DEPARTMENT OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The mission of the Department of Strategic Communication is to prepare our students, through theory and practice, for success in public relations, advertising and related industries. The department offers two degrees: a Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and Integrated Communications and a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations.

The BA in Advertising and Integrated Communications program prepares students to understand and apply principles of advertising, branding and audience analytics in creating campaigns that maximize the strategic impact of content for web, social media, mobile devices and traditional media.

The BA in Public Relations program prepares students to be entry-level practitioners for careers in agency, corporate, government and nonprofit public relations. Among the most important essential learning outcomes stressed in the major are critical thinking and reasoning skills. Our graduates offer strategic counsel to their employers and clients through writing, research and implementation.

- Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and Integrated Communications (http://catalog.qu.edu/communications/strategic-communications-ba/)
- Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations (http://catalog.qu.edu/communications/strategic-communications-public-relations-ba/)
- Master of Science in Public Relations (http://catalog.qu.edu/graduate-studies/communications/public-relations-ms/)
- Master of Science in Public Relations - Online/Professional Track (http://catalog.qu.edu/graduate-studies/communications/public-relations-ms-online/)
- Minor in Advertising and Integrated Communications (http://catalog.qu.edu/communications/strategic-communications/advertising-and-integrated-communications-minor/)
- Minor in Public Relations (http://catalog.qu.edu/communications/strategic-communications/public-relations-minor/)

Strategic Communication (STC)

STC 101. Principles of Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This course traces the development of the public relations discipline and examines the role of public relations in organizations and society. Students are introduced to the role that public relations plays in communicating to individuals, groups and society at large. Basic public relations principles and theories are examined. Students are introduced to critical thinking and reasoning concepts as well as the various professional roles in the field.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring
UC: Breadth Elective, University Curriculum Ele

STC 102. Principles of Advertising and Integrated Communications. 3 Credits.
Principles of Advertising and Integrated Communication is an introductory course that provides a comprehensive overview of the practices of advertising and integrated communication (ADIC) as they are used by organizations to maximize the impact of unified messages and promotions on consumers and other stakeholders. The course is designed to introduce students to contemporary issues and practices as well as to analyze ethical considerations involved in the basic principles within the communications campaign planning process.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring
UC: Breadth Elective, University Curriculum Ele

STC 201. Writing for Strategic Communications. 3 Credits.
Written communication is central to most public relations careers. Clear and persuasive writing is one of the tools used in public relations to convey clients’ messages to target publics. This writing-intensive course introduces students to the world of professional public relations writing. Topics include press releases and other print tactics, online content and social media. Students are involved in both in-class and out-of-class assignments.
Prerequisites: Take STC 101 or STC 102; and COM 140.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 215. Web, Mobile and Interactive Design. 3 Credits.
Students learn how to create desktop and mobile multimedia elements using web development software, HTML5, CSS3 and simple scripting. Students design projects that include functional websites, animated content and interactive experiences.
Prerequisites: Take COM 130 and JRN 106 or FTM 110.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 311. Sports Public Relations (SPS 311). 3 Credits.
This class is a comprehensive review of sports management and sports event planning. Students examine such topics as strategic planning, budgeting and time management.
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 320. Strategies for Social Media. 3 Credits.
This course addresses the impact of social and mobile media in an integrated profession. It focuses on strategically using social media to conduct research and monitor issues, to develop, implement and evaluate the success of public relations, advertising and integrated communication efforts. The course emphasizes strategic usage of such social media tools as social networks, social bookmarking sites, blogs, podcasts/vodcasts, discussion boards and conferences, wikis, mobile media and geolocation apps.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 332. Communication Research and Analysis. 3 Credits.
Quantitative reasoning is expected of today’s strategic communication professional, and this course presents an exploration of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Students learn how to use principles of scientific research and data analysis to establish, monitor and evaluate communication efforts.
Prerequisites: Take STC 101 or STC 102.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring
STC 335. Media Systems and Planning. 3 Credits.
In this course, students learn about traditional as well as new and emerging technologies, with particular emphasis on their strengths and weaknesses as message carriers. Discussions include an overview of commonly used metrics and sources of data in the advertising and communications industries. Students then use this knowledge to plan and budget for integrated communication plans that capitalize on paid, earned and owned outlets.
Prerequisites: Take STC 332.
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 341. Corporate Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This course provides students with the knowledge and skills required for positions in the corporate sector. Topics include media relations, employee communication, community relations, investor relations and crisis communication. Students hone their written communication and critical thinking skills in this class.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 343. Nonprofit Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This course is designed for students who are interested in nonprofit public relations practice. Nonprofit practitioners help organizations manage their relationships by using many types of communication. This class helps students hone the skills that enable them to prosper as nonprofit public relations professionals. Written communication skills, along with other skills, are stressed.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 344. Global Strategic Communications Management. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to explore the global reach of strategic communication, its challenges, opportunities and worldwide development. It examines how various communication disciplines such as advertising, integrated marketing communication and public relations work together in various cultures, and geopolitical and socio-economic systems. Students explore strategic communication practices from a cosmopolitan perspective while focusing on understanding global, national and local audiences in order to create an integrated strategic communication plan that strengthens brand images.
Prerequisites: Take STC 101 or STC 102.
Offered: As needed

STC 346. Strategic Health Communication. 3 Credits.
The course presents a social scientific exploration of the field of strategic health communications, with particular attention to analysis and practice of health communication relationships and messages. Participants examine theories of health behavior change and media effects. Health is discussed from an ecological perspective, considering how various social structures impact community and individual health and cultural differences regarding health. Students consider examples of mediated health campaigns and research evaluating their effectiveness. They examine the interplay among theory, research and practice, with a special emphasis on how theory informs practice.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 348. Public Relations Event Planning. 3 Credits.
This course emphasizes the fundamentals of event planning, from developing the event, choosing a site and activities, promoting the event, accommodating the audience, coordinating volunteers, overseeing a safe event environment, and assessing the event after completion. At the end of the course, based upon the readings and real-life application, the student should be able to appreciate and understand how to plan a first-rate event, regardless of the client, theme or environment.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 349. Media Relations. 3 Credits.
This course gives 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. At the conclusion of the course, students should be well-practiced in various forms of working with journalists and the public via multiple media.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 400. Special Topics. 3 Credits.
The content of this course is specialized and varies from semester to semester. Students may inquire at the School of Communications front desk to learn more about the topic being offered.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201.
Offered: As needed

STC 401. Bateman Competition Research. 1-3 Credits.
This course is designed to prepare students for advanced public relations problem-solving, the development of strategic public relations plans and the execution of a comprehensive public relations program. Students develop and implement a public relations program based on the four-step public relations process by competing in the national Public Relations Student Society of America Bateman Case Study Competition.
Prerequisites: Take STC 201 and permission of instructor.
Offered: As needed

STC 402. Bateman Competition Campaigns. 2 Credits.
Prerequisites: Take STC 332, STC 401.
Offered: As needed

STC 405. The Agency. 3 Credits.
The Agency is a student-run, interdisciplinary firm in which students produce professional work under the direction of faculty. Specializing in Public Relations, Graphic and Interactive Design, and Advertising and Integrated Communications, students collaborate on teams to manage and produce visual, written and digital work for a variety of clients in the communications field. Students apply different research methodologies, tools and techniques, and tactics to achieve desired strategic outcomes and present their projects to clients. Course is repeatable with permission of instructor.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 410. Branding Strategies. 3 Credits.
In this course, students consider how brands work and examine them as the guiding forces for integrated communication campaigns. Students identify the common characteristics of successful brands and explore the tools and techniques that are used to build brand equity.
Prerequisites: Take STC 332.
Offered: Every year, Fall
STC 450. Crisis Communication Management. 3 Credits. This senior seminar for public relations majors is focused on crisis management. The course examines institutional crisis communication from a management perspective with an emphasis on crisis prevention, planning and response. Senior-level students in STC 450 apply skills they have learned throughout the program to crisis case studies. Students are called on to demonstrate oral and written communication skills along with proficiencies in such areas as critical thinking, reasoning and creative thinking. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 332. 
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 485. Advertising and Integrated Communications Campaigns. 3 Credits. This course is the capstone course in the advertising sequence. It utilizes a team-based, project-driven approach to advertising with real-life clients. Each team engages in the conception, research, planning and execution of a unique advertising campaign for an entire semester. Students learn to work within client guidelines, strategic creative and media planning, budgetary considerations and post-campaign analysis. In this capstone experience, students develop a full-scale integrated communications campaign, including conducting secondary and primary research, strategic planning, and the production of associated creative deliverables. Students also gain experience in pitching to clients and evaluating the success and impact of the campaign. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 201, STC 332. 
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 495. Public Relations Campaigns. 3 Credits. STC495 is the capstone course for students preparing for a career in public relations. Students develop the mindset of a strategic communicator through case analyses, problem-solving exercises, and completion of a signature work. Attention is focused on the public relations planning process and student teams develop strategic public relations plans for actual clients. Writing, research and presentation skills are expected. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 101, STC 201, STC 332. 
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 499. Public Relations Ind Study. 1-6 Credits. Offered: As needed

STC 501. Principles and Theories of Public Relations. 3 Credits. Students are introduced to the growing body of knowledge in the discipline and gain expertise that contributes to professional competence in public relations. Students examine the function of public relations in organizations and society, review contemporary and historical roles of public relations professionals and explore the practice of public relations in various public and private settings. Students also learn the latest theoretical approaches to public relations and apply these approaches to contemporary public relations management practices. 
Offered: Every year, Fall

STC 502. Public Relations Research Methods. 3 Credits. This course examines the applied use of research in public relations program development. Students learn methodologies appropriate for conducting secondary analyses and primary research. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are addressed, such as secondary analysis, content analysis, survey research, focus groups, participant observation, case study and experimentation. 
Offered: Every year, Fall

STC 503. Public Relations Research Design. 3 Credits. This course focuses on the practical aspects of designing and implementing a public relations research project. Students develop problem statements, conduct literature reviews, write research questions and prepare research proposals. Ethical and methodological issues involved in research design are discussed. The course also familiarizes students with IRB protocols and helps them hone scholarly and professional writing skills, including the proper use of citations. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 501, STC 502. 
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 504. Law and Ethics in Public Relations. 3 Credits. Students become familiar with legal and industry standards for legally and ethically practicing public relations. The course aims to instill an appreciation for freedom of expression and the First Amendment; to impart a functional understanding of legal rules and principles relevant to public relations practice in the U.S.; to enhance students’ ability to identify the moral and ethical dimensions of issues that arise in public relations practice; and to develop analytical and critical thinking skills that encourage students to make and justify ethical decisions. 
Offered: Every year, Fall

STC 505. Public Relations Writing. 3 Credits. This course helps students develop professional-quality public relations writing skills. Students prepare a variety of public relations materials, such as news releases and other media materials; copy for internal magazines, reports, newsletters, brochures, institutional/advocacy advertising; video/audio scripts; web site copy; and speeches. Upon completion of this course, students have a professional portfolio of public relations writing samples. 
Offered: Every year, Fall

STC 506. Public Relations Management. 3 Credits. This course focuses on the business management aspects of public relations, such as policy formation, project direction, resource management, client relations, budgeting and counseling. Special emphasis is placed on public relations’ contribution to an institution’s mission and effectiveness. 
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 507. Strategic Planning in Public Relations. 3 Credits. This course familiarizes students with the public relations strategic planning process. Students examine contemporary case studies that demonstrate the public relations planning process and apply what they have learned to the development and presentation of a public relations campaign plan for a client. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 501. 
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 510. Crisis Management. 3 Credits. This course examines institutional crisis communication from a management perspective with an emphasis on crisis prevention, planning and response. Students are required to read and discuss selected articles from the crisis management literature, research and develop case studies of contemporary crises, and participate in simulations designed to develop professional expertise and practical skills in crisis management, including the management of information, management of public communication, strategic planning, problem solving, message production and issues management. 
Offered: As needed
STC 511. Global Strategy.  3 Credits.
This course examines concepts, issues and practices in international public relations across the borders and focuses on the challenges, opportunities, and the worldwide development of public relations. The course aims to inform you about the variables that affect public relations practice in the international realm and assist you in understanding of other countries’ domestic public relations given the various cultures, geopolitical and socio-economic systems. Participants look closely at how governments, corporations, multinationals and nongovernmental organizations employ international public relations strategies around the world. Students also examine similarities between international public relations and public diplomacy and the effects of international public relations on images of nations.
Offered: As needed

STC 512. Investor Relations.  3 Credits.
Students study the function of investor relations in corporations and examine the role of investor relations specialists charged with communicating financial information about companies to the financial media, SEC, financial analysts, shareholders and others in the financial community. Students learn how to integrate finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance in efforts to maximize shareholder wealth.
Offered: As needed

STC 513. Health and Strategic Communications.  3 Credits.
In this course, students are exposed to the field of strategic health communications, with particular attention to analysis and practice of health communication relationships and messages. Issues to be discussed include, but are not limited to: history and current challenges of the health communication field; health campaign creation, implementation and evaluation; cultural issues related to health behavior change campaigns; translational research; traditional and social media training for health care professionals; and perspectives of media influence on health attitudes, norms and behaviors.
Offered: As needed

STC 514. Social and Mobile Media.  3 Credits.
This course addresses the impact of social and mobile media on public relations. It focuses on conducting public relations campaigns online and responding to public relations issues via such tools as social networking and bookmarking sites, blogs, podcasts/vodcasts, discussion boards and conferences, wikis, mobile and location-based applications.
Offered: As needed

STC 515. Special Topics in Public Relations.  3 Credits.
This course examines a specific topic or issue in public relations theory and practice. Topics might focus on specific practice areas such as sports public relations, employee relations, political public relations, public diplomacy, nonprofit public relations, or on industry issues and trends, such as the use and impact of new technologies, professional ethics and corporate social responsibility or the integration of communication practices.
Offered: As needed

STC 516. Branding Strategies.  3 Credits.
This course explores strategies used by planners, communicators, managers and consultants to create, develop, nurture, maintain and reenergize brands. This course helps students understand the main idea of branding: developing, defending and growing brands for companies, agencies or nonprofits. It explores the essential elements of branding, including target audiences and segmentation, brand benefits, brand personality, differentiation and key brand equities. It also surveys conceptual approaches for the diagnosis of brand growth opportunities and for planning integrated brand communications.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 517. Strategic Communication for Health Professionals.  3 Credits.
In this course, graduate students are exposed to the field of strategic health communication. In particular, students are asked to consider the role of health communication messages in internal, organizational settings, as well as outward-facing messages. Unique to this graduate-level strategic communication course, the students are expected to have minimal to no experience in the field of strategic communication. Instead, the overview of the field provided through this course seeks to encourage understanding of how the theories, practices and evaluations of health communication should be incorporated within their areas of health expertise.
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 518. Measurement and Evaluation.  3 Credits.
This course focuses on the development of knowledge and skills to ensure that students are able to use data to make business decisions. Students consider key concerns of measurement to determine if measurement tools are effective and appropriate for a project’s goals, as well as how to make sense of data to measure success of a project and how to display findings for various audiences. The course is focused on the principles and process of utilizing research to best serve your client’s or organization’s goals. Main topics for the course include measurement development and refinement, online data analytics, audience segmentation, data interpretation and data visualization.
Offered: Every year, Fall and Spring

STC 519. Strategic Public Relations and Reputation Management.  3 Credits.
The focus of this course is reputation management and its importance to business success. Students analyze the function of corporate communications and examine a range of topics including organizational identity, image and reputation; issues and crisis management; institutional ethics and corporate social responsibility; strategic public relations planning; integrated marketing communication; public relations theories and best practices; and global public engagement. The course also explores specialty public relations practice areas such as media relations, investor relations, employee relations and government relations. Class discussions, case studies, in-class exercises, team projects and essay exams help students improve their critical thinking and reasoning skills, develop research and strategic planning skills and increase diversity awareness and sensitivities that are important to professional and business success.
Offered: As needed

STC 520. Sports Public Relations.  3 Credits.
This class is a comprehensive review of sports event planning and management. Students examine such topics as strategic planning, budgeting and time management.
Offered: Every other year, Fall
STC 521. Corporate Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This course provides students with the knowledge and skills required for positions in the corporate sector. Topics include media relations, employee communication, community relations, investor relations, and crisis communication. Students hone their written communication and critical thinking skills in this class.
Offered: Every other year, Fall

STC 522. Nonprofit Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This course is appropriate for students who want to learn how to develop and implement comprehensive public relations campaigns for nonprofit organizations. It highlights the structures and nuances of the various types of NPOs and examines case studies and present-day scenarios. The course requires the development of a public relations campaign, and culminates in crafting a case study assessing the effectiveness of an assigned NPO’s public relations campaign.
Offered: Every other year, Fall

STC 523. Media Systems and Planning. 3 Credits.
In this course, students learn about traditional as well as new and emerging technologies, with particular emphasis on their strengths and weaknesses as message carriers. Discussions include an overview of commonly used metrics and sources of data in the advertising and communications industries. Students then use this knowledge to plan and budget for integrated communication plans that capitalize on paid, earned and owned outlets.
Offered: Every year, Spring

STC 525. Financial Communications and Business. 3 Credits.
This course provides students with a holistic view of public relations and corporate communications management, as well as strategic planning for organizational change and growth. It covers various styles and functions of management and leadership theory and introduces key principles of marketing, branding, risk management, ethics, and finance. Throughout the course, students develop the ability to work between crucial agency organizational departments.
Offered: Every other year, Spring

STC 531. Graduate Internship in Public Relations. 3 Credits.
Students complete a minimum of 90 hours of professional fieldwork supervised by the program director and a qualified field supervisor. Approval of the program director is required.
Offered: Every year, All

STC 601. Public Relations Professional Project. 6 Credits.
Students develop a professional research project under the direction of program faculty. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 501, STC 502, STC 503.
Offered: Every year, All

STC 602. Public Relations Research Thesis. 6 Credits.
Students develop a research thesis under the direction of program faculty. 
Prerequisites: Take STC 501, STC 502, STC 503.
Offered: Every year, All

STC 603. Candidacy Continuation. 0 Credits.
This course is required of all students who are not registered for any graduate courses in the program but who continue working toward the completion of their degree. Requires permission of the program director.
Offered: As needed

STC 605. Public Relations Graduate Capstone. 3 Credits.
Students develop a professional research project under the direction of program faculty. The project work should exhibit KSAs and/or serve as PRSA Readiness Review preparation. Students may enroll in this course once they have completed 30 credits in the program. The capstone project is a personally designed, independently conducted activity, enabling students to further their knowledge/skill in one or more of the course topics that students have found especially interesting or beneficial. Permission of instructor required. This course is graded on a pass/fail basis.
Offered: Every year, Summer

STC 606. Independent Study. 3 Credits.
Students develop and implement individual research projects that advance understanding of particular theoretical or practical aspects of public relations. Approval of the program director is required.
Offered: As needed