MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION AND STRATEGY

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The Master of Science in Digital Content Creation & Strategy (DCCS) program merges creative, critical, and visual thinking to mold expert digital storytellers who are able to reach audiences on any platform in the world.

The program prepares students not only to produce, develop, and manage a wide range of content, but also to become strong digital communication leaders and creative thinkers. Students learn principles of human-centered content creation to better understand and connect with a wide range of audiences and apply strategies to solve creative, technical, and business-related obstacles.

The DCCS graduate program provides a deep exploration into all aspects of digital media, including content creation, social media, user experience (UX/UI), web production, digital strategy, and audio/video production. Within this framework, artificial intelligence (AI) and the latest software and best practices are explored to prepare students to lead in the communications field.

Regardless of the specialty, the completion of a practice-based portfolio capstone is central to the program experience. This capstone is not a singular project, but a robust, web-based portfolio generated over time that will showcase accumulated work and skillset depth. The student's portfolio is influenced by every course and program experience, and can be shown to employers in a range of fields: marketing, public relations, advertising, journalism, publishing, entertainment, healthcare, sports, agencies, graphic design, business and more.

The program encourages applications from prospective students who want to apply skills acquired during their undergraduate education or professional careers. Students in the DCCS program come from a diverse range of experiences such as social media, public relations, journalism, media studies, film and television, information technology, graphic design, web design/management, game design, broadcasting, education, and business, as well as liberal arts and sciences.

MS in Digital Content Creation & Strategy Program of Study

To earn the master's degree, students must complete 30 credits with a minimum 3.00 GPA and no grades less than a C. Any course with a grade less than C must be retaken.

The program has 9 credits (3 courses) of required courses and 21 credits of electives (7 courses). A flexible elective structure allows students to customize the degree to coincide with career goals. Students have the opportunity to enroll in an optional three-credit internship as part of the program.

A required master's capstone experience is included in the 30 credits. For the capstone, the students create a professional-quality web portfolio selected from the best work from their courses and experiences while in the DCCS program.

All courses are 7-week online modules, and each class includes live Zoom meetings to provide instruction and connection between students and faculty. Most DCCS students who work full time usually complete the program in 21 months, provided students take two courses per semester (including summer). Full-time graduate students can finish the DCCS program in 16 months. Fall, spring, and summer starts are available.

Current Quinnipiac undergraduate students may apply for the DCCS program as part of the four- or five-year dual-degree bachelor's/master's program (https://catalog.qu.edu/graduate-studies/communications/combined-digital-content-creation-strategy-ba-bs-ms/).

Required Core Courses

Code	Title	Credits
DCCS 501	Foundations in Digital Content Graduate Studies	3
DCCS 506	Writing for Interactive Media	3
DCCS 601	Master's Capstone	3
Total Credits		**9**

Electives (select seven, aligned with your professional goals)

Code	Title	Credits
Select seven courses from the following list:		21
DCCS 502	Visual Design	
DCCS 504	Motion Across Media	
DCCS 505	Website Technology and Publishing Basics	
DCCS 508	Audio and Video Design	
DCCS 512	Principles of User Experience Design	
DCCS 513	Content Strategy	
DCCS 514	Understanding Your Audience	
DCCS 516	Design Sprints	
DCCS 517	Design Thinking	
DCCS 518	Visual Storytelling	
DCCS 522	Social Media Practice and Techniques	
DCCS 524	Social Media Analytics	
DCCS 526	Social Media for the Public Good	
DCCS 528	Content Creation	
DCCS 529	Data Visualization	
DCCS 531	Graduate Internship	
DCCS 540	Digital Content Creation & Strategy Abroad	
JRN 500	Special Topics in Journalism	
JRN 506	Social Media for Journalism	
JRN 515	The Art of Interviewing	
JRN 521	Podcasting & Audio Storytelling	
JRN 531	Graduate Internship	
JRN 546	Advanced Multimedia Storytelling	
Total Credits		**21**

Student Learning Outcomes

The Digital Content Creation & Strategy (DCCS) program encompasses a wide spectrum of digital media and communications. The program acknowledges that digital media is a cultural catalyst that has revolutionized the way people communicate. It prepares students to think and act critically, creatively, and ethically. The program provides a rigorous curriculum of problem solving, innovation, strategy, creative practice, research, writing, and conceptualization. Students graduating from the DCCS program are well prepared to meet the challenges within the field of digital communications and develop ethical cross-media communication strategies. The areas of study are always evolving and include content creation, social media, visual design, web production, motion graphics, user experience (UX/UI), audio/video design and writing. The DCCS program concludes with a capstone experience that is a culmination of work created throughout the program. The following competencies are critical for digital media practitioners, and they construct a framework that contributes to the overall effective practice of the discipline.

Upon completion of the program, students should be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. **Practice Creative and Critical Thinking:** Practice processes and methods that cover empathy, the psychology of the user, problem definition and ideation methods. They build a knowledge base and skillset required to practice across digital media and to conduct the "deep work" required of master's level study.
2. **Solve Creative Problems:** Solve creative problems using the synthesis of technical, aesthetic and conceptual knowledge. This is demonstrated by the ability to create and develop visual and written responses to communication problems using research, preproduction, storyboarding and media production techniques.
3. **Conduct In-Depth Research**: Conduct in-depth research using professional methods and terminology that demonstrates fluency in the use of the formal vocabulary and concepts. This includes recognizing the influence of major cultural, historical, technological and aesthetic trends on contemporary interactive products and services.
4. **Implement Processes:** Use industry standard processes and methods to produce communications that incorporate a high level of strategy, planning, production and distribution. This is exhibited by the ability to solve communication challenges by using analysis, prototyping, user testing and outcome evaluation, among other methods.
5. **Develop Strategies:** Know how to use words, visuals, video, social media and mobile media to build an audience and deliver content. Students create an effective media presence and apply their knowledge to strategic challenges within real-world situations.
6. **Actualize Concepts**: Actualize technical, aesthetic and conceptual decisions based on using appropriate tools and technology. This includes knowing how to learn techniques with the recognition that technological change is constant.
7. **Produce Professional Media:** Produce a body of digital media suitable for seeking professional opportunities in their chosen branch of communication. This is facilitated through the process of identifying and packaging works, creating a consistent message, and using the results of their research and practice. The focus is on a unique and persuasive body of work to be distributed across mediums.

Admission

The School of Communications invites applications from prospective students who wish to pursue the professional practice of digital content creation and strategy. Recent graduates of a bachelor's program outside of the communications field are welcome to apply, as are prospective students who are presently working and wish to either shift careers or enhance their professional standing.

Admission is based on the following:

- undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with a GPA of 3.00 or greater
- a cover letter expressing interest in pursuing graduate education
- a resume showing experience either as a student or professional
- two academic or professional recommendations
- a brief online portfolio of written, visual, media or interactive work
- an original piece of writing (1,000-word minimum). This can be an academic, professional or creative work you have already produced, or a new original piece of writing on a topic of your choice. We are looking for depth of thought, depth of research, the ability to formulate ideas, and writing skills.