

# MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FIELD OF MEDIA AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The master's program in media and strategic communication is geared toward aspiring media and political communication experts. The program blends analytical and applied skills, giving students a grounding in the function and influence of the media. The most comprehensive strategic communication program in the heart of Washington, DC, this graduate program prepares students to achieve advocacy goals in today's fast-paced media environment.

Students learn to design and implement campaigns, develop messaging to target audiences, support campaigns, and encourage action. They perform analytics and data analysis and learn how to apply insights from media effects, public opinion and persuasion. They also gain the knowledge to advance their careers in fields of public and nonprofit management, government media relations, academia, or even public relations and communications consulting.

The flexible curriculum allows students to focus their studies on sustainability, science, public health, peacebuilding, or other public affairs issues.

Visit the program website (<https://smpa.gwu.edu/media-strategic-communication/>) for additional information.

## ADMISSIONS

**Admission deadlines:** Fall – April 1 (February 1 for applicants applying for assistantships/fellowships);

Spring – October 1

Applications completed after these dates will be considered on a space-available basis only.

**Standardized test scores:** The GRE general is not required. However, if you feel as though submitting scores for the GRE will strengthen your application, you are welcome to submit them.

International students: The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction.

Minimum scores for the program are:

- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.; or

- TOEFL: 600 on paper-based or 100 on Internet-based; or

**Recommendations:** One (1) recommendation required; more than one recommended; more than one recommendation preferred.

**Prior academic records:** Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

If transcripts are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translation alone should be uploaded into your application.

**Statement of purpose:** In an essay of 250 – 500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in your chosen field. Include your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, and any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application. If you are applying for an assistantship or fellowship, you should also describe any teaching experience you have had.

**International applicants:** Please review International Applicant Information (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants> (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants/>)) carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Graduate Studies  
The George Washington University  
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 107  
Washington DC 20052

For additional information about the admissions process visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate-admissions-faq/>) page.

Contact:

askccas@gwu.edu  
202-994-6210 (phone)

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

## REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

The general requirements stated under Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Programs (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#degreeregulationstext>).

36 credits, including 15 credits in core courses, 3 credits in skills courses, 12 credits in elective courses, and 6 credits in capstone courses.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
Core courses <sup>1</sup>		
SMPA 6202	Media Effects, Public Opinion, and Persuasion	
SMPA 6204	Strategic Political Communication	
SMPA 6208	Politics and Public Relations Fundamentals	
SMPA 6241	Research Design	
SMPA 6242	Analytics and Data Analysis for Strategic Communication	
Skills course		
SMPA 6201	Strategic Communications Skills (taken twice for a total of three credits) <sup>2</sup>	
Capstone courses <sup>4</sup>		
6 credits to be taken over the last two semesters in the program (3 credits per semester) in one of three options, selected in consultation with the advisor.		
Research thesis		
SMPA 6999	Thesis Research (taken twice for a total of six credits)	
Media project		
SMPA 6297	Media Capstone Project (taken twice for a total of six credits)	
Strategic communication project (taken in this order)		
SMPA 6220 & SMPA 6298	Strategic Practicum and Strategic Communication Capstone Project	
<b>Electives <sup>3</sup></b>		

12 credits of elective courses selected with the approval of the advisor.

<sup>1</sup>On the basis of academic or professional preparation, students may petition to waive any required course with substitution of another approved course.

<sup>2</sup>Taken on different topics.

<sup>3</sup> Students may take an additional 3 credits of SMPA 6201 as electives. Students who select the strategic communication capstone option may not count SMPA 6220 as an elective.

<sup>4</sup>Students should consult their advisor in the second semester of the program regarding the capstone.

With permission of the advisor, a limited number of upper-division undergraduate courses may be taken for graduate credit, provided additional work is required by the instructor.