



Programs in Strategic Communications



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World Campus

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Online.

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“From big data to omnichannel marketing, today’s digital landscape is increasing in both complexity and promise. Strategic communications practitioners must continuously develop their expertise to design successful campaigns using these latest tools. At the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, the largest accredited

school in its field, our online Bachelor of Arts and Master of Professional Studies programs in Strategic Communications build students’ theoretical and practical expertise in campaign development, media analytics, leadership, and law. Both online programs reflect our faculty’s extensive academic and industry experience, and students can be confident they will graduate with the skills needed to successfully meet the demands of this rapidly changing media environment.”

— **Michelle Baker, Ph.D.**
Director, Online Programs in Strategic Communications

Online Programs in Strategic Communications

Whether you are new to the field of communications or looking to advance as a professional in the field, Penn State's strategic communications programs delivered online through Penn State World Campus can provide you with a quality education to bolster your credentials. You'll have the flexibility to study around your schedule—when and where it is convenient for you—without sacrificing meaningful interactions with expert faculty and fellow students.

Your required communications courses will be taught by experienced Penn State faculty from the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, so you'll receive the most up-to-date

instruction in the full range of communications topics, with the same rigorous course work you would expect from resident programs.

By successfully earning a degree in strategic communications, you can enhance your skills in complex problem-solving; oral, visual, and written communications; research and analytic techniques; creativity; and social and cultural sensitivity. These competencies, highly valued in all fields, can help you set specific communication goals and create on-target, comprehensive communication strategies to reach any organization's objectives.



Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communications

The online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communications is a 120-credit degree program designed to provide you with a solid foundation in the theory, research, and practice of creating powerful communication strategies. The advantage of the strategic communications degree at Penn State is that it goes beyond the scope of a typical communications program. As a student, you'll have the opportunity to study psychology, statistics, law, research, and other disciplines that can be used to build a strong foundation for effective communication for any company or organization. The curriculum is designed to teach you to analyze a dynamic environment through theoretical concepts and

market research, set a goal for your communication strategy, design and execute messaging and media placement, and evaluate your strategy's impact.

If you are a professional who wants to advance your career in strategic communications or if you want to move into a career related to communications, this program is designed for you. Strategic communications is an ideal course of study if you want to use the latest technology to create targeted, comprehensive communication strategies across a variety of media platforms to advance your organization's objectives.



Curriculum

Courses in this program include:

Writing for the Media

Write public relations news releases, public information announcements, print, television, and radio advertisements, as well as news stories and editorials.

Research and Analytics

Use online research methods for strategic communication, including web analytics, online surveys, online interviews, and content analysis.

Social Media Strategies

Learn about specific tools and best practices needed to conquer current and future use of social media, including social networks, visual content, podcasts, blogs, and other collaborative content creation platforms.

Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing the strategic communications undergraduate degree, you should be able to:

- › use your enhanced writing skills to communicate in a diverse mass media environment
- › understand integrated marketing communications, including concepts related to consumer psychology, theories of persuasion, sales promotions, and direct marketing
- › understand laws and regulations affecting online advertising and strategic communications, particularly First Amendment protection of commercial speech, advertising regulations, and privacy regulations
- › ethically apply public relations and advertising tools across cultures
- › conduct online strategic communications research, including web analytics, online surveys, online interviews, online focus groups, and content analysis
- › use tools to track and measure online communication
- › implement best practices related to social media, including social networking, podcasting, bookmarking, blogging, microblogging, wikis, and other collaborative content-creation platforms

Master of Professional Studies in Strategic Communications

The 30-credit online Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Strategic Communications offers a career-ready curriculum to provide you with more in-depth knowledge of media messaging. You can obtain an advanced skill set in campaign construction, the targeting of specific audiences, and advanced analytical competency for use with modern digital interfaces for decision-making.

Throughout your course work, you will explore both qualitative and quantitative theories and their corresponding research methods. By harnessing your understanding of both academic and professional research, you can learn to develop and evaluate messaging rooted in established theory, as you continuously refine

your writing skills. The program culminates in a capstone course in which you will highlight your ability to develop strategic messaging for a professional client.

A strategic communications graduate program is ideal if you are in the early or middle stage of your career, currently in or aspiring to a managerial position. You can benefit from this program if you work in a specialty or industry sector such as marketing, web content production, public relations, or copywriting. As a graduate of the online MPS in Strategic Communications program, you can become a valuable asset in media outlets, business, government, education, and nonprofit organizations.



Curriculum

Courses in this program include:

Research Methods in Strategic Communications

Understand the methods and practices used to conduct effective research in examining practical and theoretical questions in strategic communications.

Digital Media Analytics

Acquire an overview of the methods for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing audience data for digital media.

Strategic Communications Campaigns

Apply the knowledge acquired in foundation courses to develop a strategic communications campaign on behalf of a professional client.

Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing the strategic communications graduate degree, you should be able to:

- › understand the current structure of the strategic communications industry in the digital media landscape
- › apply communications theory to solve realistic industry problems
- › conduct quantitative and/or qualitative strategic communications research, such as writing meaningful research questions, analyzing data sets, and writing and presenting results in a clear, academic format
- › collect, analyze, and use audience data for digital media
- › effectively communicate with multicultural populations
- › identify and analyze contemporary ethical issues and problems affecting the strategic communications industry
- › apply ethical principles to strategic communications industry issues and professional codes of conduct
- › understand and apply the influence of social media on strategic communications practice
- › develop a strategic communications campaign for a professional client





Why Penn State?

A Respected, High-Quality Education

In 1892, Penn State founded one of our nation's first correspondence courses; in 1998, we became one of the first major accredited universities to provide online education. Since then, we've been committed to ensuring that you have access to a quality academic experience, even when you have job and family obligations to fulfill. The strategic communications programs offered through Penn State World Campus have been developed in partnership with the respected Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications.

Your online courses are the same academically challenging courses that are taught on campus. Yet they give you the flexibility and convenience to study wherever you are, at times that suit your own schedule.

Faculty

The courses in the strategic communications programs are designed and taught by Penn State professors whose teaching and research interests combine academic expertise and industry experience. They are leaders in their fields and experts in the subjects that they teach, and they are committed to making sure you get a quality academic experience in your online programs.

Employer Recognized and Accepted

The online strategic communications programs will carry the same Penn State commitment to high quality that is respected by employers everywhere. And when you graduate, your diploma will be the same as any other awarded by Penn State. Penn State World Campus is the real Penn State. The only difference is the way in which the courses are delivered to you.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much is tuition?

Tuition is based on cost-per-credit, which may vary based on your program of study. Tuition rates are assessed every semester of enrollment. As a student, you may incur additional charges, such as credit-by-examination, exam proctor, and transcript fees, during your course of study. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date tuition rate.

Does Penn State World Campus offer financial aid?

World Campus makes many options available to help you pay for your education. Full- and part-time degree seeking students are eligible for federal student aid. We also have different options to help you, such as deferred payment plans, third-party payments for employed professionals, and military payment options. For more information, please visit: worldcampus.psu.edu/tuition-and-financial-aid

What does the online classroom look like?

Our philosophy for designing online courses: Use the latest technology to best deliver the content in the most flexible way while keeping the technology transparent to you. We use one centralized platform where you can log in to your classroom. There you can get assignments, interact with faculty and peers, reply to message boards, and do more.

Are online programs the real Penn State?

Yes. Penn State World Campus was launched in 1998 as Penn State's virtual campus administered online. It has since grown into one of the most highly regarded online campuses—extending Penn State's reach across the world. No distinction will be made on your official Penn State diploma that your courses were completed at a distance.



Begin Your Application Today

Bachelor of Arts

To start your application and to view deadlines, visit:

worldcampus.psu.edu/stratcomm

Application Materials

- › official high school transcripts or GED transcript
- › official military transcripts (if applicable)
- › official college or university transcripts (if applicable)
- › TOEFL or IELTS scores (if applicable)
- › complete application form and fee

Master of Professional Studies

To start your application and to view deadlines, visit:

worldcampus.psu.edu/stratcomm-mps

Application Materials

- › official college or university transcripts
- › résumé
- › statement of purpose
- › writing sample
- › references
- › TOEFL or IELTS scores (if applicable)
- › complete application form and fee

Please visit our website for a more detailed description of the requirements and application procedure: worldcampus.psu.edu/admissions

Did You Know?

- › Penn State has aligned its online programs, student support services, policies, and procedures to support military personnel, veterans, and military family members.
- › Penn State World Campus is consistently ranked in the top 10 by *U.S. News & World Report* for having the best online bachelor's programs.



Contact Us

Admissions Questions

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