

AS.480 (COMMUNICATION)

AS.480.600. Research & Writing Methods. 3 Credits.

Communication professionals take on diverse and multiple roles within and across organizations, but they share one role in common as strategic problem solvers. This course will teach you how to find, read, interpret, evaluate, and apply scientific research studies to solve practical problems encountered by communication practitioners. Topics covered include how to effectively use library resources to find research that can be of strategic value; how different research methods, including focus groups, case studies, surveys, and experiments are used in communication research; how to evaluate the quality of research reports; how to interpret qualitative and quantitative findings, including statistics; and how to distill the information found in research reports down to what is most relevant and usable. In addition to learning how to become a competent and critical research consumer, you will also be exposed to current research across different areas of the communication discipline.

AS.480.601. Introduction to the Digital Age. 3 Credits.

The digital age is changing how communication professionals communicate with public groups and how people access, understand, and process information. As a result, digital tools are an increasingly important part of the modern communicator's tool kit. This course examines empirical research that will help communication professionals in the digital age. Topics include creating usable and credible websites and effective internet advertising. The course also examines blogs, social networking, and digital journalism. The digital age is explored through primary research across a range of subjects including public relations, political communication and health communication. Prerequisite: Research and Writing Methods

Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.602. Changing Behavior through Communication. 3 Credits.

The goal of many communication initiatives is to encourage some type of behavior change. Communication professionals who understand how people change their behavior can create more successful campaigns. This course surveys major theories used to predict when and under what circumstances individuals are most likely to change their behavior. Behavior change includes a variety of actions, such as voting for a candidate, purchasing a product, joining a social networking group, or adopting a new health habit. Individual-level, interpersonal level, and community-level models of change are covered. By becoming familiar with specific theories and the empirical support for those theories, students learn how to use social science based models to guide their communication strategies effectively. Prerequisite: Research and Writing Methods

Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.603. Communication in Practice. 3 Credits.

(This course is reserved only for those students who are admitted to the program with Provisional status. If you are a degree candidate, or are not a Communication student, you can not take this course.) Communication is a fast-changing field that requires practitioners to keep current with trends in technology, audience segmentation, needs of stakeholders, message techniques, evaluation methods, and much more. Equally important, practitioners must master new ways of branding themselves in a competitive job environment. This course covers up-to-date perspectives in communication practice so that students gain a concrete understanding of the practice environment. The content includes strategic management, presentation styles, ethics, branding, campaigns, evaluation, cultural diversity, client tactics, and professional networking. Experts in practice will lecture and lead class activities. Students will create deliverables throughout the semester that will showcase their personal brand, talents, and skills in communication.

AS.480.604. Theory of Mass Communication Practices. 3 Credits.

This course surveys major theories and perspectives on how mass media can influence individuals, organizations and society, with a focus on content areas that have the most strategic relevance for public relations practice. The course covers readings on the role media plays in shaping what issues people attend to, how they think about those issues and potential outcomes; how public relations practitioners attempt to use media strategically to meet their objectives; and the implications that current media systems, technologies, and practices have for their media relations efforts. Prerequisite: Research and Writing Methods
Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.605. Organizational Communication. 3 Credits.

This course explores the complexities and strategies of internal and external communications in public, private, and non-profit organizations. As a leadership tool, communications serves a political, informational, symbolic and influential function. Topics covered include a competency-based approach of organizational communication, the interplay between internal and external communications, communicating effectiveness through problem-solving, decision-making, managing conflict and mitigating crises, organizational change management, addressing workforce diversity issues and others. Students gain exposure to various dimensions of organizational communication from different industry leaders and field experts and gain first-hand experience in critiquing, crafting and developing communication strategies, tactics and tools, as communication professionals and leaders in the workplace.

AS.480.606. Persuasion. 3 Credits.

This course addresses two questions of vital importance to communication professionals: what aspects of a message make it persuasive (or not), and what attributes of individual people and audiences make them susceptible or resistant to influence. The course examines all varieties of messaging, from individuals communicating one-on-one, to messages communicated via mass media. We study topics such as how the expertise, trustworthiness, and likeability of a spokesperson can enhance or weaken a message's persuasiveness, and how people's social groups can affect their willingness to believe. The course draws on both theory and empirical evidence to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of influence and persuasive strategies in today's world. Prerequisite: Research and Writing Methods
Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.607. Introduction to International Development Communication. 3 Credits.

This course explores the foundations of international development communication. It examines the multifaceted role that communication plays in shaping or addressing development priorities and/or outcomes across countries and sectors. The course looks at the roles of various international actors, including, policymakers, civic groups and institutional stakeholders. The course will also address the intersection of communication, culture, media and (digital) ICT in the era of globalization and their impact on international development communication strategies.

AS.480.608. Analytic Techniques in Communication Research. 3 Credits.

This course will explore quantitative research methods, but will take the next step into quantitative communication research by investigating quantitative tools used by communication practitioners, in particular to measure the effectiveness of campaigns. In addition to standard quantitative methods, you will gain an insight on digital analytics, how to understand them, and how to make important information out of the data to report on the effectiveness of campaigns and messages. This class will satisfy the requirement for Applied Quantitative Research. Students should take this course prior to the semester in which they begin their research for Thesis . Prerequisite: 480.600 Research and Writing Methods.

Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.609. Applied Qualitative Research. 3 Credits.

Communication professionals use qualitative methods to craft messages that resonate with audiences. This hands-on class exposes students to qualitative research methods that can be used on the job to guide communication efforts more strategically. Students learn how to design and conduct studies to gain insight into audience perceptions on a variety of issues. Specific techniques covered include in-depth interviews, focus groups, qualitative content analyses, and case studies. Through applied activities, students learn how to collect, analyze, and present qualitative research data. Students should take this course prior to the semester in which they begin their research for Thesis. Prerequisite: 480.600 Research and Writing Methods.

Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.613. Communication Ethics in Action. 3 Credits.

Have you ever doubted whether you are doing the right thing as a communication researcher or practitioner? Regardless of whether you realize it, you base your professional decisions and subsequent actions on morals, referring to them in different ways. For example, you may turn to your inner compass, organization's values, or professional codes of conduct. This course will not give you quick and easy solutions; however, it will help you learn how to use an ethics framework with confidence as you move forward in your career. In particular, you will learn how to consider the one or more moral problems related to a situation, facts, options for moving forward, and values to consider throughout the process. Readings will draw from fictional and non-fictional literature, news and popular media, and industry and academic research. Not only the instructor but also other communication professionals will deliver lectures. Throughout the semester, you will work as an individual and in groups to use your critical thinking to complete various activities, including reflection, discussion, presentation, and writing based on current, real-world case studies. Your experience will culminate with a final project.

AS.480.614. Communication Strategies for the 2020 Democratic Presidential Primary Debates. 3 Credits.

The Democrats are planning a dozen primary debates for the 2020 candidates with the first debate to be held this June televised by NBC/MSNBC. The second debate will be held this July hosted by CNN. With a field of presidential candidates that could surpass more than 20 people the Democrats will hold their debates on two consecutive evenings. With such a large field, the Democratic presidential hopefuls are busy planning a communications strategy for the debates and a media plan for the long campaign for 2019/2020. Our lively, timely and interactive class will focus on all of the presidential candidates, their policies, their debate strategies, their overall media and social media plans. We will look at the history and future of presidential debates in American politics. The class will analyze, observe and discuss how the media in all its many forms cover the upcoming debates and how they are covering the many presidential candidates. We will be watching the first two debates as part of our class assignment discussing how the candidates performed and if their communications strategy is helping or hurting their hoped for goal of becoming the Democratic presidential nominee and America's next president.

AS.480.620. Becoming a Press Officer. 3 Credits.

Becoming a sought-after press officer takes practice, but it also takes a very specific set of learned skills. This class uses current events and interactive discussions to put into practice skills learned through AAP courses and to focus on what is required to be an effective press officer, press secretary, and communications advisor. It examines the roles, duties and responsibilities of press officers in a variety of settings: on Capitol Hill, in federal agencies, the White House, industry associations, non-profit and advocacy organizations, domestic and international political campaigns, and on the global stage. The course includes engaging guest lectures that share insight from journalists, press officers, and communications professionals in the field about effective techniques and lessons learned. Students will engage in real-time exercises that deal with typical situations that a press officer faces in the course of a day, and participate in discussions on the complex environments in which a press officer works. In addition to gaining valuable skills, students will complete this course with a portfolio of writing samples that mimic what would be expected from a press officer.

AS.480.622. Branding by Motion Picture. 3 Credits.

Branding by Motion Picture is a course for those who want to use the motion picture medium to promote brands. It's a writing course, not a production course, on the art of expressing a brand in linear form —as a 30-second commercial for television and the Web or a longer, branding video for the Web. We study commercials and branding videos for what they can tell us about brands, audience desires and watchability. Students also choose and develop brands and write scripts in the commercial and branding video formats. Branding by Motion Picture gives students the understanding and the tools that have traditionally belonged to a small cadre of creatives in advertising agencies.

AS.480.624. Public Affairs Communication. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to learn about strategic online approaches and techniques affecting and influencing public affairs. During this course, students will develop the knowledge to:

- Distinguish between public affairs and other forms of communication, such as public relations
- Describe the different components of digital public affairs communications
- Conduct basic outreach and adhere to ethics guidelines
- Propose and choose from the most effective public affairs tools and tactics to achieve a client's goals
- Describe the role of stakeholders and create a target list of issue stakeholders for an issue-based organization or corporation that practices corporate social responsibility
- Create a comprehensive public affairs influence plan

AS.480.629. Public Relations in the Age of Digital Influence. 3 Credits.

Marketing and communication are changing. The levers that we have pulled for years to sell products and services, change behaviors, and advocate for causes, no longer work the way they did. As trust in media and marketing plummets, trust in our peers, friends, family, and colleagues rises. Today we recognize new influencers in the people sitting next to us. Now, sparking a digital conversation is just as important as crafting messages, forming partnerships, and driving media coverage. Call it influencer marketing or brand stewardship in the network age; it's all public relations. This class covers how to design impactful public relations strategies in the age of digital influence and, ultimately, how to support business imperatives more effectively through public relations.

AS.480.630. Multimedia Authoring. 3 Credits.

This course is an introduction to techniques for reading, writing, analyzing, producing and publishing integrated forms of digital multimedia. Students will be assigned projects that explore the aesthetic, technological and communications concerns inherent in new media production for the online medium. The course emphasizes the understanding of key paradigms of the multimedia experience, including: integration, interactivity, hypermedia, and immersion essential to the construction of narrative forms specific to digital media. Production techniques and design strategies will be introduced for incorporating text, imagery, sound, and video into Web 2.0 applications such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc. Readings will explore key issues in contemporary media and communications impacted by new and emerging digital technologies. The objective of the course is for students to learn the practical and critical skills necessary to achieve digital fluency for their professional work in the field of communication. This course was formerly called Essential Skills in Digital Media Literacy.

AS.480.632. Digital Political Strategy. 3 Credits.

No president will ever be elected again without an internet strategy. Mobile phones and Facebook are being used to organize mass protests. Thanks to YouTube, two Senators lost elections, and bloggers took down former CBS anchor Dan Rather and former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. Clearly, the world of political and issue campaigns has changed in the digital age. In this course students explore new strategies possible in a networked world and learn what it takes to be a digital political strategist.

AS.480.633. Interactive Marketing and Advertising. 3 Credits.

Understanding the ever-changing world of digital marketing is no longer optional - it is critical. This course is based on real world case studies from known brands that demonstrate best practices for owned, earned and paid digital communications strategies. Students will learn how to define target audiences, establish KPI's (key performance indicators), measure results and learn how to optimize user experience. We will also gauge the importance of strong and relevant content and choosing the right digital channels. Students will understand how to apply social media, e-mail marketing, SMS, digital advertising, organic search engine optimization, mobile and native apps and others. We will introduce emerging technologies and trends and how they influence digital marketing and advertising practices.

AS.480.634. Journalism & Publishing in the Digital Age. 3 Credits.

From charges of fake news to viral hoaxes that spread on social media after breaking news events, it's crucial to understand and judge the credibility of the news we consume. In what has become a 24-hour news cycle, news consumers need to have the necessary skills to navigate the digital media landscape, assess the credibility of the news organizations that produce stories, determine authenticity on social media, and gain insight into how reporters produce their work. This course aims to provide these skills through a constantly updated guide to a rapidly shifting media landscape. We'll consider current challenges, including journalism's collapsing business model, the role of platforms such as Facebook and Google, and the loss of local news and the impact of the resulting news deserts. We'll also review the guidance of leading media critics, and attempts by news organizations to engage their audiences using newsletters, events, and other methods. And we'll read and assess a wide range of stories and sites, from niche news gatherers like The Information, to upstarts like BuzzFeed and Vox, to legacy sites like The Atlantic and the New York Times.

AS.480.635. Communication.org:Not-for-Profits in the Digital Age. 3 Credits.

Students examine the primary reasons non-profit organizations exist, and the unique communication challenges they face in reaching their audiences and motivating their desired behaviors. They will examine leading trends in 21st century communication, and assess how non-profit communicators can capitalize on these trends for the benefit of their organizations. Finally, they will devise practical solutions to one or more of a non-profit "client's" challenges, using one or more of a wide variety of communication tools offered in the current media landscape.

AS.480.636. Web Writing and Content Strategy. 3 Credits.

You have 3.5 seconds to capture a web visitor's attention. How do you make sure your website entices them to stick around and learn more? This course examines how compelling web content is essential to engaging visitors and driving their behavior. We'll explore writing styles appropriate for B2B and B2C websites and blogs, and work with a variety of content formats, such as videos, infographics, contests, polls, and more. Using the website as the hub for content, we'll cover techniques for driving web visitors to your site with inbound and outbound content marketing strategies. We'll discuss the intersection of search engine optimization, social media and content marketing and the importance of an integrated approach to content creation and distribution. Lectures and exercises draw on real-world examples from a variety of industries. By the end of the semester, students will be able to create and execute a comprehensive content marketing program.

AS.480.637. Using Social and Digital Media. 3 Credits.

In this class students learn about multiple social and digital media tools, such as blogging, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, along with platforms to manage social media content and understand social media analytics. Students apply what they learn by developing a social media campaign for a company or organization that they choose. Each week, students learn how to use social media tools to effectively tell an organization's story. Students also learn the theories behind why social and digital media shape the ways that customers, advocates, audiences and consumers are interacting with influencers and organizations. By the end of the semester, students will be able to not just answer, but inspire, the inevitable questions: Why should we care about social media? How can we put social and digital media to work for our personal and organizational brands?

AS.480.638. Utilizing Images: Media Literacy In Practice. 3 Credits.

This course will teach you how to critically evaluate media, create effective visual communication by identifying key elements of a visual message, and apply relevant theory as it relates to visual message design. This course provides an overview of the approaches and strategies communication practitioners use to incorporate media literacy in their practices. This course will address the following questions: What is media literacy and how does it relate to visual communication? How can visual media be used effectively to promote strategic messages or positive change? How can we critically evaluate the quality of visual messages and create effective and ethical visual communication?

AS.480.639. Advanced Social Media Management. 3 Credits.

In today's complex digital media environment, companies and organizations expect communication practitioners to possess advanced social media management skills. Students in the Advanced Social Media course will gain in-depth knowledge in social media ecosystems, social business models, and digital media policy and law. In addition, students will have an opportunity to analyze quantitative and qualitative data to extract audience insights; develop and implement strategies; create engaging content and messages; and ultimately become skilled social media practitioners. Prerequisites: Students must have completed either 480.601 Intro to the Digital Age, or 480.637 Using Social and Digital Media prior to taking this course.

AS.480.642. Corporate Social Responsibility Campaigns. 3 Credits.

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) movement is a world-wide phenomenon, and corporations, trade associations and nonprofits are being asked to step up and be accountable. Public relations and communication professionals need to develop the skills to prepare strategic communication plans that reflect their organization's commitment to CSR in order to protect and enhance their employer's reputation in the marketplace. This course examines the global CSR movement, explores the communication challenges it presents and offers practical suggestions and tactics to respond to this trend. The class features in-class activities, outside research and guest speakers from NGOs, communication firms, and major corporations with practical advice on meeting this challenge in the global marketplace.

AS.480.643. Branding and Advertising. 3 Credits.

Branding and advertising are major components of any business or non-profit organization. Showcasing products and services in creative ways increases visibility and improves sales. This course teaches students how to develop brands, create concepts and develop advertising campaigns. Students also learn practical tips including how to organize a creative department, write a creative brief, create budgets and time-lines, research and purchase visual imagery, and how to determine appropriate media for particular branding and advertising campaigns.

AS.480.645. Health Literacy, Language and Culture. 3 Credits.

This course offers a skills-oriented approach to addressing literacy, language and culture within a health care context. Understanding the relationship between literacy, language and culture will benefit those in health communication, as well as professionals in areas such as public and media relations, digital communication, political communication, and corporate and non-profit communication. Students will explore how low literacy and poor health literacy affect quality and outcomes at the individual and systems level and consider the integration of health literacy, cultural competency and language assistance strategies to reduce disparities in health and well being. Overall, this 13-week course aims to improve the cultural and health literacy competency of professionals and the systems in which they work.

AS.480.646. Managerial Communication. 3 Credits.

Writer and historian James Humes said, "The art of communication is the language of leadership." It is that simple comment that forms the foundation of this course. Here students explore the role of communication with stakeholders including subordinates, superiors, internal and external customers, suppliers and the community. Students examine effective communication in hiring and promoting, in conflict, in community interaction and in the internal communication of an organization. The class is built around three precepts or questions: With whom does one communicate, what does one communicate and how does one communicate effectively?

AS.480.653. Communicating for Social Change. 3 Credits.

How do professionals in the nonprofit/government/issue-oriented world determine what communication strategies will help their cause? Students will be introduced to various critical theoretical frameworks and sets of conditions that describe how social challenges occur. Students in this skills-based course will individually identify a social change challenge, target specific audiences and develop various communication strategies and tactics that will advocate for, and guide their desired social change. Examples are based on global real-world experiences and address some of the challenges involved in working in the nonprofit space.

AS.480.654. Strategic Communication Program Management. 3 Credits.

This course covers strategic leadership and communication program development, management and evaluation. It emphasizes basic communication research, strategic communication objectives and message design, selection of media, development of materials, management of teams and impact evaluation. Crisis and issues management as well as the use of new communication technologies are also covered. The course focuses on a step-by-step design of a communication program using the highly acclaimed SCOPE (Strategic Communication Planning and Evaluation) Weblearning and planning software. Students develop two strategic communication programs, one as individual work and another as part of a team. Lectures and discussions utilize case studies to illustrate key points and desired learning. This course combines reality-based and conceptual approaches to provide students with the intellectual tools needed to assume senior management or outside counsel roles in developing and implementing fully integrated communication programs.

AS.480.657. Introduction to Public Relations. 3 Credits.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics lists public relations as one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. This introductory course, designed for career changers and those new to public relations, details the ideas, skills, and principles that underlie the public relations craft. Students in this class study the role and contributions of public relations practitioners in contemporary society, learn about potential legal and ethical aspects of the practice of public relations, study the communication process and how persuasion is used with various audiences, and learn how to develop a strategic communication plan to achieve specific goals and objectives. The class will also introduce students to specialized practice areas within the public relations field such as business and industry, government, nonprofit and associations, and health care.

AS.480.658. Public Relations Writing. 3 Credits.

The primary goal of this course is for students to develop the professional-level persuasive writing skills expected of the best PR practitioners. Students are given weekly writing assignments outside of class and write on deadline during many class periods. The course covers various forms of public relations writing including press releases, op-ed essays, crisis communications and internal communications. Written work is judged using 10 tenets of good writing: organization, persuasion, clarity, focus, flow, tone, proper usage, timeliness, accuracy and relevance.

AS.480.659. Risk and Crisis Communication. 3 Credits.

This course provides students with a fundamental understanding of crisis management, risk communication, media relations, and public-opinion research techniques in multiple contexts. It introduces students to crisis management principles, strategies, tactics and communication methods. Course participants work as a team to develop a crisis management plan for analysis and discussion. Successful students are able to transfer to the workplace the knowledge and skills developed in this course. Students learn to predict, manage, and control real-world controversies that they may confront as they pursue their careers. Moreover, students are able to manage effectively, participate in, and control volatile situations involving the news media.

AS.480.660. Media Relations. 3 Credits.

Media outreach is a critical piece of any strategic communication effort. This course prepares students to build, implement, and measure earned media programs that achieve policy, business and philanthropic objectives. Class lectures, guest speakers, readings and assignments give students an understanding of the priorities and expectations of various types of contemporary media, and how to successfully engage them through research-based strategies and tactics designed to reach key audiences.

AS.480.661. International Public Relations and Public Diplomacy. 3 Credits.

In today's global world, reaching international audiences is a key function of U.S. government-funded public diplomacy programs, corporate public relations, and non-governmental organizations involved in relief and development. Through readings, lectures, discussions and exercises, this course examines the differences between domestic and international media environments. Students develop communication skills needed to deliver messages and craft outreach strategies and programs for non-American audiences. Special attention is paid to communicating with audiences in Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia, including Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Topics include a historical overview of international public relations and public diplomacy, opportunities and challenges for today's public diplomacy practitioner, using research to understand international audiences, writing effectively for international audiences, health and development communication, and communication in international conflict resolution. Students emerge with skills to work overseas in the fast-growing areas of public diplomacy and international public relations.

AS.480.662. Opinion Writing. 3 Credits.

The world of Washington revolves around opinion, and access to the nation's editorial and op-ed pages is key to making sure your opinions (or those of your employer) are successfully shared with the policy makers and opinion leaders who shape public policy. Opinion pieces carry far more impact than news; consequently, the editorial and op-ed pages are much more difficult markets to crack than the news pages. The editorial and op-ed pages have their own writing style and standards of news judgment; once a writer knows them, though, opinion writing is some of the most rewarding journalism, personally and professionally. Students in this class learn to understand the anatomy of good editorial writing; how to write for opinion sections of newspapers, magazines, and other news outlets; how to pitch op-ed and opinion pieces; and how to sell ideas to editorial boards.

AS.480.663. Integrated Marketing Communication. 3 Credits.

Integrated marketing communication breaks down the traditional advertising, public relations and marketing silos by challenging practitioners to apply the optimum mix of media and message to motivate the target audience to act. The rise of the internet and now Web 2.0 support the need to embrace integrated marketing communication as a comprehensive approach to reach target audiences. In this course students learn to evaluate audience demographics and apply the appropriate communication channels and messages based upon the audiences' needs and the business realities of marketing campaigns. During the semester, students develop a tool kit of steps to follow to attain marketing success. Through simulation exercises, case study analysis and self-directed reading, students develop a results-oriented and measurable marketing campaign proposal.

AS.480.665. Speech Writing. 3 Credits.

Speech writing is one of the most important but least instructed skills for communications professionals. Through hands-on practice, students learn to write speeches for diverse audiences and contexts. Throughout the course, students will curate a speaker's narrative and public persona to develop a portfolio of work. The portfolio encompasses speeches for ceremonial occasions, public policy speeches and the keynote address. The course also incorporates practical considerations such as the speech writer's role in analyzing speaking situations and audiences, and collaborative drafting processes typical of large organizations.

AS.480.668. Understanding Markets and Audiences. 3 Credits.

This course demonstrates the important role market research—and the use of existing data to better understand audience and environment—plays in the overall campaign process. This course will focus on the integral steps that facilitate target audience definition and how to extract a keen understanding of this audience and its interactions within its environment to develop effective campaign strategy. The course's structure and various assignments will often mimic a client/consultant relationship to ensure a real-world experience. To that end, the instructors will play the role of "client" in many instances, asking students to articulate how an assignment or deliverable contributes to the overall goals of the campaign.

AS.480.675. Public Policy Management & Advocacy. 3 Credits.

Washington D.C. is home to thousands of organizations attempting to influence public policy. Associations, foundations, think tanks and private lobbying firms are all competing for the attention of policymakers and the public. These groups invariably need competent communicators who can help them cut through jargon, crystallize their messages and strategically communicate with the key audiences imperative to advancing their policy goals. This course introduces students to the deliberate process organizations undertake to speak out on issues and exert influence over the policies that have the potential to impact them and the way they do business. The class will cover how organizations conduct advocacy efforts and how communication is used as a tool to advance policy change. Students will gain a practical understanding of how policy groups and communications professionals operate in the field.

AS.480.678. Spokesperson Development & Training. 3 Credits.

This course provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform effectively as spokespersons in news media interviews and other high-stakes situations requiring public testimony. Students learn what motivates news media and how journalists cover stories. They learn to recognize the numerous interview techniques used by reporters, and the major differences between broadcast and print interviews. Course participants also learn successful spokesperson strategies, tactics and techniques designed to enhance their performance and reduce the risks inherent in today's volatile media environment. Students develop effective messages and the other tools needed to prepare for interviews and public testimony. Students use on-camera training throughout the course to sharpen interview skills and to critique student performance. Successful students are able to transfer the knowledge and skills acquired in this course to the workplace. They are prepared to serve as spokespersons in a wide array of situations ranging from routine news interviews to potentially volatile confrontations.

AS.480.680. Nonfiction Filmmaking. 3 Credits.

Today's communication environment calls for a good understanding of the process and methods of nonfiction filmmaking. This course introduces students to nonfiction storytelling in the motion picture medium, from conceptualization to writing to production. Using smartphones, simple production equipment and editing software, students will produce their own videos and be prepared for real-world production with professional crews.

AS.480.681. Communication Evaluation. 3 Credits.

This course will prepare communication researchers to gather evidence that guides the planning, implementation, and refinement of communication campaigns. Throughout the semester, students will practice using evaluation to inform the various stages of a communication effort based on real world conditions. They will draw from behavior theory; and formative (including pretesting), process, and summative evaluation. They also will learn how to ensure the protection of the rights of human research participants.

AS.480.682. Health Psychology & Behavior Change. 3 Credits.

This course provides an overview of health psychology: the scientific study of behaviors and cognitive processes related to health states. It addresses the mind/body connection, the influence of social and physical environments on our health, cognitive processing of health information, health belief models, and the link between personality traits and health. Understanding the interactions between these biological, psychological, and social influences on individuals' health states is a key element in developing effective health communication and intervention programs. Students approach all course topics from both theory-driven and applied perspectives.

AS.480.685. Argument & Public Address. 3 Credits.

Argument construction, engagement, and analysis are critical skill sets for communication professionals. Whether substantiating your own position or refuting claims made by others, it is important to understand how arguments function, interact, and effect action and policy. This course prepares students to understand and construct arguments by exploring how they are developed and communicated to diverse audiences. Students will learn to analyze, critique, and fashion arguments through written and speech-based exercises.

AS.480.686. Behavior Change and Education through Entertainment. 3 Credits.

This course explores the various ways communication professionals can use entertainment to educate people and encourage them to adopt and enjoy improved life styles. Throughout history, stories, drama, poetry, music, dance, and other entertainment formats have been used to enlighten and educate both adults and children. In today's society, the channels of communication are ever increasing. This course investigates ways in which education can be subtly but effectively worked into both new and time-honored genres of entertainment to foster positive behavior change.

AS.480.687. Intercultural Communication. 3 Credits.

This course examines the meaning and importance of intercultural communication as it applies to individuals, groups, organizations and nations. Students examine the meaning of "culture" and how "culture" can affect personal, national and international understanding and communication, beliefs and behaviors. The course examines the difficulties and dangers that can result from cultural misunderstanding. In a modern world with diverse communication methods, there is an ever-increasing need for intercultural understanding and communication. The course investigates the various ways in which cultures differ and the necessity of understanding and respecting other cultures. The course assists communication professionals to be more effective with external communication campaigns in other countries and internal communication within a diverse workplace. The course emphasizes clear and logical spoken and written expression to enhance individual ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures.

AS.480.699. Politics, Media, and the Race for the Presidency. 3 Credits.

This course will examine the role of media in shaping the race for the presidency in 2016.

AS.480.725. How the Media Covers the White House. 3 Credits.

How the Media Covers the White House class for spring, 2017 will discuss and analyze how correspondents cover the White House. We will watch and discuss the beginning of the 45th president and their new administration and how the traditional and social media cover the new president. In addition, the class will look at the media strategy of the new administration and how the newly inaugurated 45th president will use social media and traditional media to promote their new policies. We are at the start of a new administration, so we can study how a new president sets up their media operation. We will look at the new press operation of the White House and compare it to previous administrations through our history. We will discuss how the various media assign their new White House reporters. We will have White House correspondents as guest speakers for the class. This will be a lively, interactive and interesting class looking at the media covering the new White House and how the new president presents themselves to the American public.

AS.480.800. Thesis. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to guide students through the thesis process. It is the last course students take in finishing their masters' degrees. Students select a topic for original research and conduct and write up their research in the course of the class. Students are encouraged to select a topic that will be useful in the workplace and that can be part of their professional portfolio. Graduation is subject to approval of the thesis by the thesis committee and completion of a successful defense. Students are encouraged to enter the class with a clear idea of what they would like to research. All core courses must be completed before starting Thesis.

AS.480.801. Independent Study. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to guide students through the thesis process. It is the last course students take in finishing their masters' degrees. Students select a topic for original research and conduct and write up their research in the course of the class. Students are encouraged to select a topic that will be useful in the workplace and that can be part of their professional portfolio. Graduation is subject to approval of the thesis by the thesis committee and completion of a successful defense. Students are encouraged to enter the class with a clear idea of what they would like to research. All core courses must be completed before starting Thesis.

AS.480.804. Practicum. 3 Credits.

Strategic-planning students complete the Practicum course during their last semester in the MA in Communication program. This optional core course offers a culminating experience that helps students integrate new or enhanced capabilities into a significant evidence-based project relevant to their profession. Each student can identify an organization or individual in need of support for a communication-related project and how to fulfill that need. In addition, the student must prepare (a) a proposal that outlines objectives, scope of work, any deliverables, timeline, and method for evaluating achievement of objectives; and (b) any final deliverables. The student must complete the Practicum course in one semester.

Prerequisite(s): You must complete AS.480.600 in order to register for this course. You can enroll for this course when registration opens for the next semester.

AS.480.805. Research and Authorship in Communication. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to guide students through the thesis process. It is the last course applied research track students take in finishing their master's degrees. Students select a topic for original research and conduct and write up their research in the course of the class. Students are encouraged to select a topic that will be useful in the workplace and that can be part of their professional portfolio. Graduation is subject to approval of the thesis by the thesis committee and completion of a successful defense. Students are encouraged to enter the class with a clear idea of what they would like to research. All core courses must be completed before starting the Thesis course.

AS.480.806. Practicum: Independent Study. 3 Credits.

Strategic-planning students complete the Practicum course during their last semester in the MA in Communication program. This optional core course offers a culminating experience that helps students integrate new or enhanced capabilities into a significant evidence-based project relevant to their profession. Each student can identify an organization or individual in need of support for a communication-related project and how to fulfill that need. In addition, the student must prepare (a) a proposal that outlines objectives, scope of work, any deliverables, timeline, and method for evaluating achievement of objectives; and (b) any final deliverables. The student must complete the Practicum course in one semester.

AS.480.888. Thesis Continuation.

Students not finishing the thesis during the term in which they enroll in the Thesis course must enroll in Thesis Continuation in every ensuing semester (including summer) until they complete their degrees. It is not possible to take a semester off or a leave of absence while working on the thesis.