

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS, MA

The Master of Arts in Advertising and Public Relations is designed for aspiring students who wish to gain advanced knowledge and expertise in creating and managing persuasive communication. We help motivated students transition from a tactical to a more strategic, managerial approach to advertising and public relations, while becoming ethical and globally competent thought leaders in their future careers.

The Advertising and Public Relations Master of Arts program offers three concentrations that enable students to develop expertise in three growing areas of advertising and public relations.

The **Advertising Creative** concentration helps students build portfolios while learning to solve a client's problems by beautifully wrapping smart strategies in provocative, layered, and memorable ideas.

The **Media Strategy** concentration equips students with analytic skills necessary to analyze traditional, digital, and social media data, uncover actionable insights, and develop brand strategies leveraging those insights.

The online-only **Marketing Communication Management** concentration is designed for emerging leaders who wish to gain advanced knowledge and expertise in creating and managing persuasive communication in an integrated industry landscape in order to pursue managerial careers.

Admission Requirements

Please see the following link for Graduate School admission requirements.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Degree Requirements

The M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations is a 30-33 (based on concentration) credit-hour program designed to provide students with knowledge of industry trends, proficiency in research-driven critical thinking and problem solving, and exposure to scholars and professionals who are well-connected to an evolving communication landscape in order to build a unique expertise in managing persuasive communication.

Students will work with a faculty advisor to create their own career emphasis from a wide range of electives within A+PR and other departments that will help them gain in-depth knowledge for their future career. These electives, along with a core specifically designed to provide students with a true blend of academic and industry knowledge, will help guide their capstone project. Students will choose from two options: a strategic plan for aspiring industry professionals or a thesis for aspiring scholars. In addition to coursework, students will be required to receive professional experience during the summer after their first year in order to enhance the training they receive in the classroom.

Each student's progress will be guided by their faculty advisor. Students in each program must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 during their tenure in the program. Students who receive more than two "C" grades will undergo a faculty review to determine if they should proceed in the program.

Concentrations

A+PR's M.A. program offers two application-only concentrations that provide expertise in two growing areas of advertising and public relations to prepare students for more specialized jobs, and an online-only concentration designed to train future leaders in global integrated marketing communication.

The Advertising Creative concentration helps students build portfolios while learning to solve a client's problems by beautifully wrapping smart strategies in provocative, layered, and memorable ideas. At the completion of the program, students will have a portfolio that highlights their natural talents and emphasizes their newly developed strengths to help students find a job in their area of expertise, either art direction or copywriting. Admission into this concentration is by application only. Applications are available the spring semester before students begin the program.

The Media Strategy concentration equips students with analytic skills necessary to analyze traditional, digital, and social media data, uncover actionable insights, and develop brand strategies leveraging those insights. Through hands-on course work and industry collaboration, students will be prepared to pursue careers in media strategy and planning, brand planning, and advertising and public relations analytics.

The Marketing Communication Management concentration is an online-only, professionally-driven focus that equips leaders with the knowledge and expertise that drives the current interrelated landscape of marketing, advertising and public relations. Through a focus on data-driven strategic planning and emphasis on building ethical leadership skills, the program will help create ethically-grounded, globally aware and business-savvy thought leaders.

Master of Arts in Advertising and Public Relations		Hours
Core Courses (12 hours)		
APR 551	Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 550	Analysis and Insights	3
APR 570	Ethics and Prof Leadership	3
APR 593	Global Comm Management	3
Elective Courses (15 hours) - students that declared a concentration will have a defined set of courses to complete. If a concentration isn't declared, students complete the following:		
Research Course (3 hours - students must choose one of the following or an approved substitution)		3
APR 552	Quantitative Research Methods	
COM 550	Qualitative Research Methods in Communication	
Media Course (3 hours - students must choose one of the following or an approved substitution)		3
APR 522	Media Strategy and Analytics	
APR 523	Media Relations	
Strategy Course (3 hours - students must choose one of the following or an approved substitution)		3
APR 524	Reputation Comm Strategy	
APR 525	Brand Communication Strategy	
Electives (6 hours - based on area of speciality)		6
Capstone Project (3-6 hours)		
Students will complete one of the following options:		3-6
Thesis Option (main campus students only; students will complete six hours of the following course)		
APR 599	Thesis Research	
White Paper Option (students will complete either 3 hours (DL students only) or 6 hours (main campus students only) of the following course)		
APR 598	Industry Project	

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Integrated Campaign Option (main campus students only; students will complete 3 hours of each of the following courses)

- APR 597 Campaign Research and Planning
- APR 598 Industry Project

Comprehensive Exam Option (main campus students only; students will complete 3 hours of each of the following courses)

- APR 594 Comprehensive Exam Preparation

Elective Course

Total Hours 30-33

Professional Experience Requirement

Students enrolled in the M.A. program will be required to complete an internship or some type of professional experience during the summer of their first year. This requirement is designed to encourage students to use the skills learned in the classroom in a professional setting. Students will be required to submit a job description to the graduate coordinator for approval prior to completing the internship. Internships will be approved on a case-by-case basis, but typical internships that are approved would require at least 10 hours a week and/or 80 hours during the summer semester in an advertising, public relations or a related role in a professional setting. After completing the internship, students will submit a short (1-2 page) description of what they experienced and learned during the internship, as well as a form signed by their immediate supervisor, in order to satisfy the requirement. International students that must receive course credit for the internship requirement will enroll for one hour in APR 596 Independent Study Research.

Capstone Project

The capstone project will be an individual demonstration of your knowledge of the skills, theories and concepts that you learned in your coursework during the program. Students will work with an advisor to determine the best course of action from the following options:

Thesis (individual only)

Students will work with their advisor to identify a gap in the scholarly research devoted to a topic in advertising and/or public relations. The student will conduct a review of related literature and propose and execute original research that will answer the student's overarching research inquiry. Completing a thesis will be suggested to students that are looking to pursue a doctorate. The thesis can only be completed in the spring semester of a student's second year, or later if needed.

White Paper (individual only)

Students will work with their advisor to identify a problem or opportunity facing the advertising and public relations industry. The student will conduct secondary and primary research in order to assess the problem/opportunity and form insights and recommendations that will address the problem/opportunity. Completing a white paper will be suggested to students that are looking to pursue a career in the advertising and public relations industry. **All distance learning students will complete a white paper.**

Integrated Communication Plan (team-based only)

Students will work in a small team (3-4 students) along with their advisor to create an integrated communication campaign for an organization. The student will conduct secondary and primary research in order to assess the problem/opportunity, create a planning report and develop a campaign book that will address the problem/opportunity faced by the organization. Completing an integrated campaign will be suggested to

students that are looking to pursue a career in the advertising and public relations industry that do not have an undergraduate background in the area. The campaign can only be completed by the team during the spring semester of their second year.

Comprehensive Exam

Students will complete a case-focused examination on topics covered in the core theory (APR 551), research (APR 550) and professionalism (APR 570) courses. Students will take a course during the fall semester focused on reviewing those concepts covered in the three courses and will submit a comprehensive case study centered around a topic in advertising and public relations. The comprehensive exam option is available to all main campus students, but the exam option is required for students completing the program the fall semester of their second year (17-month option).

Advertising Creative Concentration Hours

Program Core		Hours
APR 550	Analysis and Insights	3
APR 551	Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 570	Ethics and Prof Leadership	3
APR 593	Global Comm Management	3
APR 598	Industry Project	6
Concentration in Advertising Creative		Hours
APR 531	Concepting	4
APR 532	Creative Leadership	3
APR 533 or APR 534	Copywriting Seminar Art Direction Seminar	3
APR 535	Portfolio I	4
APR 536	Portfolio II	4

Total Hours 36

Digital Communication Concentration (online only) Hours

Program Core		Hours
APR 550	Analysis and Insights	3
APR 551	Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 570	Ethics and Prof Leadership	3
APR 593	Global Comm Management	3
APR 598	Industry Project	3-6
Concentration in Digital Communication		Hours
APR 522	Media Strategy and Analytics	3
APR 541	Digital Communication Strategy	3
APR 542	Writing for Digital Comm	3
APR 543	Advanced Digital Marketing	3
APR 524 or APR 525	Reputation Comm Strategy Brand Communication Strategy	3

Total Hours 30-33

Media Strategy Concentration Hours

Program Core		Hours
APR 550	Analysis and Insights	3
APR 551	Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 570	Ethics and Prof Leadership	3
APR 593	Global Comm Management	3
APR 598 or APR 599	Industry Project Thesis Research	6

Concentration in Media Strategy

APR 522	Media Strategy and Analytics	3
APR 525	Brand Communication Strategy	3
APR 541 or MKT 543	Digital Communication Strategy Adv Digital and Social Media	3
APR 552	Quantitative Research Methods	3
APR 584	Computational Research Methods	3
Total Hours		33

Marketing Communication Management Concentration (online only) Hours**Program Core**

APR 550	Analysis and Insights	3
APR 551	Foundations of Integrated Comm	3
APR 570	Ethics and Prof Leadership	3
APR 593	Global Comm Management	3
APR 598	Industry Project	3

Concentration in Marketing Communication Management

APR 522	Media Strategy and Analytics	3
IBA 555	Global Market Management	3
MKT 530	Advanced Marketing Analysis	3
MKT 540	Intro to Digital/Social Media	3
APR 524 or APR 525	Reputation Comm Strategy Brand Communication Strategy	3
Total Hours		30