Stony Brook University
School of Communication and Journalism

Graduate Course Offerings
Summer/Fall 2025

Summer 2025

COM 534 – COMMUNICATING SCIENCE USING DIGITAL MEDIA
Science Communication MS and AGC Elective Option; Journalism MS Elective Option; 3 Credits

An exploration into using digital platforms to communicate science to public audiences. Science and health information increasingly travels by digital media, as new ways emerge for scientists, health care professionals, and others to communicate directly with the public, without the intermediaries of press or public relations. Students will learn to be effective and engaged online communicators, to help science reach broader audiences in meaningful ways. This course offers a practical, hands-on approach to using digital "tools of the trade" such as blogs, videos, audio/podcasts, and social media platforms. Students will also learn about the great potential and perils of social media, as they learn to think critically about the broader issues surrounding this medium.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from July 16th to August 16th, 6:00 PM to 8:15 PM EST.

Fall 2025

COM 500 – THEORIES OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION
Science Communication MS Requirement; 3 Credits

A foundational course in the theoretical underpinnings and empirical science of science communication. Students will learn about evidence-based approaches to communicate scientific concepts and data accurately and effectively to diverse audiences. This course will provide students with a sense of how science communication fits into the larger communication discipline, and the important questions being asked today in science communication research. Students will hone their written science communication skills by evaluating existing science communication literature and proposing a novel project idea rooted in the evidence-based approaches discussed in the class.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Wednesdays from 6:30 PM to 9:20 PM EST.

COM 516 – COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS
Science Communication MS Requirement; 3 Credits

Inquiry into social science research that enables students to ask meaningful questions and conduct research to find reliable and valid answers to those questions. Students explore traditional and non-traditional data collection methods, tools for analysis, and current research trends. Students engage in the empirical research process by identifying research questions and hypotheses, reviewing past research, collecting and analyzing data, and evaluating the credibility of published research findings. As part of this course students will identify and delve more deeply into a content area within the Science of Science Communication field to build greater knowledge about how specific areas of

science communication are interpreted, measured, and disseminated. Numerical and statistical concepts to analyze and interpret empirical data will be explored using a commonly used statistical package (e.g., Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS).

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Thursdays from 5:00 PM to 7:50 PM EST.

COM 550 – CLIMATE COMMUNICATION

Science Communication MS and AGC Elective Option; 3 Credits

An introduction and exploration of the communication sub-discipline of climate communication. Students will learn evidence-based approaches to communicating climate change related topics, such as extreme weather and climate mitigation strategies to diverse audiences. Students will consider challenges and potential solutions for more effectively communicating climate science to public audiences, policy makers, journalists, and scientists. Emphasis will be placed on exploring audience-centered messaging for all communication modalities.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Tuesdays from 2:00 PM to 4;50 PM EST.

COM 565 – FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Science Communication AGC Requirement; 3 Credits

A foundational course in science communication and an introduction to the Alda Method®. Students will learn about evidence-based approaches to communicate scientific concepts and data accurately and effectively to diverse audiences. Through an exploration of science communication literature and applied-improvisational theater exercises, students build communication skills to help them understand, connect, relate, and adapt to various audiences such as peers, professors, employers, policy makers, funders, journalists, and the public. Students hone their written and oral science communication skills by creating, delivering, and evaluating audience-centered messaging.

Section S01: This section meets in-person on Mondays from 2:00 PM to 4:50 PM EST.
Section S02: This section meets in-person on Tuesdays from 9:30 AM to 12:20 PM EST.

COM 577 – Communication Law and Ethics

Science Communication MS and Journalism MS Requirement; 3 Credits

An exploration into the legal and ethical considerations that science communicators, journalists, mass media professionals, and consumers face in the 21st century. Students learn about the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics, the First Amendment Handbook from the Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press, and review case studies and current newsworthy stories to build an analytical model through which they can understand, analyze, and act on relevant legal and ethical issues in public communication settings.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Tuesdays from 6:30 PM to 9:20 PM EST.

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COM 585 – COMMUNICATING SCIENCE AND HEALTH RISKS TO THE PUBLIC

Science Communication MS and AGC Elective Option; Journalism MS Elective Option; 3 Credits

An exploration of risk communication theories and strategies, and their application to effective communication in science, environmental, and public health settings. The processes and effects of persuasive communication as they relate to message framing are also explored. Students will learn to use effective communication to advance individual and community-level decision-making about science and public health issues. Specifically, risk communication through interpersonal, organizational, and mediated channels will be explored, with particular attention paid to message features that are believed to generate predictable effects. Students will explore how communication impacts the public's experience of risk, and practice designing and delivering culturally competent messages about potential science, health, and environmental hazards. This hands-on course provides opportunities to practice designing and delivering a variety of risk messages.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Mondays from 5:00 PM to 7:50 PM EST.

COM 599 – PROJECT WORK IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Science Communication AGC Requirement (Typically completed in last semester); 3 Credits

A culminating experience for students in the Advanced Graduate Certificate in Science Communication. Students work individually or in groups to plan, design, and complete a capstone project rooted in science communication. Projects should allow students to apply what they have learned about science communication to a real-world context. Examples may include but are not limited to competing in science communication competitions, creating podcasts, writing book chapters, recording educational videos, designing a social media campaign, and/or creating outreach opportunities in the community. Students will submit a project proposal and participate in peer workshops sessions to offer and receive feedback on their work throughout the semester. Students will formally present their work to peers, faculty, and members of the campus/community at the conclusion of the course.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Fridays from 11:00 AM to 1:50 PM EST.

COM 699 – MASTER'S PROJECT IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Science Communication MS Requirement (Typically completed in last semester); 3 Credits

A culminating experience for students in the MS in Science Communication. Students will identify and secure a faculty mentor under whom they will work independently to plan, design, and complete a research-based, science communication project. The project should reflect what students have cumulatively learned in the program and respond to the needs of an organization, community, or stakeholder group. Projects may take the form of original research intended for submission to an academic conference or translational research that informs the content development for a specific audience (e.g., educational module, communication campaign, social media strategy, etc.). Each project will have written, visual, and/or interactive components. Students will formally present their work to peers, faculty, and members of the campus/community at the conclusion of the course.

Student and faculty advisor work together to determine meeting schedule.

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JRN 510 – BASIC REPORTING AND WRITING FOR JOURNALISM

Journalism MS Requirement; 3 Credits

An introduction to the basic elements of writing news and feature stories. Students will gain practical experience reporting on campus and community events in the form of breaking-news reports, news features, profiles, and in-depth news stories. Students will learn how to develop story ideas; find, assess, and interview sources; research topics; identify the important elements in a story; and explain information clearly, concisely, and fairly. Students will also explore the role of the press in a free society.

Section S01: This section meets in-person on Wednesdays from 5:00 PM to 7:50 PM EST.

JRN 521 – SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM

Journalism MS Requirement; 3 Credits

An introduction to rigorous, evidence-based reporting on responses to social problems. Students will explore storytelling tools based on the foundations of solutions journalism (e.g., cover a response to a problem and how it happened; provide evidence of impact, consider effectiveness, not just intentions, through qualitative and/or quantitative data; produce insights that can help others respond to the problem; and address limitations or caveats of the response). Students will practice skills developed by the Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) to design narratives around conflict and problem-focused news coverage, and produce high quality solutions journalism and investigative stories, both in multimedia and written form. As a SJN hub institution, students will access resources from and submit stories to the Solutions Story Tracker® to assist in the development of the field.

Section S01: This section meets in-person on Thursdays from 6:30 PM to 9:20 PM EST.

JRN 545 – MOBILE PODCASTING

Journalism MS, Science Communication MS and AGC Elective Option; 3 Credits

An introduction to podcasting using digital tools. Students will learn skills for creating both scripted and unscripted podcasts, and cover topics such as, developing "intros" and "outros," integrating music and sound effects, and promoting and branding podcasts. Students will collaborate to create a jointly produced podcast that is intended for a broadcast or media company, and/or emerging digital platforms.

Section S30: This section meets online synchronously on Mondays from 6:30 PM to 9:20 PM EST.

JRN 600 – MASTER'S PROJECT IN JOURNALISM

Journalism MS Requirement (Typically completed in last semester); 3 Credits

A culminating experience for students in the MS in Journalism. Students will identify and secure a faculty mentor under whom they will work independently to plan, design, and complete a journalistic project of their choice. The project should reflect what students have cumulatively learned in the program and address the needs of an organization, community, or stakeholder group. Each project will

have written, visual, and/or interactive components. Students will formally present their work to peers, faculty, and members of the campus/community at the conclusion of the course.

Student and faculty advisor work together to determine meeting schedule.

JRN 625 – MEDIA REPORTING ON CRIME

Journalism MS Elective Option; 3 Credits

An analysis of how crime is reported in the media, including a deep dive into the stakes and relevant stakeholders involved, challenges, and best practices for how to cover this sensitive but perennially important topic effectively. This class will leverage social science research to help students understand the extent to which media coverage patterns influence public perceptions and policy preferences on crime and criminal justice. Students will learn about existing trends in crime reporting, surveying the empirical literature of how media coverage of crime tends to vary in systematic ways depending on the characteristics of the victim and alleged perpetrator, and/or the nature of the crime. Students will develop core competencies to help them deal with bearing witness to some of the worst acts human beings commit and prepare to interview people at the worst moments of their lives. They will learn to present and describe findings in ways that are accurate and responsible, but also accessible, concise, and compelling for lay audiences. They will also learn to balance retaining access to law enforcement officers, judges, politicians, activists, and other stakeholders while also subjecting their claims to scrutiny and, at times, presenting facts that undermine the preferred narratives of their sources.

Section S01: This section meets in-person on Thursdays from 3:30 PM to 6:20 PM EST.