

# Notre Dame's Online Data Science Program Grows Enrollment 84% with Mongoose

## Overview

The University of Notre Dame's Online Master's in Data Science, housed in the College of Science's Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics (ACMS) department, is the university's only fully online program. With a small, dedicated team and a growing student base, the program required a communication solution that could drive enrollment, enhance engagement, and foster personal, human connections at scale. Mongoose's Conversation Intelligence Platform became the catalyst for that transformation.

## Challenge

As a fully online program operating within a traditional university structure, the ACMS team faced unique challenges: Email overload and low response rates among prospective students; difficulty reaching their niche audience with traditional marketing strategies; a need to build relationships in a digital-first environment; and limited internal resources, as only two staff members manage the entire funnel from inquiry through alumni engagement. **Samantha Adamczewski, Associate Director of the Online Master's in Data Science program** at The University of Notre Dame, explained, "We were having trouble reaching our target audience. Long marketing emails weren't working. People didn't want another email; they wanted short, helpful texts."

## Solution

The team adopted Mongoose Text to reach students earlier in their journey, reduce friction, and support one-on-one connections with prospective, current, and former students. **Cortney Mayfield, Admissions Coordinator**, is responsible for writing the messages and monitoring the inbox, ensuring timely and personal replies that make conversations feel human, not automated. They began by using **Mongoose Conversation Intelligence** primarily in admissions, but quickly recognized its broader potential. Staff segmented prospective students based on activity level and crafted personalized texts around key moments like application open dates, info sessions, fee waivers, and events. The program then expanded its use of Mongoose to support:

- **Student success:** Personalized reminders, quick logistical support, event updates, and check-ins
- **Alumni engagement:** Invites to events, outreach for referral support, and updates about the program

“Mongoose allowed us to make every message feel personal. Prospective students were surprised to receive a response from a human rather than an auto-generated message. I had students tell me at Orientation that this was impactful to their admissions experience.”

SAMANTHA ADAMCZEWSKI

## Implementation & Impact

### Record-Breaking Enrollment

The program experienced record-breaking enrollment, increasing from **25 students in 2023 to 36 in 2024** and then to **46 students in 2025**, its highest number to date. This growth directly translated to revenue for the self-funded program, which relies on enrollment for its operating budget. Samantha noted,

“The increase in numbers is incredible, and Mongoose played a key role in achieving it.”

### Improved Communication Outcomes

Mongoose helped shift the team's strategy from long-form email to concise, effective texting. Prospective students were more likely to attend info sessions, complete applications, and ask specific questions when communication moved to text. With real humans responding—never bots—students felt cared for and connected. Samantha added,

“It's not just about pushing info; it's about building trust in a way email simply can't.”

### Expanded Use Beyond Admissions

The team has expanded Mongoose's Conversation Intelligence Platform to support:

- Student services with event updates, reminders, and quick support
- Alumni relations, by inviting grads to events, requesting referrals, and maintaining connections
- Internal efficiency, by reducing unnecessary emails and helping staff prioritize engagement



Now that we've mastered texting for admissions, we're scaling it for student success and alumni. Our alumni are some of our best recruiters; if we can engage them meaningfully, that impacts admissions, too.

SAMANTHA ADAMCZEWSKI

## The Mongoose Difference

### High-Touch Support

Samantha praised the ongoing partnership:



The Mongoose team is fantastic. They understand higher ed, they help us brainstorm, and they don't wait for our questions; they come with ideas. It's a real partnership.

### ROI That's Clear and Measurable

- Enrollment growth is directly tied to Mongoose-supported communication
- Higher applicant-to-enrollee conversion rates
- More positive interactions captured via the platform's dashboards and tracking tools



You can see the return in the numbers. But even more than that, you can feel it in the way students respond.

### Strategic Communication Shift

- Texting enabled the team to shift from mass marketing to tailored, human-centered messaging
- Staff used moments like Notre Dame sports games and national holidays to creatively boost engagement



Several people applied during the college football playoff game. You can't buy that kind of relevance unless you're tuned into what people care about.

## Future Plans

Looking ahead, the team plans to:

- Expand texting across all student lifecycle stages, including orientation and immersion logistics
- Increase alumni engagement via text, offering new opportunities for involvement and recruitment
- Incorporate new Mongoose features, including smart messages and segmentation



We want to take everything we've learned in admissions and apply it across the student experience.

## Conclusion

Mongoose helped Notre Dame's Online Master's in Data Science program redefine communication for a modern, digital-first audience. By replacing ineffective emails with timely, human-centered texts, the team has scaled enrollment, built lasting connections, and created a more engaging experience—while working with a lean staff. Samantha summed it up,



If you're wondering whether it's worth the investment, the answer is yes. Mongoose Conversation Intelligence was the catalyst for growth, enabling us to create impactful, personalized communication that directly led to a successful expansion of our program.

Mongoose Conversation Intelligence Platform

Learn more

[hellomongoose.com](https://hellomongoose.com)