



M.A. in Media and Communication Specialization in Strategic Communication and Social Media Graduate Handbook – Revised 2022

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StratComm [Program Web Page](#)

General Information

[Catalogs, Policies, and Procedures
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[2020-2021 Graduate Catalog
School of Media and Communication](#)

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About this Master of Arts program

The field of media and communication is constantly changing. Professionals who desire to continue or pursue a career in the field are expected to embrace change and apply current trends to advance in their current positions or explore new career opportunities, especially if they aspire to leadership roles.

StratComm coursework refreshes, solidifies, and upgrades the undergraduate knowledge base, allowing students to prepare for the challenges emerging in their professional careers. As a result, graduates of the program will be equipped with up-to-date knowledge and skills in media and communication that apply to the entire strategic communication mix.

The specialization is designed for media and communication professionals working in corporations, agencies, not-for-profit organizations and elsewhere in marketing, corporate communication, public relations, social media, executive communication and other disciplines. Graduates of the Master of Arts in Media and Communication Strategic Communication Specialization will have a greater appreciation for the role that communication plays in organizational life, understand research-driven strategic planning and evaluation of communication programs and tactics, and understand different types of social media and their application alongside the full range of paid, owned, shared and earned media.

Students in StratComm should expect a dynamic educational experience that blends theory and practice, knowledge, and skills to result in a foundation for professional and personal growth. We present subject matter in wider context to fuse business and organizational strategy with communication strategy. We aspire to help students become highly effective businesspeople with communication as their expertise.

About BGSU's School of Media and Communication

The School of Media and Communication brings together research, teaching, and service as a leader in developing the knowledge, skills, and values critical to civic and global engagement. We connect and enhance undergraduate and graduate educational experiences to prepare students for lifelong growth and leadership. We offer quality education – enriched by co-curricular opportunities and evolving communication technologies – that prepares students to achieve professional success, communicate effectively, contribute to their communities, and engage globally in relationships with individuals, governments, businesses, and not-for-profit and civic organizations.

The School maintains numerous partnerships to nurture collaborative teaching, innovative research, and significant public service. With a tradition of excellence in graduate study dating back to the 1950s, the faculty, staff, and students of the School of Media and Communication at BGSU look forward to contributing to today's media and communication scholarship, education and practice. The graduate program is known for its excellent placement records, balance in teaching, research, and service, and the diversity of its student body. The key commitment of the SMC faculty is to motivate and educate students to be independent intellectual leaders and professionals.

SMC has a long track record of successful graduate education, having produced communication managers at major corporations and faculty at colleges and universities throughout the region and beyond. The

StratComm program also has a strong and growing network of alumni.

Time to Complete Degree

Candidates must complete a minimum of 27 hours of graduate credit, plus three (3) hours of capstone experience (Project) for a total of 30 hours. In the capstone experience for this master's degree, candidates are expected to demonstrate apt knowledge of the discipline of media and communication. The Specialization in Strategic Communication is a part-time program designed to be completed in less than two years; students can elect to complete the program full-time depending on course availability and must complete all their degree requirements within six (6) years.

Course Load

All Media & Communication (MC) classes are three credit hours, offered in seven (7) week sessions in Spring and Fall and six (6) week sessions in Summer. Students typically enroll in one (1) class per session unless they choose to enroll in more. MC 6910 (Master's Project Research) is also 3 credit hours and is offered in the second seven-week session in Spring and Fall. The capstone experience is not available in Summer.

Coursework

Required Courses (3 credit hours each):

MC 6001: Strategic Communication

MC 6301: Quantitative Methods for Strategic Communication

MC 6401: Qualitative Methods for Strategic Communication

MC 6551: Public Relations Research & Practice

MC 6553: Advertising Research & Practice

MC 6550 Organizational Communication

MC 6552 Social Media Seminar

MC 6910 Master's Project Research

Electives:

- Six credit hours of electives must be completed. Three of those six hours must be MC courses; Three can be from any discipline, but must be eCampus or Distance Learning courses.
- Electives should be chosen in consultation with the program coordinator.

Transfer of Credits/Course Waiver

Students are eligible to apply for up to nine (9) hours of transfer credit from another accredited master's program or from BGSU graduate-level classes completed as an Advanced Undergraduate or Non-Degree Graduate Student. Should a student receive a waiver for a particular course, s/he will need to complete an elective course to make up the overall credit hours required (30). Waivers must be requested in writing, which should be submitted with proper documentation of prior coursework to the Program Coordinator.

Graduate Orientation

All incoming graduate students are encouraged to participate in BGSU's online orientation events, including MC 5000 Intro to Graduate Studies.

Forms

Most forms mentioned can be found on the [BGSU Graduate College Website](#). Others are available through the School office (SMC@bgsu.edu)

Degree Audit Proposal Report System (DARS)

Graduate students review their DARS report each semester. They should consult with the academic advisor of the program (Program Coordinator) requesting course registration. As a rule of thumb, students should take required courses at the time they are offered; electives can be taken at any time. Students are responsible for tracking their own progress.

MA Master's Project

The Project is a combination portfolio review and reflective essay. In short, students will compile the final papers/projects from the five skills courses, update, augment and/or edit as needed based on instructor feedback given at the time of completion and additional research and add a reflective essay discussing their academic efforts and its impact on their work and lives. See the syllabus for detailed information and instructions. These materials should be accessible to readers unfamiliar with the details of each class.

Capstone Experience Scheduling Form: The student completes this form concurrently with their application for graduation. The form identifies which courses the capstone experience will cover along with the names of faculty who taught them and in which semester, and the semester in which the project will be completed. The form should be submitted to the graduate secretary by email (SMC@bgsu.edu) no later than the third week in the first session for Fall and Spring semesters. Please note that if the form is received after these dates, the student will not be permitted to participate in in the experience until the next scheduled date.

The project will be accessed via Canvas. For the project, the due date is the end of Week 6 of the second session of the semester.

During the semester you intend to graduate, your tasks:

Complete the requisite forms as described above. Obtain the form from the program coordinator and/or SMC@bgsu.edu and return it to both after completion.

Complete the [application for graduation](#) in the Student Center in MyBGSU. [Note relevant deadlines, here.](#)

Academic Honesty Policy

The graduate program of the School of Media and Communication is committed to the University's standards on academic honesty as expressed in the University Charter and Student Code. This statement supplements those provisions. As these documents note, cheating and plagiarism are destructive to the central purpose of the University and never tolerated. [Review the complete policy.](#)

Policy Applications for Media and Communication Graduate Students

SMC expects that all students will complete the capstone experience on their own independently and individually.

Students must always be very careful to acknowledge any kind of borrowing that is included in their work, not only in words but ideas. Acknowledgment of whatever is not one's own work is the proper and honest use of sources. Ignorance of citation style is no excuse. Style manuals provide extensive information on appropriate forms of citation.

The use of professional term paper services or research services is always forbidden.

Students are always responsible for the data collection and analysis in works that they represent as their own, unless the work in question is explicitly credited to the source.

Students should take great care to comply with professional standards in regard to submission of their work to professional conferences and journals.

Probation & Dismissal

Failure to make satisfactory progress normally results in academic probation and may lead to dismissal from the graduate program. Satisfactory progress means that a graduate student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. This GPA requirement applies to all graduate students at BGSU, including those who are currently enrolled as non-degree seeking students.

Unsatisfactory progress is also indicated by the accumulation of two or more C's, a D, or an F. Students who are placed on or continued on probation will be notified in writing by the Graduate College. In general, students should not remain on probation for more than two semesters; if satisfactory progress seems unlikely after one or two semesters on probation, the student is likely to be dismissed from the program.

Funding is not typically available for this program. However, if a student was awarded funding, it is possible for a student to lose funding at the end of a semester and be placed on academic probation (without funding) for the subsequent semester. Graduate students are required to demonstrate "satisfactory progress toward the degree" in order to maintain a teaching, administrative, or research assistantship.

Incomplete Coursework

The School of Media and Communication follows the policy of the Graduate College regarding incomplete coursework. The policy, applied to both degree and non-degree seeking students, is as follows:

An INC (incomplete) may be given only when, for some justifiable reason, a student fails to take the final examination or to fulfill a specified requirement in a course.

An INC may be removed, and a grade substituted if the student completes course requirements to the satisfaction of the instructor prior to the deadline established by the Graduate College. The Graduate College deadlines for removal of incomplete grades for the respective academic semesters are:

- Fall semester: June 1
- Spring semester: September 1

- Summer semester: November 1. However, an individual instructor may come to an agreement with his or her student for an earlier deadline for removal of an incomplete grade.
- The graduate dean designee has the authority to extend the deadline for an incomplete. The student must petition the graduate dean designee for such consideration in writing and prior to the expiration of the deadline. The instructor's support is required for approval of the request.
- For courses taken S/U, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to U.
- For courses taken for a letter grade, any mark of INC not removed by these deadlines will change to F. A student cannot graduate with a grade of INC.

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation early in the semester they plan to graduate. Students file the form directly with the Graduate College. Students are eligible for graduation if they have fulfilled all their academic program requirements and met all the Graduate College deadlines and have applied for graduation. Find relevant deadlines and additional information [here](#).

Advising

The Program Coordinator for the strategic communication specialization is the Advisor for graduate students in the program.

Keys to Success

The common style in the School of Media and Communication is APA Style. Find more information at www.APAStyle.org.

The ability to review academic literature and evaluate it is critical to your success. The following book is very helpful.

Pyrczak, Fred & Tcherni-Buzzeo, Maria. (2018). *Evaluating Research in Academic Journals: A Practical Guide to Realistic Evaluation*. 10.4324/9781351260961.

The pace and cadence of graduate work is different and more demanding than in undergraduate study. Be prepared to set aside time to carefully read and view course content. Keep abreast of the work.