Corporate and Public Communication
Master’s (MS or MA) Program Graduate
Student Handbook

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This document is intended as a brief overview of the facilities, academic programs, and
administrative procedures for graduate students affiliated with the Corporate and Public
Communication master’s program, within the College of Applied Studies at Florida State
University Panama City. More detail can be found by clicking on the links provided
throughout the document. Important sources of information for graduate students include
the FSU Graduate School and, in particular, the information for new students, which
includes a campus-wide Graduate Handbook. Other key sources include the FSU Graduate
About the Corporate and Public Communication Program

CPC is located in the College of Applied Studies, on the FSU Panama City Campus of Florida State University. The Corporate and Public Communication program offers a Master of Science and Master of Arts degree. The College of Applied Studies offers a terminal master's degree for graduate students currently employed in or seeking professional positions emphasizing public affairs, public information, and public issues management within business, government, not-for-profit organizations, or educational institutions. By the conclusion of the master’s program, students will be competent in select areas of organizational communication. Students may also combine the bachelor program in Professional Communication with the graduate degree.

The goals of the CPC program include:

- Preparing students for professional careers within business, government, not-for-profit organizations or educational institutions
- Providing students with experience in making formal communication presentations
- Helping students develop quantitative and qualitative skills in organizational communication contexts and
- Equipping students with basic knowledge of communication theories with particular emphasis on those that apply to corporate and public affairs, public information, and issue management

The skills to be developed include:

- The ability to successfully plan and implement marketing, advertising or public relations campaigns
- The ability to successfully resolve conflicts
- The ability to successfully manage individuals and crises
- The ability to find in any situation the available means of persuasion
- The ability to analyze the content of various messages
- The ability to perform computer-mediated, social scientific communication research

Location and Facilities

CPC is located in the Holley Academic Center on the FSU Panama City Campus in Panama City, Florida. The physical space includes offices for core faculty and adjuncts, along with student study areas, student veterans lounge/study area, computer labs & a library learning center. The FSU Panama City campus also offers 9 graduate and 20 undergraduate degree programs.
Admissions

Applicants to the MS or MA CPC program apply online through the FSU Graduate Application Portal. Admission decisions are made by the Professional Communication Faculty. Questions concerning the application and admissions process should be sent to the Academic Program Specialist, Cristina Doan at cdoan@pc.fsu.edu or 850-770-2148 or Angie Sexton at asexton@pc.fsu.edu or 850-770-2178.

Application Requirements

All applicants for the Corporate and Public Communication master’s program must meet both university and departmental requirements.

Florida State University Graduate Admission Requirements

1. Complete and submit the University Admissions Office's Online Application Form.
2. Pay a non-refundable application fee of $30. Application packets will not be reviewed until the fee has been paid.
3. Submit a completed Residency Affidavit. All applicants must submit this form, which is completed online.
4. Arrange for an official transcript from each college or university attended to be sent to the Office of Admissions. Transcripts may be sent digitally but must come directly from the institutions attended. An unofficial transcript may be uploaded for the College of Applied Studies for review.
5. Take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and request scores to be sent to FSU. You must take the new GRE test, which contains verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing. Go to the Educational Testing Service Web site for more information.

The Corporate and Public Communication Program provides a GRE waiver for applicants that meet requirements. Use the provided link below in the program requirements for the waiver request form.

THE GRE IS NOT REQUIRED FOR SUMMER 2022, FALL 2022, AND SPRING 2023 ADMISSION. THIS IS A TEMPORARY GENERAL UNIVERSITY WAIVER DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC. WHILE THE GRE IS OPTIONAL DUE TO COVID, IT IS PREFERRED THAT CANDIDATES STILL SUBMIT THEIR GRE SCORES.

Corporate and Public Communication Graduate Admission Requirements

In addition to the university requirements, CPC program applicants must meet the program requirements listed below. A separate program application is not required. The university application specifies the program to which you are applying. Documents are submitted with your online university application.
FSU and the Corporate and Public Communication program applies a holistic approach to the application review process. Consideration is given to all application components including GPA, GRE scores, personal statement, letters of recommendation, writing sample, related experiences, and record of preparation.

Applicants that meet the following requirements will be considered for the program but are not guaranteed admission. Admission decisions will be provided through the FSU application portal or by notification from the graduate program faculty or staff.

1. A minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) undergraduate academic record from accredited universities.
2. Official Verbal and Quantitative GRE scores. A typical combined (verbal and quantitative) score for CPC applicants is at least a 285. When registering for the GRE, you must select a location code to send the scores. This code is 5219.
3. In your FSU application, applicants should submit a self-authored, original, personal statement addressing their interest and fit for this program. This statement will be evaluated for its style, clarity of purpose, organization, grammar, and development of ideas.
   In the personal statement, all applicants should ensure an answer to at least these questions:
   - Why have you chosen to apply to this master's program?
   - What are your career goals and how does this program help you meet them?
   - Describe your academic and applied professional/organizational experiences that make you a strong candidate for this program (make sure to address both academic and applied experiences)
   - What do you plan to do upon graduation to utilize this degree in your career?
   *Personal statements should be well-proofread, answer all questions above, be 2-3 pages in length, and include double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font
4. A resume or curriculum vitae, which is carefully proofread, professional in nature, and outlines all related academic and professional experiences relevant to this program.
5. A writing sample. Applicants must submit/upload a writing sample to demonstrate your writing ability to the admission committee.
   This writing sample should be an original, self-authored 5-10 page paper. Topics can vary and the paper will be evaluated for clarity of expression, writing style, use of format, and potential for graduate-level writing. Examples can include a research paper from an undergraduate course (written by the applicant), professional report, executive summary as part of applied experience, project proposals, or other example of writing that applicants feel demonstrate their writing potential for success in graduate school.
   *We prefer this sample to be a sole-authored sample by the applicant, if an applicant
wants to submit a co-authored sample, please include a description of your contributions to the sample.

GRE Waiver – Corporate and Public Communication

To be considered for a GRE Waiver you must complete the form and provide the requested supporting documentation using our online portal.

Degree Options and Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of thirty-three (33) course hours, of which students must complete 30 hours of graduate-level coursework (5000 level and above). Twenty-seven (27) hours must be letter-graded.

Students who have completed insufficient course work in Communication at the undergraduate level (e.g. students who did not major in a communication-related area) may be required to take up to nine additional hours of letter-graded undergraduate course work as determined by their graduate advisors. Note: These additional hours will not count toward completion of the thirty-three (33) graduate-level semester hours.

Master of Science (MS) in Corporate and Public Communication

This program requires a minimum of thirty-three (33) hours of coursework plus a comprehensive exam. It is possible to complete the program in as few as two years if some coursework is completed during summer sessions. All courses must be passed with a “B-” grade or better and students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout enrollment in the program. The program requires students to take:

6 credit Hours – Theory and Principles

Required
- COM 5409 (3) Burke & Communication Theory: This course provides an introduction to the communication theory of Kenneth Burke and compares and contrasts that with other major rhetorical and communication theorists and shows students how the various theories can be applied to corporate and public communication situations.

At least one of the following:
- COM 6403r (3) Advanced Problems: Integrated Marketing Communication: May be repeated to a maximum of eight semester hours; duplicate registration allowed. School approval required.
• MMC 5600 (3) Mass Communication Theory and Effects: This course is an analysis of historical and current theories of mass communication with an emphasis on media effects.
• SPC 5545 (3) Studies in Persuasion: This course involves lecture, readings, and discussion of human behavior theories as applied to persuasive communication.

6 credit Hours – Research and Methods
Required
• COM 5127 (3) Assessing Organizational Communication: This course introduces students to the methods of assessing organizational communication including survey, feedback methodology, assessment, and related issues in applied research.
• COM 5316 (3) Statistical Methods in Communication Research: This course examines statistical methodologies for communication research.

9 Credit Hours – Applications
Required
• COM 5526 (3) Marketing Communication Management: This course addresses the principles and procedures for communications planning for marketing and culminates in the development of an integrated marketing plan for e-business.
• SPC 5442 (3) Group Dynamics and Leadership: This course is a review of important concepts and research in group processes and group leadership.
At least one of the following:
• SPC 6920r (3) Colloquium: Training and Consulting: This course is a survey of issues of immediate interest and consequence to the area of speech communication. May be repeated to a maximum of nine semester hours; duplicate registration allowed.
• COM 5469 (3) Communication Planning & Dispute: Corequisite: COM 4465. This course introduces students to the theory and practice of alternative dispute resolution.

12 Credit Hours - Approved Communication and outside courses (no more than 2 classes outside of the Communication major may be taken)

0 Credit Hours – Comprehensive Examination (Students registered for zero semester hour graduate level courses and additional courses will not be charged for a zero-credit hour course.)
When registering for a zero-credit hour course only, the student will be charged for one semester at the Florida Resident tuition-rate of the course level.

Required

- COM 8966r (0) Master’s Comprehensive Examination: (Pass/Fail grade only)

Master of Arts (MA) in Corporate and Public Communication

This program requires the same minimum thirty-three (33) hours and grade point average requirements as the Master of Science. However, these students must complete six (6) or more semester hours of graduate credit in humanities courses. They must also demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language, which may be accomplished in any of the following ways:

- Certification of proficiency by the appropriate FSU language department
- Twelve (12) semester hours in a foreign language in a college or university with an earned average of 3.0 in those courses
- Four (4) years of a single language in high school

Program of Study Worksheet

This worksheet is to be completed by the student and the advisory committee prior to the end of the first semester of graduate work. After all signatures are obtained, a digital copy will be provided to the student to retain for reference.

Graduate Advisor

Dr. Brian Parker & Cristina Doan serve as the general Graduate Advisors to all students admitted to the MS or MA CPC program. CPC students should have at least one advising meeting each semester. Enrolled students should take courses recommended by the Graduate Advisor, to ensure timely completion of their degree requirements.

Policies and Procedures on Exemption

Students who have previously taken and passed graduate-level courses required by the CPC program with a grade of B or better, or equivalent courses, are allowed to substitute other courses to meet program requirements. It is the intent of this provision to enable students to acquire more advanced training than would ordinarily be required as part of the CPC degree. Permission must be given by the Graduate Advisor, subject to the advise of faculty.

Leave of Absence Policy

Under special circumstances, graduate students may apply for a leave of absence from the university for a specific period of up to three consecutive semesters (includes summer term). The circumstances justifying a leave include, but are not limited to: personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in immediate family, or
completion of an off-campus internship. The student must provide appropriate documentation and a rationale for the leave request. Students cannot be on leave during their semester of graduation and must be registered for a minimum of two hours that semester. The university’s leave of absence policy may be found in its entirety in the university’s Graduate Bulletin found [here](#). Please consult with your graduate advisor Dr. Brian Parker ([bparker@pc.fsu.edu](mailto:bparker@pc.fsu.edu)) or Cristina Doan ([cdoan@fsu.edu](mailto:cdoan@fsu.edu)) prior to applying for a Leave of Absence.

**Fees and Course Loads**

For a detailed official description of graduate tuition rates, student fees, and related costs, consult FSU PC Tuition and Fees [webpage](#). Students who are not Florida residents may qualify for in-state tuition through the [Academic Common Market](#)(ACM). ACM eligibility must be established prior to matriculation.

**Professional Conduct and Academic Integrity**

All students affiliated with CPC program in any capacity are expected to demonstrate the highest professional standards in terms of personal behavior and ethics. Investigation and resolution of alleged violations of the FSU [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Code](#) are coordinated through the [FSU PC Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). CPC program students who have been accused of conduct or honor code violations should alert the CPC program advisors.

**Appeals Process**

The CPC program values collegial governance based on best professional practices. All actions or decisions of the faculty may be appealed to the Dean of the College of Applied Studies. Specific University procedures exist for grade appeals and other academic grievances, including Academic Honor Code violations. See [Regulations and Procedures](#) section of the Academic General Bulletin or the website of the [FSU PC Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) for details.

**Resources for Graduate Students**

**Funded Awards and Recognition**

Through the generosity of alumni, friends and faculty, CPC students may benefit from the following awards located [here](#). For details on funding and awards offered through The Graduate School, please visit the Funding & Awards [webpage](#).