

COMMUNICATION (COM)

COM-500 FINDING YOUR VOICE: INTRO TO MARKETING COMMUNICATION (3 Credits)

This course will serve as the foundational course in Communication tools, as well as an introduction to the role of creativity in effective marketing communication. Through a series of lectures, videos, and assignments students will learn concepts such as branding, design, empathy, story, and symphony, in the creation of right-brain dominated marketing communication, that are also rooted in research, strategy and analysis. Specific areas covered include what a brand is and why it matters, brand value and how to measure it, communication of brand value in creative messaging, and the role of consumer insights in measuring a brand. Integration of the tools of marketing communication, such as but not limited to advertising, all digital media, PR, writing and promotion, will be emphasized. The course also provides an overview of both U.S. and global marketing communication practices.

Restrictions: RG.UG.GR

COM-510 EMBRACING ANALYSIS: MAKING MEANING FROM DATA (3 Credits)

This course provides students with an overview of the types of data a marketing communications practitioner will likely encounter and how that data can be used to make smarter decisions. The student will learn how to use analytical tools to identify critical insights and new opportunities. Importantly, students will study how to visually present their findings to facilitate easy understanding by others. Emphasis is placed on the translation of cold numbers or data into skilled communication decisions and strategies that can positively impact the organization.

COM-520 EMBRACING RESEARCH: MARKETING COMMUNICATION RESEARCH (3 Credits)

This is an introductory course in the field of marketing communication research designed to provide the student with an overview of the purposes, procedures, and applications of marketing communication research. Students will learn how to obtain and use secondary data, and to design and conduct both qualitative and quantitative primary research to answer questions a communication practitioner will face. Finally, basic statistics, data analysis, and reporting will be studied. This course serves to guide students as they complete their final thesis campaigns by directing students in their own research design.

COM-540 EMBRACING THE BRAND: STRATEGY AND EXECUTION (3 Credits)

This course will explore the power of customer-centric branding and the critical role strategic brand storytelling plays in the execution of a marketing communication plan in today's global and digital age. The course will examine brand in the stages of the customer buying journey, help students understand how brand identity and equity is created in the mind of diverse audiences, and explain how research, analysis, design thinking and governance help create and maintain meaningful brands over time.

Restrictions: RG.UG.GR

COM-555 MASTERING THE RESEARCH: FIELDWORK (1 Credit)

This is an introductory course in the field of marketing communication research designed to provide the student with an overview of the purposes, procedures, and applications of marketing communication research. Students will learn how to obtain and use secondary data, and to design and conduct both qualitative and quantitative primary research to answer questions a communication practitioner will face. Finally, basic statistics, data analysis, and reporting will be studied. This course serves to guide students as they complete their final thesis campaigns by directing students in their own research design.

COM-580 EMBRACING THE AUDIENCE: EMPATHY & ETHICS (3 Credits)

This course is designed to empower students to become disciplined and astute discoverers of consumer behavior, and to develop an ethical code when engaging with consumers. Students will develop a thorough understanding of consumer behavior, consumer pain points, and the customer journey in order to develop empathy with their audience that leads to relevant marketing message creation. Students will strengthen their insight muscles and get into the mindset required of communication professionals with curiosity, introspection, and empathy: practicing the critical skills of observation, listening and inquiring, and analyzing qualitative data that create meaningful connections to the audience. Current research in consumer behavior, media ethics, digital technologies, and case studies in best practices will help inform student creation of messaging that engage consumers and adhere to ethical principles.

Restrictions: RG.UG.GR

COM-590 EMBRACING STRATEGIC THINKING: MARKETING STRATEGY AND PLANNING (3 Credits)

This course is designed to develop decision-making skills by examining selected topics including marketing strategy; analysis of strategic marketing opportunities; dominant themes in strategic marketing planning; and the design, implementation and control of strategic marketing message plans. This class also examines targeting; segmenting and positioning procedures; and competitive, consumer, and market analyses. Case study analysis will be utilized throughout the course to promote experiential, real-world understanding of the material.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500

Restrictions: RG.UG.GR

COM-620 INTEGRATING CREATIVE: STRATEGY & DESIGN (3 Credits)

This class focuses on symphonic thinking in the development of a variety of marketing communication messages based on insights gleaned from primary and secondary research. Students will learn to create and distill a creative strategy from a focused brief, to concept an advertising campaign, to create and evaluate concepts and executions against the strategy and brief, and to maintain continuity of message across disparate media for diverse audiences. In short, in this class you must make the leap from the reasoned logic of developing a strategy to the inexplicable process of creativity. Bring both your right brain and your left brain to class.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-640 INTEGRATING DIGITAL MEDIA, MOBILE & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES (3 Credits)

Consumer adoption of new communication applications and technologies is changing the communication landscape. Communication practitioners must remain on the forefront of these technologies and have an in-depth knowledge of strategic uses and consumer expectations from them. In this course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of social media marketing, mobile marketing, lead generation, user experience, and paid media amplification that will maximize brand discoverability, credibility and new audience potential. Emerging technologies and their impact on the communication field will also be addressed. Current research, digital simulations, and case studies will help inform students of best practices and ethics.

COM-650 INTEGRATING PR IN A GLOBAL MARKET (3 Credits)

This course provides an introductory analysis of strategic public relations practices for the communication practitioner in a global, ever-changing society. Using organizational strategy to drive tactics, this course demonstrates that emerging technologies require quick thinking by relying on the body of knowledge from which PR stems. This course teaches engagement across communication channels. This course demonstrates how PR can both lead and contribute to effective communication. Emphasis is on social responsibility, ethics and cross-cultural understanding.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-652 INTEGRATING MEDIA RELATIONS (3 Credits)

The relentless growth of digital news sources and platforms has forever reshaped the media landscape, but persuading media gatekeepers remains a critical role for public relations practitioners. This course is designed to help students identify these gatekeepers in print, broadcast, digital, and multimedia roles - and how each has different needs, expectations, and pain points in delivering relevant content to their diverse audiences. Students will learn to see through the eyes of assignment editors, news producers, website managers, bloggers, and influencers. The ethics and ROI surrounding native marketing and advertorial opportunities will be explored. Students will create newsworthy "pitches" that persuade media gatekeepers to ask for more details, an interview, or pursue an editorial opportunity.

COM-654 INTEGRATING CRISIS COMMUNICATION (3 Credits)

This course examines strategic approaches to managing and responding to crises including natural disasters, accidents, executive wrongdoing, and product recalls. Students will learn to recognize and explain the dynamics of a crisis and determine the role of PR in the crisis response, including reputation management, executive and employee counsel, and crisis plan development, execution and evaluation. Different communication channels to reach necessary publics will be emphasized. This course allows students to explore previous crises via case-based analysis.

COM-656 INTEGRATING EVENT MANAGEMENT & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING (3 Credits)

This course will give students understanding and creative insights on events that organizations and institutions use to engage external and internal audiences. Public relations professionals today are tasked with helping to build engagement and trust between their organization and constituencies: diverse external publics, employees, and investor groups. Every event offers opportunities to create experiences that reflect positively on the organization and brand. Students will develop a mastery of planning and executing a number of events and experiences designed to strengthen the trust relationship between the organization and its key leaders, and diverse stakeholders. Students also will examine ways to execute events sustainably. Internal events that engage and inspire employees, such as town meetings, sales meetings, and engagements with community leaders will be explored. Students will also learn to plan, budget, manage, and execute external events for customers and news media, such as trade shows, recognition and celebration activities, and virtual and physical news conferences.

COM-662 INTEGRATING CONTENT MARKETING: STRATEGY & PLANNING (3 Credits)

Content marketing is a strategic approach to creating content that furthers an organization's brand through stimulating interest. This course provides an introduction to sound content marketing fundamentals. Students will be introduced to the structure and practices of content strategy, planning, distribution and analysis with sensitivity to the diversity of the audiences being served. It will include shaping content planning, driving marketing and organization goals, attracting and retaining customers via content, ensuring brand alignment, exploring content marketing channels, conducting analysis and investigating trends shaping the future of content marketing.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-664 INTEGRATING CONTENT CREATION: VISUAL, COPY & OPTIMIZATION (3 Credits)

This course will give priority to content creation and storytelling that supports the brand strategy. It will include a review of content strategy, revisiting the customer journey and buyer personas as a means for developing content that resonates with the intended audience. Students will be introduced to content idea generation, written and visual content types (such as blog posts, infographics, case studies, video, etc.), and creating visuals and copy that gain traction in the digital sphere. Organic search optimization/keyword analysis, content creation tools, content management tools, and content tailoring will also be covered as necessary skills for optimization.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-720 INTEGRATING VISUALS: COMMUNICATION DESIGN (3 Credits)

This course examines the role design plays in effective communications. Emphasis is placed on achieving the goals set forward in the creative strategy to create an emotional connection with the audience. Course topics include: principles of design; effective use of color, typography and other graphic elements, and the fundamentals of branding. Students will strengthen their communication design skills through practical application across multiple communication pieces maintaining continuity across media. In addition, students will demonstrate their ability to construct and articulate effective visual communication pieces as applied to their final thesis project.

COM-800 MASTERING THE FIELD: THESIS (1 Credit)

A capstone course that prepares students for the Final Defense process. Outcomes of the course are presentation materials that are executive ready and professionally produced. Course will use student examples, real-life examples, and case studies to give students an opportunity to analyze and critique the quality and content of professional executive communication materials. Course will incorporate appropriate use of current technologies and presentation strategies to equip students for the Final Defense process.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-801 MASTERING THE REVISION (1 Credit)

A self directed course supported by a faculty mentor for the revision of the student's Master Thesis Communication plan based on Defense Committee feedback requesting the student to "re-present". Working with the faculty mentor the student will develop a timeline to address the Defense Committee feedback, make the necessary revisions, and prepare the necessary documents for a "re-presentation" of their Thesis Communication Plan. The outcome of this course is a revised Master Thesis Communication Plan that is ready for presentation at the next defense round or as stipulated by the Defense Committee. This is a P/F course.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520

COM-830 MASTERING THE PROJECT: FINAL DEFENSE (1 Credit)

This course is designed as the final step in the MA Communication Program where the student presents and defends their required Communication Plan before a panel of faculty and industry professionals in lieu of a master's thesis, to obtain a Master of Arts degree at graduation. The goal is for the student to exhibit their command of Marketing Communication through the presentation of a fully developed original Communication Plan done with a real client and reflective of their specialization (IMC, PR or Content Marketing). It is expected that the student shows evolution of their plan and their marketing communication skills at the defense. The Defense Panel will assess the student's preparedness for graduation based on their command of Marketing Communication and their area of specialization, the effectiveness of their communication pieces, and their ability to handle questions and discussion on behalf of the client.

Prerequisite(s): TAKE COM-500 COM-540 COM-580 COM-590 COM-510 COM-520