School of Communication and Journalism (SoCJ)

Dean
Laura Lindenfeld, PhD

Graduate Program Director
Brenda Hoffman, PhD

Graduate Program Coordinator
Stefanie Ambrosio-Mullady, MA

Degrees Awarded
MS in Science Communication; Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication

Prospective and current students, please email us for additional information and/or questions at:
socj_grad@stonybrook.edu

Website
https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/journalism/graduate-students/science-communication-masters.php

Application
https://graduateadmissions.stonybrook.edu/apply/

Program Description
The Master of Science in Science Communication prepares students to engage in and advocate for valid, reliable public discourse about science, through communication that helps others engage with science in new and meaningful ways. This program takes a modern approach to communication, combining a traditional social science theory and research foundation, with practical, hands-on training to help students become effective boundary spanners between science and society. As part of their coursework, students will experience unique training in improvisation to help them embrace flexibility while maintaining an appropriate level of preparation, offering students lifelong skills that will prepare them to remain nimble in an everchanging world around them. Students will learn to:

• Share scientific discoveries in ways that resonate with diverse audiences
• Conduct and evaluate empirical, social science research
• Design targeted communication campaigns that respond to the needs, values, and cultures of an audience
• Recognize their own biases and understand how their experiences shape how they see and interact with individuals and societies
• Support diversity and inclusion in written and verbal communication
• Apply contemporary legal and ethical practices in face-to-face and digital communication
• Contribute to high-quality, professional projects that build bridges between science and society

Designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population, this program welcomes students from a variety of educational and professional backgrounds including but not limited to, STEM, health sciences, and/or the social sciences and humanities. This program is best suited for students interested in pursuing careers in professional science communication, that seek to bring science out of labs and libraries and into the world. Students with a background in science will be prepared to share their own scientific discoveries, while those with little or no scientific experience will learn to collaborate with experts to help them share scientific information with accuracy and relevancy. This is a fully-online degree program, which allows students to study from any location on a full-time or part-time basis.

The Master of Science in Science Communication is designed to meet programmatic outcomes that are outlined in the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)’s professional values and competencies. For more information about ACEJMC competencies, please visit their website at http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/

Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication

Designed for graduate students enrolled in STEM and health-sciences programs at Stony Brook University, the 12-credit Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication complements ongoing graduate degree work. Students receive hands-on skills training to combine their deep subject-matter knowledge with evidence-based communication practices, preparing them to engage in audience-centered science communication that is meaningful, relatable, and upholds scientific integrity. Graduates of this certificate will be prepared to share scientific discoveries in ways that resonate with diverse audiences, design targeted messaging that responds to the needs, values, and cultures of an audience, and support diversity and inclusion in their written and verbal communication.

The certificate is offered in collaboration with the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, one of the nation’s leading science communication training and research organizations in the country. Students will work with an interdisciplinary team of faculty scholars and practitioners to explore the science behind effective communication, and hone their communication skills with a variety of hands-on experiences.

Admission Requirements for the MS in Science Communication

Stony Brook University Graduate Bulletin: www.stonybrook.edu/gradbulletin
Application Deadlines

Note: Applications accepted for fall admission only.

Early Decision and International Applicants: March 1
Regular Application Deadline (Domestic Applicants Only): April 15

Applicants must submit the following:

1. CV or Resume
2. Personal statement (500 words): In a short essay, applicants should describe why science communication is important to them, their reason(s) for applying to program, and how they feel as though a degree in science communication will advance their future career goals.
3. Three letters of recommendation: We are interested in hearing from three different recommenders who can comment on the applicant’s academic strengths, communication or professional skills (including oral, written, and/or multimedia), and/or their potential for success in this graduate program.
4. Official transcripts: Applicants must demonstrate a 3.0 cumulative grade point average and a completed Bachelor’s degree.
5. Two writing samples: Students may elect to submit two academic/professional writing samples OR one academic/professional writing sample and one creative work. Academic writing samples may include but are not limited to course papers, academic publications, or published news pieces. Creative works may include but are not limited to video recorded live broadcasts, professional social media campaigns, or recorded podcast content.
6. Language proficiency scores (international applicants). Please refer to the most up to date requirements found in the Graduate Bulletin.
7. GRE scores are optional.

Admission Requirements for the Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication

Application Deadlines

Note: To apply, students must be enrolled in a graduate program at Stony Brook University. Students must enroll in the certificate program no later than the second to last semester in their primary program. Students may not enroll in their final semester.

February 1: Fall Admission
September 1: Spring Admission

Applicant Information:

1. To apply, students must be enrolled in a graduate program at Stony Brook University. Students must enroll in the certificate program no later than the second to last semester in their primary program. Students may not enroll in their final semester.
2. Before completing the application, students should have completed letters of approval from both their primary program’s director and the certificate program’s director. The application requires that both documents be uploaded with the application. To obtain the approval letter from the Science Communication certificate program’s director, please email socj_grad@stonybrook.edu with your name, ID number, and semester you plan to start the certificate program.
3. Students ready to apply can submit their applications on the graduate school’s website. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Bg-VhAiUXH2TEBK9pmFIT3T0kmEIjx9ZmN7iCxVReQ/viewform?edit_requested=true

Facilities

The School of Communication and Journalism maintains a technologically advanced, $1.3 million, bi-level Newsroom. It is located in Melville Library, and is equipped with 38 workstations, a collaborative learning system that allows any piece of work to be displayed simultaneously on any or all desktops, and a large projection screen. Each workstation has two displays and industry standard software.

The School of Communication and Journalism also has a fully equipped HD broadcast studio, with multiple studio cameras, teleprompters, an anchor desk, an interview set, chroma key green-screen set and a control room.

Mobile equipment available for use by journalism students in the field includes Padcasters to broadcast live remotely, JVC 4K video cameras, Nikon D610 and D7500 DSLR video/still cameras SB700 Speedlights and digital audio recorders. Students can collaborate on projects between the Newsroom and studio spaces using state-of-the-art production software. The broadcast studio includes a podcasting studio, equipped with a mixing board and four professional-level microphones.

Requirements for the MS in Science Communication

The 33-credit Master of Science in Science Communication consists of six required courses (18 credits) and five elective courses (15 credits). Students will work closely with the graduate program director and faculty advisors each semester to develop an individualized plan of study that best fits their interests and career goals. Students may elect to enroll part-time or full-time. Full-time graduate work is defined as a minimum of 9 credits per semester. All courses are offered in an online format.
REQUIRED COURSES (18 CREDITS)

COM 516: Communication Research Methods
COM 526: Building and Assessing Communication Strategies
COM 565: Foundations of Science Communication
COM 577: Communication Law and Ethics
COM 583: Principles of Inclusive Engagement
COM 699: Master’s Project in Science Communication

ELECTIVE COURSES (15 CREDITS)

COM 517: Advanced Communication Research Methods
COM 522: Communicating Science to Policy Makers
COM 534: Communicating Science Using Digital Media
JRN 545: Mobile Podcasting
COM 550: Climate Communication
COM 575: Special Topics in Science Communication
COM 585: Communicating Science and Health Risks to the Public
COM 587: Independent Study
COM 588: Graduate Internship
COM 605: Environmental Communication

Note: Science Communication students may complete select JRN courses for elective credit, with departmental approval.

Requirements for the Concentration in Climate Communication

The concentration in Climate Communication offers students interested in studying climate change a designated set of courses that focus specifically on climate change research and practice. Students have the option to take up to two courses in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SoMAS). Students that elect to declare a concentration in Climate communication will complete the following requirements for the Master of Science in Science Communication.

REQUIRED COURSES (27 CREDITS)

COM 516: Communication Research Methods
COM 526: Building and Assessing Communication Strategies
COM 550: Climate Communication
COM 565: Foundations of Science Communication
COM 577: Communication Law and Ethics
COM 583: Principles of Inclusive Engagement
COM 585: Communicating Science and Health Risks to the Public
COM 605: Environmental Communication
COM 699: Master’s Project in Science Communication

Elective Courses (6 credits)

Select two courses from the following list:

COM 522: Communicating Science to Policy Makers
MAR 514: Environmental Management
MAR 525: Environment and Public Health
MAR 534: Seminar in Decision Support for Climate Change Solutions
MAR 568: Practical Skills for Scientists

Requirements for the Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication

The 12-credit Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication consists of two required courses (6 credits) and two elective courses (6 credits). Students will work closely with the graduate program director and faculty advisors each semester to develop an individualized plan of study that best fits their interests and career goals.

REQUIRED COURSES (6 CREDITS)

COM 565: Foundations of Science Communication
COM 599: Project Work in Science Communication

ELECTIVE COURSES (6 CREDITS)

COM 522: Communicating Science to Policy Makers
COM 534: Communicating Science Using Digital Media
JRN 545: Mobile Podcasting
COM 550: Climate Communication
COM 575: Special Topics in Science Communication
COM 583: Principles of Inclusive Engagement
COM 585: Communicating Science and Health Risks to the Public
COM 605: Environmental Communication

Note: Certificate students may complete select COM and JRN courses not listed here for elective credit, with departmental approval.

Faculty

Please see the School of Communication and Journalism faculty directory: https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/journalism/about/fac-staff.php#/faculty

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.