

MASS COMMUNICATIONS, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture offers a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications with concentrations in one of three areas: advertising, journalism or public relations. The public relations concentration is designed to prepare students for employment in industry, government, nonprofit associations and public relations agencies.

Learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communication professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communication professions in which they work.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions in which they work.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Understand and apply the principles and laws appropriate to the communication professions in which they work, including copyright and trademark law.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically.
- Establish an environment that encourages, supports and reinforces professionalism at all levels of learning.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

Special requirements

The **overview section** of the Robertson School of Media and Culture explains the requirements for students to be admitted to, and remain in, the foundation program or a specific concentration in the school.

Students must earn at least 72 credits in courses outside mass communications. In addition, students must earn a total of 45 credits in classes at the 300-level and above, including upper-level mass communications course work. To graduate from the mass communications program, students must have both a minimum cumulative GPA and a minimum major GPA of 2.5 and must earn a minimum grade of C in their senior-level capstone courses. The mass communications curriculum includes the foundation and specific concentrations.

Foundation course work for public relations students

MASC 101; MASC 203 with a minimum grade of C; MASC 210 with a minimum grade of C; and completion of UNIV 111, UNIV 112, POLI 103, ECON 203 and the College of Humanities and Sciences' math and statistics (must choose STAT 208 OR STAT 210), science and technology, and diverse and global communities requirements. Completion of both ECON 210 and ECON 211 may substitute for ECON 203.

To enroll in MASC 203, students must receive departmental permission.

To enroll in a mass communications course, majors must have earned a minimum grade of C in all courses prerequisite for that course.

Degree requirements for Mass Communications, Bachelor of Science (B.S.) with a concentration in public relations

General education requirements

Course	Title	Hours
University Core Education Curriculum (minimum 21 credits)		
UNIV 111 Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	Focused Inquiry I	3
UNIV 112 Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	Focused Inquiry II	3
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Approved humanities/fine arts		3
Approved natural/physical sciences		3-4
Approved quantitative literacy		3-4
Approved social/behavioral sciences		3-4
Total Hours		21-24

Course	Title	Hours
Additional College of Humanities and Sciences requirements (11-23 credits)		
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
Approved H&S diverse and global communities		3
Approved H&S human, social and political behavior (fulfills University Core social/behavioral sciences)		
Approved H&S literature and civilization (fulfills University Core humanities/fine arts)		
Approved H&S science and technology (fulfills University Core natural/physical sciences)		
Approved H&S general education electives		6-8
Experiential fine arts ¹		1-3
Foreign language through the 102 level (by course or placement)		0-8
Total Hours		11-23

¹

Course offered by the School of the Arts

Collateral requirements

Course	Title	Hours
ECON 203	Introduction to Economics (completion of both ECON 210 and ECON 211 satisfies this requirement)	3
ENGL 304	Persuasive Writing	3
HIST 104	Survey of American History	3
MGMT 310	Managing People in Organizations	3
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
POLI 103	U.S. Government (fulfills approved human, social and political behavior)	3
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking (fulfills University Core quantitative literacy)	3
or STAT 210	Basic Practice of Statistics	
POLI (300-level or above) or upper-level writing (ENGL 310, ENGL 367, ENGL 393)		3
Literature course (300-level or above) except ENGL 386/TEDU 386 or TEDU 387		3
Total Hours		27

Major requirements

Course	Title	Hours
MASC 101	Mass Communications	3
MASC 203	Journalism Writing	3
MASC 210	Public Relations	3
MASC 333	Public Relations Technical Writing and Media Relations	3
MASC 334	Visual Communication and Design for Public Relations	3
MASC 336	Social Media for Public Relations	3
MASC 337	Public Relations Strategy	3
MASC 335	Multimedia Production for Public Relations	3
MASC 338	Public Relations Professionalism	3
MASC 408	Communications Ethics and Law	3
MASC 425	Public Relations Research Methods	3
MASC 439	Agency (capstone)	3
MASC 493	Fieldwork/Internship	3
Select public relations electives from the approved list below or any additional MASC course		6
Total Hours		45

Open electives

Course	Title	Hours
Select two to 16 credits		2-16

The minimum total of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Public relations electives

Course	Title	Hours
MASC 423	Tourism and Hospitality Public Relations	3
MASC 424	Sports and Entertainment Public Relations	3
MASC 433	Special Events	3

MASC 435	Crisis Communication	3
MASC 438	Organizational Communications	3
MASC 488	Strategic Health Communication	3

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester	Hours
MASC 101 Mass Communications	3
POLI 103 U.S. Government (must take for approved H&S human, social and political behavior)	3
UNIV 101 Introduction to the University	1
UNIV 111 Focused Inquiry I	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	
Approved science and technology	3-4
Term Hours:	13-14

Spring semester

ECON 203 Introduction to Economics (or ECON 210 or ECON 211 if other of these two has been completed)	3
HUMS 202 Choices in a Consumer Society	1
MASC 210 Public Relations	3
UNIV 112 Focused Inquiry II	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	
Approved diverse and global communities	3
Approved general education elective	3-4
Term Hours:	16-17

Sophomore year

Fall semester

HIST 104 Survey of American History	3
MASC 203 Journalism Writing	3
STAT 208 Statistical Thinking	3
or or Basic Practice of Statistics	
STAT 210	
UNIV 200 Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Experiential fine arts (course offered by School of the Arts)	3
Term Hours:	15

Spring semester

ENGL 304 Persuasive Writing	3
MASC 333 Public Relations Technical Writing and Media Relations	3
MASC 334 Visual Communication and Design for Public Relations	3
MASC 337 Public Relations Strategy	3
Approved literature and civilization (ENGL 215 recommended)	3
Term Hours:	15

Junior year**Fall semester**

MASC 336	Social Media for Public Relations	3
MASC 338	Public Relations Professionalism	3
MASC 408	Communications Ethics and Law	3
Foreign language (101-level)		4
Literature course (300-level or above) except ENGL/TEDU 386 or ENGL 387		3
Term Hours:		16

Spring semester

MASC 335	Multimedia Production for Public Relations	3
MKTG 301	Marketing Principles	3
POLI (300 level or above) or one upper-level writing course (ENGL 310, ENGL 393, ENGL 367)		3
Foreign language (102-level)		4
Public relations elective		3
Term Hours:		16

Senior year**Fall semester**

MASC 425	Public Relations Research Methods	3
MASC 493	Fieldwork/Internship	3
Approved general education elective		3
Open elective		3
Public relations elective		3
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester

MASC 439	Agency (capstone)	3
MGMT 319	Leadership	3
Open electives		5-6
Public relations elective		3
Term Hours:		14-15
Total Hours:		120-123

The minimum total of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

MASC 101. Mass Communications. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Open only to mass communications majors or media studies minors, or by permission of School of Mass Communications. A comprehensive overview of mass media which examines its history and evolution. Emphasis is given to the ways in which communications technologies have shaped and are shaped by society. Considers how digital and earlier technologies have led to increasing integration of world cultures and economies. Includes discussion of mass media law and ethics, including the origins and evolution of a free press and the legal framework of contemporary mass media practice.

MASC 151. Global Communications. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Explores how communication media and globalization drive each other and how they both impact the nation-state as well as international institutions. Examines how technology, the global economy and international media corporations influence culture, politics, business, law and other institutions in countries around the world. Explores the relationship between media systems and governments and how both are affected by technology and globalization. Crosslisted as: INTL 151.

MASC 201. Curiousness. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Study and practice of the first attribute for success in creativity: curiousness. Students engage in practical applications, readings, lectures, demonstrations and in-class exercises that build curiosity and help students identify and trust their natural curious nature. Provides advertising and non-advertising majors with rigorous and provocative challenges to stimulate further interest in creating for media.

MASC 203. Journalism Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 101 minimum grade of C, UNIV 112 or both ENGL 295 and HONR 200 with minimum grade(s) of C, and minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Study and practice in fact gathering and development of basic writing skills for print, broadcast and online journalism. Focuses on journalistic storytelling, grammar, Associated Press style and knowledge of current affairs.

MASC 204. Story. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 101 minimum grade of C and 201 minimum grade of C, UNIV 112 or both ENGL 295 and HONR 200 with minimum grade(s) of C, and minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Focuses on writing for advertising and consumer communications (the best advertising tells stories to which consumers can relate). Students study the parts of a story, what makes a story interesting and how to find those things. Practice includes looking for, finding and constructing a story. A survey of many different ways storytelling is involved in making advertising. Practice in applying storytelling skills to several advertising and communication projects.

MASC 210. Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Introduction to public relations principles and practices, including analysis of tools, media, ethical responsibilities and emerging technologies. Special attention to the theory and research literature on rational and ethical persuasion.

MASC 251. Global Health and Social Media. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An online service-learning class in which students explore the theory and practice of social media campaigns for global health issues and develop projects for nonprofit clients. The class will explore the following issues: theories and concepts of social media campaigns about global health issues; practical application of social media in health campaigns; targeting online audiences through social media; utilization of multimedia content for social media; and organizational strategies for social media to achieve social benefits.

MASC 261. History and Development of Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 101 with a minimum grade of C. An examination of the regulatory, technical, economic and creative foundations of print, broadcast and Web-based journalism. Historical, contemporary and ethical issues are also addressed.

MASC 290. Ethical Problems in Mass Media. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 101 minimum grade of C. Examination and analysis of contemporary issues and problems in conventional and new media. The philosophical foundation and principles of ethical decision-making are explored. Critical and unresolved issues are discussed within the legal and ethical framework of modern mass media practice. Students are required to design and justify resolutions to the issues and present defenses for the resolution proposals.

MASC 291. Topics in Communications. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. May be repeated once with different content. A study of a specialized topic in mass communications. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered.

MASC 300. Technical Prowess. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 204 minimum grade of C. For advertising students only. Examines the functions of visual and graphic communication in the print and electronic media. Focuses on mastery of graphics software and basic design principles used in advertising. Students gain hands-on experience with state-of-the-art computer graphics and layout programs. (May not be taken if student has taken MASC 301 or 334.)

MASC 301. Graphics for Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 with a minimum grade of C. For journalism students only. Examines the functions of visual and graphic communication in the print and electronic media. Focuses on creative typographic and layout design principles and integrates practice in editing, graphic creation, digital-image manipulation and professional publishing. Students gain hands-on experience with state-of-the-art computer graphics and layout programs used in newspaper and magazine journalism. (May not be taken if student has taken MASC 300 or 334.)

MASC 303. Reporting for Print and Web. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 203 minimum grade of C and UNIV 200 minimum grade of C or HONR 200 minimum grade of C. Detailed study in reporting and writing news stories for print publications and websites. Focus on interviewing, writing news and features and preparing for entry-level reporting assignments. Students also will learn online presentation skills, including photos, audio, video and interactive elements.

MASC 305. Copy Editing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 301 minimum grade of C. Instruction and practice in basic newspaper and online editing with a focus on practical experience in editing local and news service copy for publication. Includes emphasis on headline writing, development of news judgment, accuracy and fairness, and potential legal problems for copy editors. Attention also will be paid to layout and design for newspapers and online.

MASC 317. Visual Acuteness. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 300 with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to advertising majors. Study and practice of visual problem-solving and graphic design. This course uses design thinking, conceptual thinking and process. Topics include building harmonious systems, using the typographic grid and understanding the relationship between type and image.

MASC 333. Public Relations Technical Writing and Media Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 203, MASC 210, and UNIV 200 or HONR 200, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. An intensive writing course that builds a practical foundation for writing in public relations. Establishes writing techniques and methods for message development, storytelling, persuasiveness and action. Includes development of organizational background and branding materials, community relations materials, and the creation of materials for key stakeholders in news media and other influencer media. Explains the value, role and function of mass communication channels, including a strategic approach to pitching, engaging and interviewing for mass media with a plan for monitoring and evaluating media mentions. Establishes a diverse writing portfolio.

MASC 334. Visual Communication and Design for Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 203 and MASC 210, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students or media studies minors. Provides hands-on experience with current graphic design software such as Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign while building skills for concepting, developing and critiquing design projects for public relations. Explores theoretical and practical approaches to visual communication and message development. Exposes students to the language skills and empathy required to work with professional designers in the industry. Establishes a diverse portfolio of graphic design materials. (May not be taken if student has completed MASC 300 or MASC 301.)

MASC 335. Multimedia Production for Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: ENGL 304, MASC 333, MASC 334 and MASC 337, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Multimedia technology course used to advance the digital and practical skills devolved in MASC 333 and MASC 334. Explores current and innovative approaches to multimedia tools and technology used for public relations including, but not limited to, multimedia photography, video storytelling, webcasts and webinars, and subscriber engagement. Explores industry trends in digital, online and mobile communication. Establishes a diverse portfolio of multimedia projects. (May not be taken if student has completed MASC 300 or 301.)

MASC 336. Social Media for Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: ENGL 304, MASC 333, MASC 334 and MASC 337, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Covers development, trends and application of social media. Focuses on social media as a strategic tool for public relations professionals. Identifies and analyzes functionality and best practices, including audience engagement, benchmarking and appropriate metrics for social media monitoring, measurement and evaluation.

MASC 337. Public Relations Strategy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 203 and MASC 210, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Teaches the strategic process for building public relations campaigns and other communication plans. Includes thorough instruction for setting goals, objectives, strategies and tactics. Establishes a method for measuring and evaluating effectiveness in public relations efforts supplemented by industry examples and case studies.

MASC 338. Public Relations Professionalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: ENGL 304, MASC 333, MASC 334 and MASC 337, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Reinforces professionalism skills and career competencies for the public relations industry. Strengthens verbal and interpersonal skills used for pitching, presenting, influencing and engaging with audiences. Institutes a plan for employment supported by skillsets in networking, job-seeking and applying, interviewing, and relationship building. Explores options for public relations career paths, development opportunities, specializations and certifications. Establishes a diverse portfolio of public relations materials.

MASC 341. Feature and Article Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 303 minimum grade of C or 363 minimum grade of C. Practice in preparing articles and features for newspapers and magazines. Emphasis is on creative journalistic writing and development of writing skills.

MASC 344. Data Journalism and Visualization. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 203; and STAT 208 or STAT 210. Enrollment is restricted to mass communications majors. A practical guide to computer-assisted reporting and data-driven storytelling. Focus on finding authoritative sources and information on the internet, analyzing data with spreadsheets and other tools and creating online graphics. Students will learn how to evaluate the reliability of electronic information and how the First Amendment and journalism ethics apply to data.

MASC 359. International Media Coverage: The Middle East. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 101 or MASC 151 with a minimum grade of C. This interdisciplinary course explores the media's role in covering cultural, political, religious and other issues in the Middle East. Students will examine the role and impact of the media in both the United States and Middle East in shaping global and regional public opinion. Using webcam and online technology, VCU students will discuss cross-cultural perspectives with students from the other U.S. universities and universities in the Middle East. Crosslisted as: WRLD 359.

MASC 363. Introduction to Broadcast Writing. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 with a minimum grade of C. Corequisite: MASC 367. Students will concentrate on developing news writing and reporting skills for television and radio. Course work will include weekly writing assignments and the production of broadcast-quality radio and television stories. Knowledge of current events is essential.

MASC 367. Audio and Video Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 with a minimum grade of C. Corequisite: MASC 363. Open to mass communications majors only. Focuses on the purpose, function and execution of basic techniques of audio and video field and studio production operations, especially as they relate to news. Emphasizes the production of broadcast-quality media content. Fieldwork production, remote production and live production, along with audio and video recording and editing, are covered.

MASC 380. History of Advertising. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 or 204 with a minimum grade of C. A foundation survey, from prehistoric to present day. What is advertising? How did it get to be that way and what might it become? Advertising's place in society through several eras, with emphasis on U.S. advertising history, but attention also paid to the role of advertising in other countries. An overview of the creation of the ad agency, a summary of its parts, an explanation of its workings and its place in society. Understanding advertising as practiced from various viewpoints including the agency, public, clients and social and political groups.

MASC 381. Great Advertising. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 380 minimum grade of C. Explores the practitioner-oriented approach to the creation, preparation and evaluation of advertising, branding and communications. Views great advertising from the perspective of integrated marketing communication and utilizes case studies of advertising and branding campaigns for some of the world's best-known brands.

MASC 382. Acumen. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 380 minimum grade of C. Focuses on excelling in the business aspects of advertising, branding and communications. To understand an advertising client's business needs, one must understand how the client does business. Students will learn about advertising from within the context of marketing, business and commerce.

MASC 392. Perspicuousness. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 204 with a minimum grade of C and UNIV 200 or HONR 200 with a minimum grade of C. Intensive practice in choosing the right word for the right occasion. Study of the different types of advertising copy used by both local and national advertisers. Focuses on creative thinking and inspired writing for advertising, branding and communications.

MASC 393. Creativity for Television. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 380 minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Learn the process of developing professional-level television advertising with a concentration in creative thinking and solutions. Students create TV commercials with attention to scripts, storyboards, talent, visual composition, editing, music, sound effects and direction.

MASC 394. Imagination. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 300 with a minimum grade of C. Study of art direction: practice in visualizing and utilizing media space aesthetically. Students complete assignments each week, ranging from traditional advertising to alternative media venues. Results are presented in front of the class for critique by faculty and fellow students.

MASC 396. Mobile and Social Media Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 303 with minimum grade of C. Integrates journalism skills and concepts from previous writing and reporting classes and adapts them to mobile and social media. Students work in a newsroom environment to utilize mobile devices and social media platforms to identify compelling story ideas, effectively break news and report on important news events and issues while applying theories and concepts of social networking to journalism. Students explore emerging technologies, develop their own professional social media portfolios and build digital communities.

MASC 397. Ubiquity. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 204 minimum grade of C. Using media to help achieve the client's ad objective. An intensive problem-based course on using mass, personal and social media to engage the consumer, to help communicate the brand's message and to add impact to a communications campaign. Students will study media planning and buying of all types of media (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, outdoor, online and nontraditional).

MASC 398. Awareness. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 204 with a minimum grade of C. Understanding what advertisers can look for in their research and how they use research to connect with consumers. Through this intensive research practicum focused on account planning, students will learn to research consumers, competition and brands. Students will use quantitative (such as online surveys) and qualitative (such as focus groups, panel studies, one-on-one interviews) methods to research consumers and target audiences. Students will conduct competitive market research on brands.

MASC 399. Empathy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 204 with a minimum grade of C. Focuses on managing client accounts, team management, group dynamics, negotiating and presentation skills. Students learn how to persuade through understanding of others, including how to make smarter decisions, spark innovation and solve problems more quickly, and how to create a culture of candor, trust, resilience and accountability in clients and in coworkers.

MASC 403. Advanced Reporting. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 303 minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Capstone course for journalism/print-online concentration. Intensive study of the techniques of reporting meetings and news of public affairs. Attention will be paid to covering governmental agencies at all levels. Instruction in newspaper editing included. Quality of writing will be a paramount and continual consideration. Emphasis on fast-paced deadlines. This course may not be taken simultaneously with MASC 404, MASC 475 or MASC 496 without permission from the instructor.

MASC 404. Specialized Project Reporting. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 303 with a minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Capstone course for journalism/print-online concentration. Provides news beat experience for students reporting on complex issues facing the public in the urban community. Emphasis also on editing, team reporting, in-depth research and interviewing techniques, and use of public records. This course may not be taken simultaneously with MASC 403, MASC 475 or MASC 496 without permission from the instructor.

MASC 408. Communications Ethics and Law. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 or 204 with a minimum grade of C. Study of ethical and legal issues affecting the practice of journalism and public relations. Examination and analysis of contemporary issues and problems in conventional and new media. The philosophical foundation and principles of ethical decision-making are explored. Critical and unresolved issues are discussed within the legal and ethical framework of modern mass media practice.

MASC 409. Truth and Honor. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 204 minimum grade of C and 380 minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. A survey of laws pertaining to the creation of advertising, such as trademark and copyright, and to the effects of advertising in the culture. A discussion of ethical questions pertaining to persuasion, communication and the effects of advertising in the culture.

MASC 415. Advanced Video Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 363 and 367, both with minimum grades of C. Corequisite: MASC 460. Students learn advanced field shooting and editing techniques as well as the inner workings of the television studio, including studio camera operation, advanced audio and video editing, visual storytelling, and advanced camera techniques.

MASC 423. Tourism and Hospitality Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 and MASC 210, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment restricted to public relations students. Examines the role and practice of public relations in the tourism and hospitality industries. Students will learn how to use public relations strategies and tactics to stimulate interest among travelers in destinations and specific activities. Emphasis on media relations, special events, sponsorships/partnerships and social media.

MASC 424. Sports and Entertainment Public Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 and MASC 210, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment restricted to public relations students. Examines the role and practice of public relations in the sports and entertainment industries. Students will learn the role of public relations in managing relationships with the news media, fans and fan groups, and other key audiences. Focus on media relations, social media, sponsorships/partnerships, promotions and community relations.

MASC 425. Public Relations Research Methods. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: STAT 208 or STAT 210; MASC 335, MASC 336, MASC 337 and MASC 338, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. An introduction to the role of research in public relations, with primary emphasis on content analysis, focus group, survey and communication audit methods, and the evaluation of quantitative research data.

MASC 426. Influencer Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 333 and MASC 336, each with minimum grade of C for public relations students; MASC 392 or MASC 398 with a minimum grade of C for advertising students. Enrollment is restricted to public relations and advertising students. Explores the evolution and impact of online influencers such as bloggers, vloggers, reviewers and critics and their ability to affect audience decision-making. Presents strategies and best practices for identifying and cultivating strategic relationships with these influencers, as well as how to apply their influence to a larger communication strategy. Students will learn to leverage the influencer framework to generate better content and more subscribers for clients and organizations.

MASC 433. Special Events. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 and MASC 210, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment restricted to public relations students only. Students learn the theory and organizational strategies of special events as a function of public relations. Topics include client consulting, objective setting, budgeting, sponsorships, vendor negotiations and follow-up procedures.

MASC 435. Crisis Communication. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 333, MASC 334 and MASC 337, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Students learn techniques for dealing with sudden and unexpected situations that have a negative impact on organizations and their images to key constituencies. Through case studies and crisis simulation exercises, students develop strategic solutions for crisis situations. Students are provided with the insights, confidence and practical expertise needed to manage the consequences of a wide range of possible crises in ways that maintain, or even enhance, their employer's reputation.

MASC 438. Organizational Communications. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 425 with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment restricted to public relations students only. Focuses on the tools to communicate with employees, volunteers and special organizational internal publics, and how those internal messages are used to achieve the goals and objectives of organizations. Students learn the theories of organizational communication and the techniques used to conduct an internal audit of the communication climate in an organization.

MASC 439. Agency. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 333, MASC 335, MASC 336, MASC 337, MASC 338 and MASC 425, each with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Fast-paced, professionally driven course where students take the lead to fulfill the public relations needs of clients in the community. Working from the first class through the end of the semester, students apply theoretical and practical skillsets learned in the program to perform research, strategic plan development, tactical design and execution. Assesses students' theoretical and practical learning achieved in the program as a capstone course concluding with a final presentation for critical feedback by the client(s) and other industry professionals.

MASC 450. Style. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3-3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 392 and 394, both with a minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. An advanced, intensive study of advertising style, forming one's own sense of style and the creative process. Emphasizing strategic and creative development of advertising campaigns. Students will conceptualize advertising campaigns, execute digitally produced, comprehensive advertisements and campaign materials, and assemble a final portfolio. Culminates in a formal portfolio review with professionals from the advertising industry.

MASC 451. Invention. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 450 with a minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. An advanced, intensive study of inventiveness in the creative process. Emphasis on strategic and creative development of advertising campaigns that builds on what students learned about advertising style in MASC 450. Prepares students for post-graduate work or study. Students will conceptualize and produce advertising campaigns and assemble a final portfolio. Culminates in a formal portfolio review with professionals from the advertising industry.

MASC 459. Judgment. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 398 and 399 and 6 additional credits of MASC electives, all with minimum grades of C. For mass communications majors only. Application and demonstration of inspiration, innovation, advertising knowledge and skills. Designed to help students in the strategic concentration compile a strong, comprehensive body of work used in brand communications. Students will develop competence in evaluating communication concepts, market situations and client and agency concerns.

MASC 460. Advanced Television Newsgathering. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 363 and 367, both with minimum grade of C. Corequisite: MASC 415. Television news practicum. Using the university and the city of Richmond as their classroom, students will report, write and produce television and multimedia news stories. Electronic newsgathering and editing equipment will be utilized to create professional-caliber projects.

MASC 461. The Documentary. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 303, 415 and 460, each with minimum grade of C. An examination of documentary concepts through analysis of radio, television and film documentaries. The course will center on the development, writing and production of a documentary in the medium (audio or video) of the student's choice.

MASC 462. Photojournalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 363 minimum grade of C and 367 minimum grade of C. Examination of theoretical, technical and practical use of photography in communications and reporting, along with theories and legal guidelines of photojournalism. Training in news photography (both still and video) and its application in converged media. Students must have their own manually operable 35 mm film or digital (minimum 3.2 megapixels) single lens reflex cameras with at least a 50 mm lens or a zoom lens capable of 50 mm shooting. Students will use departmental video cameras.

MASC 463. Advanced Radio Newsgathering. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 363 minimum grade of C and 367 minimum grade of C. Radio practicum. Using the university and city of Richmond as their classroom, students will report, write and produce radio news stories. Studio and remote equipment will be utilized to create professional-caliber projects.

MASC 465. Newscasting. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 laboratory hours. 3 credits. May be repeated once for a total of 6 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 303, 415 and 460, each with minimum grade of C. Concentrates on developing on-air skills in radio and television studio and field situations. Emphasizes journalistic principles in delivery of news, public affairs, editorial and interviews. Stresses grammar, diction and broadcast writing.

MASC 466. Television Studio Production. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 laboratory hours. 3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 or 204 with minimum grade of C. Instruction and practice in basic television and studio production. Supports the production of television broadcast journalism programming by broadcast journalism students and explores standards, contemporary technologies and best-practices techniques for modern studio video production.

MASC 467. Nonprofit Project Development. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 210 with a minimum grade of C or MASC 380 with a minimum grade of C. Students will be selected to work with area nonprofit clients to create and produce a wide variety of advertising and promotional materials. Students will develop strategy, write creative briefs, recruit teams to work with them during CreateAthon onCampus (a 24-hour creative event held during Spring Break), present work to clients and follow any deliverables through production. Strong emphasis on leadership and a commitment to working with nonprofits.

MASC 474. Diversity in the Media. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 101 with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment restricted to mass communications majors and media studies minors. Examines historical and contemporary issues associated with the presence and portrayal of selected groups in/by the media in the United States. Examines groups based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion and other characteristics. Issues related to diversity and diversity awareness in advertising, journalism and public relations are also explored.

MASC 475. Capital News Service. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 303 minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Capstone course for journalism/print-online concentration. Advanced journalism students cover state government and politics, including the Virginia General Assembly, the governor, regulatory agencies and elections. Students produce content for publication by newspapers and other news outlets and for social media. Strong emphasis on fast-paced deadlines. This course may not be taken simultaneously with MASC 403, MASC 404 or MASC 496 without permission from the instructor.

MASC 480. Touch. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 398 minimum grade of C and 399 minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Designing advertising strategies that touch the target audience and engage them in the brand. Students learn to understand the research, the consumer, the competition and the client's brand so that they can develop a strong communication strategy. This is an advanced study of the strategic side of advertising.

MASC 481. Completeness. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: creative advertising concentration: MASC 392 and 394, both with minimum grade of C; strategic advertising concentration: MASC 398 and 399, both with minimum grade of C. For mass communications majors only. Intensive study in the planning and preparation of advertising campaigns. Students develop complete advertising plans including research, media and creative strategies, sales promotion plans and merchandising plans.

MASC 485. Web Site Design. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 300, 301 or 334 with a minimum grade of C. Students will receive an introduction to the processes, principles and tools of website design, development and production. The course will focus on the development of strong interactive interfaces, animation, graphic images, text, and functional site design and organization. In this hands-on, computer-based course, students will design and develop a comprehensive site and launch it to the Internet. Increasing the students' knowledge of design principles and technical skills with Web development tools will be emphasized.

MASC 488. Strategic Health Communication. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 336 with a minimum grade of C. Enrollment is restricted to public relations students. Covers the design, implementation and evaluation of health-focused media campaigns, and examines behavioral theories and research on media influences with respect to both beneficial and harmful effects on well-being. Students will focus on effective message design as well as responding to emerging viral conversations, translating health communication language into language accessible for the public and designing a digital media-based health communication campaign for an actual client.

MASC 491. Topics in Communications. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1, 2 or 3 credits per semester. May be repeated with different topics for a maximum of 9 credits. Prerequisite: MASC 203 or 204, either with a minimum grade of C. An intensive study of a specialized field of mass communications.

MASC 492. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. Variable credit. Maximum of 3 credits per semester; maximum total of 6 credits for all independent study courses. Prerequisite: MASC 203 or 204 with a minimum grade of C. The course is designed for students who wish to study subject matter not offered elsewhere in the mass communications' curriculum.

MASC 493. Fieldwork/Internship. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1, 2 or 3 credits per semester. May be repeated with different topics; maximum total of 6 credits may be applied toward graduation. Prerequisites: MASC 203 or 204, either with a minimum grade of C, and permission of internship coordinator. Selected students will receive on-the-job training under the supervision of an instructor and the employer. Internships are available in newspapers, magazines, public relations, advertising, radio and television.

MASC 496. Mobile and Social Media Journalism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 303, 363 and 367, each with minimum grade of C. Capstone course for print-online journalism students. Integrates journalism skills and concepts from previous writing and reporting classes and adapts them to mobile and social media. Students work in a newsroom environment to utilize mobile devices and social media platforms to identify compelling story ideas, effectively break news and report on important news events and issues while applying theories and concepts of online social networking to journalism. Students develop their own professional social media portfolios and build online communities. This course may not be taken simultaneously with MASC 403, MASC 404 or MASC 475 without permission from the instructor.

MASC 499. Career Minded. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: MASC 398 and MASC 399, each with a minimum grade of C; or MASC 392 and MASC 394, each with a minimum grade of C. Study of career options and expectations. Development of career skills such as networking, interviewing and salary negotiations. Creation of career materials such as career plan and resume.