MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FIELD OF MEDIA AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Master of Arts (MA) candidates in School of Media and Public Affairs study with leading political communication scholars and award-winning journalists. They explore how the changing media landscape affects politics, journalism, and the fundamental ways in which governments and other organizations interact with the public. The Master of Arts in Media and Strategic Communication is designed for students interested in media and strategic political communication.

Students gain a full understanding of how political actors use communication, as well as the history and theory behind how various forms of communication affect the operation of both governmental and non-governmental organizations. The focus on strategic political communication provides the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge as well as high-level networking opportunities to excel in a wide range of professional fields, including public opinion and policy analysis, advocacy communication, media, academia, and political public relations. The program consists of 12 courses (36 credit hours) that combine core theoretical and media skills courses with opportunities to develop an area of specialization chosen by the student. It can be completed either full-time or part-time.

Students take 5 core courses (15 credit hours) in strategic communication, media theory, and research methods and analytics. Students work with faculty advisors to tailor the additional credit hours—which encompass skills courses, electives, and the final capstone project—toward their future goals. For their capstone project, students have the option of completing a research thesis, media project, or strategic communication plan to showcase their expertise. The School of Media and Public Affairs also offers a MA in Global Communication in conjunction with the Elliott School of International Affairs.

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.

Minimum scores for the program are:
- TOEFL: 600 on paper-based or 100 on Internet-based; or
- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.; or

Recommendation required: 1 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 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.

Please review International Applicant Information carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

For more information on the admission process, please visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (http://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate/admissions/faqs/) page.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Office of Graduate Admissions
1160 18th Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036
Columbian College of Arts and Sciences – Graduate Admissions Office
The George Washington University
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 215
Washington DC 20052

Contact for questions:
askccas@gwu.edu – 202-994-6210 (phone) – 202-994-6213 (fax)
8:30 am - 5:30 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/#degeregulationtext).

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMPA 6202</td>
<td>Media Effects, Public Opinion, and Persuasion</td>
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<td>SMPA 6204</td>
<td>Strategic Political Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMPA 6208</td>
<td>Politics and Public Relations Fundamentals</td>
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<td>SMPA 6241</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
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<td>SMPA 6242</td>
<td>Analytics and Data Analysis for Strategic Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills course</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMPA 6201</td>
<td>Strategic Communications Skills (taken twice for a total of three credits)</td>
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<td>Capstone courses</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td>Research thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMPA 6999</td>
<td>Thesis Research (taken twice for a total of six credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media project</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMPA 6297</td>
<td>Media Capstone Project (taken twice for a total of six credits)</td>
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1On the basis of academic or professional preparation, students may petition to waive any required course with substitution of another approved course.

2Taken on different topics.

3Students 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.

4Students 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.