5616 Marketing Research Methods

Marketing research is an organized way of developing and providing information for decision-making purposes. This course focuses on both qualitative and quantitative aspects of marketing research and how they help managers in addressing substantive marketing problems such as market segmentation, estimating market potential, forecasting, developing advertising and pricing policies, and designing and positioning new products.

Industry Application: Marketing research capabilities enable data-driven decision-making rather than relying on intuition or HiPPO (Highest Paid Person's Opinion) in strategic choices. Consumer goods companies in highly competitive industries, use quantitative research to forecast demand and optimize pricing—companies like Coca-Cola and PepsiCo invest heavily in market research before product launches. Technology companies employ qualitative methods to understand user needs and inform product development. Market research firms including Nielsen, Ipsos, and Kantar employ researchers who design studies and interpret findings for client decision-making. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods reflects reality: some questions require numerical precision while others need deep understanding of motivations and preferences. Consulting firms helping clients with market entry, segmentation, and positioning require professionals who can translate business questions into research designs and findings into actionable recommendations that executives trust enough to bet resources on.

MAR 5815 Marketing Management and Strategy

This course provides a solid foundation in modern marketing from a strategic, general management perspective. Concepts and techniques presented address competitive analysis, segmentation, positioning strategy, and marketing decisions that support an effective marketing strategy. To reflect the scope of today's business world, the course examines marketing across various, diverse contexts and perspectives, including domestic and international, products and services, and others.

Industry Application: Strategic marketing frameworks enable systematic analysis of competitive positioning and market opportunities rather than ad hoc tactical decisions. Brand managers at companies like Nike and Coca-Cola use strategic frameworks to evaluate product portfolio decisions and resource allocation across markets. Technology companies entering new markets must analyze competitive dynamics and develop differentiated positioning strategies. Consulting firms including McKinsey and BCG require consultants who can analyze client market positions and recommend strategic responses. The emphasis on diverse contexts— international markets, services versus products—reflects the reality that marketing principles apply broadly but execution varies significantly by context. What distinguishes effective marketing leaders is the ability to integrate competitive analysis, customer insights, and organizational capabilities into coherent strategies that guide tactical decisions. The general

management perspective prepares graduates for senior marketing roles requiring cross-functional coordination and P&L accountability.

MAR 5838 Brand Management

In this course, you will develop a deep understanding of brand structure and its importance in marketing. We will focus on management of brand equity, i.e., the value of the brand to the organization. Specific topics include defining and measuring brand equity, branding a service, launching a new brand, brand positioning, building and leveraging a brand, strategic brand management, and brand extension.

Industry Application: Brand equity represents billions in enterprise value, making brand management capabilities strategically important beyond marketing departments. Consumer goods companies like Unilever and Procter & Gamble organize around brand management, where brand managers function as mini-CEOs responsible for their brands' performance and consumer perceptions. Luxury brands including LVMH and Kering require professionals who understand how to build and protect brand value across product categories and geographic markets. The focus on measuring brand equity addresses a critical challenge: justifying brand investments requires demonstrating financial impact, not just awareness or sentiment metrics. Technology companies launching new products must decide between leveraging existing brands versus creating new ones—decisions requiring systematic frameworks rather than intuition. Service companies face unique branding challenges since they cannot display physical products, requiring different approaches to building brand associations and customer trust through experience and reputation management.

MAR 5899 Marketing Capstone

In the Capstone, students create a marketing plan and fully integrated campaign including digital and social media for a real company. Students apply the strategic marketing knowledge and tools they've learned to increase the spending rate of current customers and cost-effectively acquire new customers. They integrate strategic marketing mix elements with corporate goals and maximize the benefits of e-commerce technology. And they discover cutting-edge strategic marketing models and their real-world applications.

Industry Application: The capstone creates portfolio-ready evidence of integrated marketing capability that hiring managers actively seek when evaluating candidates. Marketing agencies evaluate candidates based on campaign work demonstrating strategic thinking and creative execution—exactly the integrated skills developed through capstone projects. Brand management positions at consumer goods companies require candidates who can develop comprehensive marketing plans connecting strategic objectives to tactical execution. The real company component provides authentic experience navigating stakeholder constraints and business realities rather than theoretical exercises. Digital marketing roles at companies like Google and Facebook require professionals who can integrate paid, owned, and earned media into cohesive strategies. The emphasis on connecting marketing activities to business objectives—customer acquisition costs, lifetime value, conversion rates—reflects how marketing accountability has evolved from brand awareness to revenue impact requiring rigorous measurement and optimization.

DAV 5200 Visual Design and Storytelling

Analysts must present their data in effective and compelling visualizations. This course combines the best heuristics for data presentation with hands-on experience in creating spreadsheet charts and data visualizations from a variety of source data. Students will learn how to combine text and visualizations to craft stories that promote deeper engagement with data analyses and conclusions.

Industry Application: Data visualization capabilities enable marketers to communicate insights to stakeholders who make budget and strategy decisions based on evidence. Marketing analytics teams must present campaign performance, customer segmentation, and market research to executives who lack technical backgrounds. Consulting firms require analysts who can create executive-ready visualizations that drive client decisions—clients pay for clarity and actionable insights, not raw data. Media companies including The New York Times use data visualization to engage audiences and explain complex topics. The storytelling emphasis addresses a critical gap: data rarely speaks for itself, requiring marketers to craft narratives that help stakeholders understand implications. Marketing technology companies building dashboards need professionals who understand both technical capabilities and design principles. The combination of analytical rigor and communication skills distinguishes marketers who influence strategy from those who simply report metrics.

DAV 5400 Analytics Programming

Code-based solutions can be richer, more accurate, and more flexible than those that rely on off-the shelf software and analytics packages. This course teaches the programming skills that data analysts need to prepare structured and unstructured data for downstream analysis. Students will use high-level programming languages to create rich data analysis workflows.

Industry Application: Programming skills enable marketers to analyze data at scales and complexities that spreadsheet tools cannot handle, increasingly differentiating competitive candidates. E-commerce companies processing millions of transactions need marketers who can programmatically analyze customer behavior rather than sampling small datasets. Marketing technology companies including Adobe and Salesforce require product marketers who understand the technical capabilities they're selling. The ability to work with unstructured data—social media posts, customer reviews, website behavior—requires programming skills since traditional tools cannot process this information. Digital agencies serving sophisticated clients must demonstrate analytical rigor and reproducibility that manual analyses cannot provide. The emphasis on workflow creation addresses the reality that marketing analyses need regular updating—code-based approaches enable automation and consistency that manual processes cannot achieve. This technical capability increasingly separates senior marketing roles from junior positions as data volumes and analytical expectations continue growing.

MAR 5728 Digital Storytelling

Marketers tell story with purpose, and digital marketers create content that resonates with audiences through different and non-traditional channels. This course equips students with the knowhow to control and integrate the narrative across multiple media for awareness, advertising, branding, public relations, and retention by telling stories and creating experiences. Students will use multiple media formats and digital/physical artifacts to tell stories and tailor messages for a variety of market segments and effectively engage, excite, and convert leads into long-term customers.

Industry Application: Digital storytelling capabilities enable brands to create emotional connections across fragmented media landscapes where attention is scarce. Content marketing agencies help brands develop narrative strategies—companies like Nike and Airbnb employ digital storytellers who create multimedia campaigns. Media companies including Netflix and Spotify use storytelling to differentiate in crowded markets. The multi-format emphasis reflects reality: effective digital stories leverage video, interactive content, podcasts, and written pieces depending on platform and audience. Direct-to-consumer brands must tell compelling stories to justify premium pricing and build customer loyalty. The focus on creating experiences rather than just messages addresses the evolution from interruptive advertising to content that audiences choose to consume. What distinguishes effective digital storytellers is adapting narratives across touchpoints while maintaining coherence—fragmented customer journeys require consistent storytelling.

MAR 5729 Web Design and User Experience

Compelling and functional websites are at the heart of every great company's business strategy. Behavioral research tells us that digital media should be useful, intuitive and visually appealing. They must also tell a consistent story across each stage of the customer journey. This course introduces foundational concepts of design and development, using best practices in information architecture and user experience. By the end of the course students will be able to create websites and digital properties with strong value propositions and calls to action that support a company's conversion goals.

Industry Application: User experience design capabilities directly impact conversion rates and customer satisfaction—poorly designed websites cost companies millions in lost revenue. E-commerce companies obsess over UX optimization since small improvements in conversion rates generate substantial revenue—Amazon famously tests design changes extensively. Digital agencies including Razorfish and R/GA require UX designers who combine behavioral research with design skills. SaaS companies depend on intuitive product experiences to reduce customer acquisition costs and improve retention. The emphasis on information architecture and user journey addresses the reality that websites serve multiple purposes—awareness, education, conversion—requiring deliberate design of each stage. Technology companies launching new digital products need professionals who can translate business requirements into user-centered designs. The combination of aesthetic appeal and functional design reflects the dual challenge: websites must look professional while enabling users to accomplish goals efficiently without friction.

MAR 5730 Web Analytics and SEO

Web analytics and SEO allow companies to achieve sales and business objectives. By tracking online visitors and analyzing their activities, marketers can refine their keyword strategies, and optimize digital properties to increase time on site and conversion rates. This course prepares students to effectively drive and measure web traffic using a variety of digital platforms. Students learn to build digital marketing measurement models maps business objectives to Key Performance Indicators. They will also explore how to obtain and analyze data to make actionable recommendations.

Industry Application: Web analytics and SEO capabilities enable marketers to drive measurable traffic and conversions rather than relying on paid advertising alone. E-commerce

companies depend on organic search traffic for profitable customer acquisition—companies like Wayfair and Chewy invest heavily in SEO. Digital marketing agencies help clients improve search visibility and optimize conversion funnels using analytics platforms. Marketing technology companies including Google and Adobe provide analytics tools requiring professionals who can translate data into recommendations. The measurement model emphasis addresses accountability expectations: marketing leaders must connect activities to business objectives and demonstrate ROI. The combination of driving traffic (SEO) and optimizing performance (analytics) reflects the full-funnel responsibility of digital marketers. What separates effective practitioners is the ability to identify optimization opportunities from data patterns and implement changes that improve business metrics, beyond vanity metrics like page views.

MAR 5731 Predictive Analytics

Effective marketers harness the power of big data to develop consumer insights and make data-driven decisions. This course introduces students to the application of statistical and research-based techniques that predict behavior. Students construct models to ensure effective campaigns and initiatives, and evaluate the trade-offs between analysis, prediction and actual program execution.

Industry Application: Predictive modeling capabilities enable marketers to optimize campaign spend and targeting based on data-driven forecasts rather than historical averages. Subscription businesses including Netflix and Spotify use predictive models to identify churn risk and intervene with retention campaigns. Financial services companies apply predictive analytics for customer lifetime value estimation and credit risk assessment. Retail companies forecast demand to optimize inventory and promotional strategies. Marketing technology platforms enable personalization at scale using predictive models—companies like Salesforce and Adobe integrate predictive capabilities into marketing automation. The emphasis on trade-offs between analysis and execution addresses a practical reality: perfect predictions are impossible, so marketers must balance analytical rigor with timely action. What distinguishes effective marketing analysts is understanding model limitations and communicating uncertainty appropriately to stakeholders who must make decisions under imperfect information, avoiding both overconfidence and analysis paralysis.

MAR 5734 Influencer Content Strategy

Influencers have emerged as an authentic, trustworthy source within a fragmented media landscape caused by the explosion of digital and social channels. In this course, we'll explore how influencers leverage the psychology of persuasion to craft contagious content, build stickier messages, and get any product, idea, or behavior embraced by the masses. We'll also analyze how influencers use the power of their social networks and the credibility of word-of-mouth influence to spread information, both online and offline. Finally, we'll discuss the future of influencer strategies and their relationship to broadcast, digital, social media, and mobile channels.

Industry Application: Influencer marketing has evolved from experimental tactic to substantial budget allocation as traditional advertising effectiveness declines. Consumer brands partner with influencers for authentic endorsements—companies like Daniel Wellington built businesses primarily through influencer collaborations. Marketing agencies including Influencer and The Village help brands identify and manage influencer partnerships. Beauty and fashion brands work extensively with influencers since visual platforms like Instagram and TikTok drive

discovery and purchasing decisions. The psychology of persuasion emphasis enables strategic influencer selection rather than choosing based solely on follower counts. What separates effective influencer strategies is understanding how credibility, reach, and audience alignment combine to drive outcomes. The future-focused component addresses the evolving landscape as platforms, regulations, and consumer attitudes toward influencer content continue changing. Organizations need marketers who can evaluate influencer partnerships strategically and measure impact beyond vanity metrics to demonstrate business value.

MAR 5900 Internship

This course consists of an off-campus internship experience supervised by a staff person at the internship site and overseen by a faculty advisor. The internship site must be approved by the program director, and the overall duration of student work must be no less than 150 hours (based on a 3-credit course). At the start of the internship, the student and faculty advisor will jointly develop specific learning objectives tailored to the nature of the internship. Over the course of the internship, students will be required to submit weekly reflections, and at the end of the internship, students write a final paper that represents the culmination of the work performed.

Industry Application: Marketing internship experience provides professional exposure and portfolio development that classroom learning cannot replicate, frequently serving as the pathway to full-time positions. Advertising agencies including Ogilvy and BBDO use internship programs to evaluate talent for permanent roles—performance during internships matters more than résumés. Consumer goods companies recruit brand management interns who can transition into assistant brand manager positions. Digital marketing agencies need interns who can contribute to client campaigns while developing practical skills. Technology companies offer marketing internships providing exposure to product marketing, growth marketing, and brand strategy. The 150-hour minimum with faculty oversight ensures substantive project work rather than administrative tasks. The weekly reflections develop professional self-assessment habits while the final paper creates portfolio evidence. Marketing success requires both analytical capabilities and interpersonal skills—internships develop the stakeholder management and deadline execution that academic work alone cannot teach.

MAR 5901 Independent Study

This independent study course provides the student with the flexibility to learn more about a topic of interest outside of the formal course setting. The subject should be chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor who acts as the student's supervisor, and with the permission of the program director. The student is required to submit a course contract describing the course of study and its specific learning objectives. Course credit is determined in advance of the course, by the instructor with the approval of the program director.

Industry Application: Independent study demonstrates intellectual curiosity and initiative that distinguish exceptional marketing candidates from competent ones in competitive hiring. The ability to identify interesting topics and pursue specialized knowledge signals the continuous learning mindset essential for marketing careers where platforms and best practices evolve constantly. Leading marketing teams value this initiative because professional work requires staying current with emerging channels without formal training. The faculty mentorship provides individualized guidance while developing professional advisor relationships. For students targeting specialized areas like influencer marketing, marketing automation, or conversion optimization, independent study enables deep exploration beyond standard coursework. This

serves as compelling evidence of genuine passion when competing for positions where employers want innovation drivers. The self-directed learning capability becomes increasingly valuable as marketing continues fragmenting across channels requiring rapid mastery of new domains.

MAR 5902 Special Topics

This course provides the opportunity to offer boutique short-term courses on emerging phenomena, policies, processes, technologies, and techniques in digital and social strategies, and marketing analytics. The expectation is that this will be an advanced class that requires an appropriate student project and deliverable in line with the number of credits awarded for the course.

Industry Application: Emerging marketing technologies and platforms evolve faster than standard curricula can adapt, making exposure to cutting-edge topics a competitive advantage. New channels like TikTok and emerging platforms require marketers to continuously update their knowledge. Marketing technology categories including customer data platforms, marketing automation, and attribution modeling create new specializations requiring dedicated study. Technology companies value candidates who proactively develop expertise in specialized areas relevant to their needs. The project-based format creates portfolio evidence beyond standard coursework. Marketing conferences like INBOUND and Social Media Marketing World demonstrate the importance of staying current—leading practitioners continuously learn about emerging tactics. The boutique course format enables timely coverage of emerging topics before they become mainstream, giving students early-mover advantages. The ability to rapidly master new marketing domains is itself valuable as the field continues evolving.

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