

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION (STCM)

STCM 130 Fundamentals of Public Relations and Advertising (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): WRIT 105 or HONP 100. This explores some key issues and principles in the fields of public relations and advertising. Topics include media relations; media assessment; promotions; public relations strategies and tactics; relationship-building; and ethics. Students learn the basic theories, history, ethical codes, and practices of public relations and advertising. Students will also begin to grapple with the challenges of strategic communication through cases, scenarios, and applications. Satisfies SEEDS Creative Expression student learning outcome in alignment with Educated Citizenry value.

STCM 140 Multimedia Production for Strategic Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): CMST 110. This course is designed to provide students the fundamental principles and skills for designing, producing, and evaluating content published for the Web and other digital delivery platforms. In a hands-on class, students will learn expansive and engaging storytelling techniques through using the essential elements of multi-media production, such as audio recording and editing, basic photography, video production and editing, interactive infographics, or mobile animation for various groups of targeted audiences. Students will develop strong media professional skills as well as critical and analytical abilities in multi media production.

STCM 145 Influencers and Opinion Leaders (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): CMST 110. Reaching a brand's target audience in the right place, at the right time, with the right message is more challenging than ever. The growth of social media has led to fragmented audiences across a digital landscape that features nearly-unlimited ways to find news and information. Enter the Social Media Influencer, whose specialty is call-to-action, whether for driving sales, clicks, or votes; amplifying a message; or enhancing a brand's credibility. Finding the right influencer or building a strong following requires a complex combination of research, analysis, management, measurement, and money. This course explores the nuances of vital media industry.

STCM 230 Brand Storytelling in Strategic Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130. The course aims to develop students' ability to develop brand narratives. It will cover the steps/processes of building brands, methods of measuring brand equity, ways to leverage brand equity, strategies in managing brand portfolios (brand iterations and extensions), and management of brands over time, geographic boundaries, and market segments.

STCM 233 Public Relations Writing Across Media (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130; and WRIT 106 or HONP 101. Restriction(s): For majors of the Advertising BA program and the Social Media and Public Relations BA program. This course aims to enhance the skills and careers of public relations students in the media industry through developing the competency in writing. Students will become more proficient in various forms of public relations writing targeted to specific audiences. Particularly, this course addresses basics in writing, styles, language, and formats for various media platforms (print, radio, television, web, social media, etc.) for a variety of contexts including small business enterprises, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. Students in this class will build expertise on how to write effectively, concisely, and persuasively for different target audiences, how to create the "voice" of a brand, how to build and manage content for various media platforms, and how to incorporate strategy and creativity into all writing pieces. Meets the Graduation Writing Requirement for majors in Social Media and Public Relations Management.

STCM 234 Copywriting Across Media (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130; and WRIT 106 or HONP 101. Restriction(s): Social Media and Public Relations BA students only. "Just Do It." "Got milk?" "American Runs on Dunkin'." Memorable advertising copy goes well beyond catchy taglines and writing :30 spots. It is an art form at the intersection of creativity and excellent writing, and is innovative, inspirational and emotional. This course explores creative theory and the writing skills necessary to create powerful and compelling copy across web, mobile, radio, TV and print advertising. Students will also learn the importance of teamwork and design while visiting some of the world's best ad shops and hearing from their award-winning copywriters, art directors and creative directors. Meets the Graduation Writing Requirement for majors in Advertising.

STCM 237 Ethics in Digital Media (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130. The course introduces students to the concepts of ethics and professional responsibility in strategic communication, particularly in the career fields of public relations and advertising. In this course students develop their awareness of the ethical responsibilities inherent to digitally mediated public communication, increase their abilities to recognize and understand moral communication issues, acquire skills and knowledge to reach and justify ethical decisions, and cultivate a sense of personal and professional responsibility.

STCM 240 Social Media Analytics (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130 or JOUR 180. The proliferation of social media has created a powerful tool that enables insightful, strategic, and informed decision-making for organizations and brands. Social Media analytics tools have become critical in understanding the human behavior, consumer sentiments, and emerging issues in organizations' online environment. This course introduces concepts, frameworks, and methods for analyzing and understanding how organizations and brands can employ social media analytics tools in strategizing, implementing, and evaluating viral public relations, advertising, and marketing campaigns. Students in this course will learn various analytics tools and techniques for analyzing and interpreting various types of social media data.

STCM 320 Special Topics in Public Relations and Advertising - Junior Seminar (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130, STCM 140 and STCM 230. This is a special topic course for juniors in public relations and advertising. This course addresses crucial and emergent topics related to industry practices. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

STCM 326 Integrated Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 230. The course introduces students to the fundamentals of integrated communication. Students will understand the complex communication mix of today to promote theoretical knowledge; learn how to strategically plan integrated campaigns to ensure consistency of creative strategy employing disciplinary writing; explore complementary use of traditional and digital media, and measurable objectives; focus on the integration of marketing, advertising, and public relations messages along with the strategic use of channels and content by looking at disciplinary works of excellence.

STCM 330 Public Relations Investigation and Strategy (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 233. The purpose of this course is to familiarize public relations majors with effective social science investigation/research methods used to diagnose and solve communication problems, to identify measurable objectives, to inform strategic planning and message development, and to perform program evaluations in order to optimize organizational decision making and improve effectiveness for communication strategies. This course will cover the following main topics: major research approaches, research ethics, formulating research questions and testing hypotheses, conceptual and operational definitions, measurement, sampling, research design, interpretations of qualitative findings, SPSS data analysis, and report writing.

STCM 333 Public Relations Cases (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 233. This course uses a case-study method to learn about theoretical and applied principles of public relations campaign management. Students examine successful/unsuccessful examples of public relations in order to learn how to plan more effective campaigns and to evaluate completed campaigns. As part of the course, students continue to hone their discussion/writing skills and learn to be more critical of the role played by the media, opinion leaders, and multiple publics in the public relations process.

STCM 337 Specialized Writing in Digital Media (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 130 and STCM 233. The course intends to help students develop the essential skills on how to write for online media and audiences who exhibit considerable differences from traditional media outlets and audiences. Students learn how to segment online audiences, how to address these different sectors, and how to tailor messages to their varying needs. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

STCM 339 Digital Techniques in Strategic Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 230. The rapidly evolving digital media landscape is transforming how communication professionals integrate digital media into their practices. This course explores advanced topics related to vital digital techniques applied in the strategic communication industry. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

STCM 340 Crisis Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 230. The purpose of this course is to examine the role that communication plays in organizational crisis management. An emphasis will be placed on understanding how communication practitioners can help organizations plan, respond, and recover from crises. Emphasis will also be placed on the impact of social media on how crises evolve and are managed. Issues that will be examined include how a communication practitioner can help organizations or brands prevent crises, how to interact with media during a crisis, how to engage with various online stakeholders on social media, how to respond ethically to stakeholder concerns, and how to promote organizational learning so a similar crisis can be prevented.

STCM 381 Consumer Insights (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 230. This course is an investigation into the actions and motivations that define choices made by consumers. Exploration of the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of consumers will be explored. Techniques of investigating consumer behavior will be considered with application to elements relevant to advertising.

STCM 401 Advertising Media Strategies (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 381. Restriction(s): Advertising BA majors only. This course introduces you to basic concepts, strategies, tactics and procedures of media planning. You will learn how to evaluate and decide where and when to buy and place advertisements to achieve your marketing, advertising and media objectives. We will also consider the challenges strategic communicators face in today's highly niched media market and increased consumer control. The focus of the course will be on building a strategic approach to ensuring content is placed in the most relevant outlet, platform, publication, etc. The interaction between placement and consumer action will be considered with an emphasis on activating consumers through strategic media placement.

STCM 410 Hawk Communications (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 330 or STCM 381 or by permission. Restriction(s): Juniors and seniors only. Students work with area businesses, non-profits, and internal university programs in a professional team setting that mirrors a strategic communications agency. Tasks include social media management, content creation, press releases, event planning, pitching media, interviewing, data analytics, and more. The course is designed to be a bridge to an internship for juniors and seniors. May be repeated for a maximum total of 6 credits.

STCM 430 Public Relations Campaigns (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 330. The campaigns course is developed using an agency-team approach, with approximately five students per team. This team will approximate the team approach currently used in the PR industry. Team efforts will include research, writing, media strategies, content, and engagement. Resulting content should reflect strong theoretical knowledge, disciplinary writing, and create disciplinary works of excellence. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

STCM 431 Advertising Campaign (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 381. Restriction(s): Advertising BA majors only. This is the capstone course in the Advertising major of the Strategic Communications area. The course will teach students how to work with clients and develop a comprehensive advertising plan for the client and/or its products.

STCM 439 Global Strategic Communication (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 333 or STCM 381. Cross-cultural communication has become an integral component in strategic communication. Even the most experienced organizations face challenges when they try to engage strategic publics in cross-cultural communication. Dominant theoretical frameworks of public relations, advertising, or marketing communication, which for decades have been developed primarily in the U.S. and Western Europe, are now challenged with the new standards and norms across cultures. Issues regarding ethics, effectiveness, and diversity are being transformed during globalization. This course examines this transformation and provides students with the insight to strategic communication across cultures.

STCM 460 PRSSA Bateman Competition I (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): STCM 330 or STCM 401 or by permission. Annually, the Public Relations Students Society of America (PRSSA) conducts the Bateman Case Study Competition, which is open to strategic communication undergraduate students nationwide. The project unfolds across Fall and Spring semesters, with this course—STCM 460—serving as the first part (and STCM 461 serving as the second). Together, the sequential courses provide hands-on, real-world experience in developing and implementing an actual communications campaign in response to a client brief. Student teams will lead all facets of campaign development spanning research and planning (in STCM 460) and implementation and evaluation (in STCM 461), gaining valuable experience and building a portfolio for future employment opportunities.

STCM 510 Stakeholder Insights (3 credits)

A pivotal function of communication is to actively engage a diverse array of stakeholders, including community members, employees, consumers, shareholders, activists, regulatory agencies, and more, through thoughtfully crafted mediated messaging. In this course, Students investigate the actions and motivations that shape choices made by stakeholders. This exploration encompasses the cognitive, affective, communicative, and social dimensions of stakeholder attitudes and behaviors. By utilizing advanced analytics and research tools, students will investigate how different stakeholders perceive and interact with messages, allowing for a nuanced analysis of their needs and expectations. Moreover, students will collect and analyze data to extract valuable insights that can inform strategic communication efforts. The focus will be on how these insights can be leveraged to foster meaningful engagement, build trust, and enhance relationships with stakeholders.

STCM 515 Data Analytics (3 credits)

Students learn the fundamental concepts and vital skills in applying data analytics to generate business insights for communication campaign development, business performance evaluation, crisis communication management, and relevant strategic communication decision making. In particular, students learn how to conduct social listening and monitoring through various (paid & unpaid) digital media analytics tools and platforms.

STCM 520 Crisis Communication (3 credits)

Students identify the nature and types of crises and how to manage crisis communication efforts. They learn to prepare for, mitigate, and respond to crises that can negatively impact the reputation and financial footing of a broad range of organizations. Students use communication techniques and media strategies across platforms and channels to navigate anticipated and unexpected crises.

STCM 525 Strategic Branding (3 credits)

Students learn the foundations of branding strategy and communication techniques that organizations use to connect and engage with consumers. Vision, purpose, and values are examined as central components of a comprehensive branding strategy. Using engaging storytelling techniques, students learn to develop a strategic branding strategy considering audience, messaging, channel strategy, creative partnerships, and content.

STCM 530 Multimedia Storytelling (3 credits)

Students learn the skills needed to create compelling narratives using a variety of multimedia tools. Through a combination of theory and professional exercises, students tell compelling brand and journalistic stories across myriad media platforms, including video, audio, digital/interactive, and text formats. Students also learn how to navigate the rapidly evolving media landscape and adapt their storytelling techniques through new tools, techniques, and styles.

STCM 535 Applied Media Production (3 credits)

Students build proficiency in creating dynamic audio and video content. Students learn how to leverage a wide range of nimble media production tools, including smartphones and software editing platforms, and master best practices in multi-media content creation, from staging through post-production. With this skill set, students collaboratively create audio and video content that could be used across a range of media platforms and achieve various strategic communication goals.

STCM 540 Leading Digital Social Advocacy (3 credits)

Students explore communication strategies used by organizations to advocate for issues and positions as well as the impact of social advocacy on organizational outcomes. Consumer attitudes and behavior, corporate reputation, and employee engagement are examined from an advocacy perspective. Using a case study approach, students learn emerging insights about managing corporate social advocacy and CEO activism across media platforms; the risks and rewards of advocacy initiatives; advocacy and authenticity; and consumer activism.

STCM 545 Guiding Innovation and Change in the Digital Media Landscape (3 credits)

Students learn and critically analyze the challenges and opportunities presented by a rapidly changing media landscape, including new emerging technologies, evolving consumer behaviors, and the globalization of media. Through a combination of theory, case studies, and collaborative applied exercises, this course equips students with the knowledge and skills to navigate, adapt, and lead in the modern media environment.

STCM 550 Influencer Marketing in Social Media (3 credits)

Students learn about influencers, opinion leaders, and how social media marketing strategies are used to leverage their potential. They study how research, measurement, and evaluation play critical roles in effectively using influencer campaigns across media platforms. With this knowledge, students develop the skills to drive sales, amplify messages, and enhance brand awareness through effective influencer communication.

STCM 555 Social Media Strategy and Campaign Design (3 credits)

Students learn tactics to effectively use social media across strategic communication campaigns. Students develop critical skills in campaign development and execution, social media listening, and campaign evaluation. Through collaborative class projects, students apply this knowledge in developing social media campaigns, paying critical attention to how brands and organizations leverage social media engagement.

STCM 560 Agency Immersion (6 credits)

Restriction(s): Department Approval Required. This experiential course enables students to engage with industry professionals while applying and reflecting upon their programmatic learning. As a 14-week Summer Session offering with a one-week residency experience, the course enables students, guided by faculty, to work on professionally relevant projects in collaboration with classmates and industry partners. During the course's residency portion, students learn about partner organizations and their professional work while conducting impactful fieldwork. The course culminates in project completion, debriefing and feedback with stakeholders, and an academic presentation that integrates and reflects upon programmatic learning and professional next-steps.