



# COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Overview

- Professional and research-oriented courses with an emphasis on public relations and strategic communication.
- Hybrid program with at least 50% (18 credits) of the 36 required degree credits offered online.



2024 - 2025 NEWSLETTER



# COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

## ACCELERATED PROGRAM

### Did you know?

The Communication Management Program offers an accelerated program which allows students to earn both their bachelor's and master's degrees in less time through an individualized plan.

- ★ Earn a Bachelor's Degree & a Master's Degree faster.
- ★ Apply up to 9 credits of graduate courses towards both undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- ★ Save money due to time efficiency.
- ★ Increase earning potential in the job market.



<https://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/accelerated-programs/>

"I really enjoyed class because everyone came from different backgrounds. As an undergraduate, my experience was limited... but I was able to learn so much by hearing from my peers."

—Samantha Bonney, 2022



## GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Meet students in our program who are funded by graduate assistantships. Assistantships are designed for students to:

- ★ Gain further expertise in their field
- ★ Develop research and pedagogical skills
- ★ Acquire experience in leadership
- ★ Foster academic administrative skills
- ★ Develop collegial collaborations with advisors
- ★ Gain experience in interpersonal effectiveness and performance evaluation



Sami Kohout  
COMM Management



Kaitlyn Tilley  
COMM Management



Mekila Ha  
Housing & Residence Life



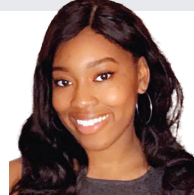
Erin Conohan  
COMM Management



Sydney Avelino  
International Student Scholar Office



Abbey Frock  
Campus Recreation



Tyra Waterton  
COFAC GSA Representative



Bernette Kassa  
CBE Dean's Office

Graduate assistants receive tuition remission and a stipend to offset living expenses.



# PROGRAM MILESTONES

## THESIS

### About the Thesis

Students conduct sustained research to investigate the factors that influence the effectiveness of professional communication or campaigns.

The thesis prepares a student for future academic research or doctoral programs and may involve any appropriate forms of scholarly communication research.



### Framing climate change in children's picture books: A qualitative study of authors and illustrators

by Tameka Shelford

Thesis advisor: Dr. Hyang-Sook Kim

This study explores frame building, frame setting, and framing strategies used by authors and illustrators of climate change picture books.

### A rhetoric of revulsion: Evaluating the efficiency of disgust appeals and the role of mediating emotions in animal rights campaigns

by Kayla Kozak

Thesis advisor: Dr. Kyongseok Kim

This study explores the efficiency of disgust appeals in animal rights campaigns, focusing on how varying levels of disgust from graphic imagery affect emotional responses and behavioral intentions.

# PROGRAM MILESTONES

## GRADUATE PROJECT

### About the Project

Students showcase their acquisition of communication management knowledge and skills under the guidance of a faculty adviser from the department.

Students choose a client, develop the project with an appropriate method of investigation, and report the finding in writing and oral presentation.

### Beyond the swipe: Unlocking Towson Campus Recreation's social media strategy through uses and gratification theory and social exchange theory

by Samantha Bonney

Advisor: Dr. Lingling Zhang

Samantha Bonney created a social media plan for Towson Campus Recreation.

### Are non-profits prepared for crisis communication?

by Sophia Berta

Advisor: Dr. Hyang-Sook Kim

Sophia Berta created a crisis management plan for the Wellness House of Annapolis, a nonprofit organization.



# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Students have presented original research at conferences



**Framing climate change in children's picture books: A qualitative study of authors and illustrators**  
Tameka Shelford

**Workplace flexibility for whom? How communications job advertisements signal commitments, perks, and values**  
Rebecca Kirkman, Lindsey Culli, and Dr. Elia Powers

**Expressing identity through ink: Tattoo styles, self-expression, and personal branding**  
Elle Jones, Pamela Haas, and Dr. Elia Powers

**How public speaking anxiety influences young adults' career interests and plans**  
Aaliyah Brooks, Tameka Shelford, and Dr. Elia Powers

Presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

## PROGRAM MILESTONES

### COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

#### About the Exams

Students take six credits of additional electives and pass three written, on-campus comprehensive exams. Exams are in communication theory, a research method, and a 600-level mass communication course chosen by the student.

#### Chazz's Experience



Chazz Kibler successfully completed his comprehensive exams in spring 2022. He prepared extensive notes to study. In addition to communication theory, he took exams on quantitative research methodology and social media content strategy.

#### Chazz's Tips for Success:

- Write a literature review for the communication theories.
- Teach what you've been studying to a family member or friend.
- Study even when you may not feel like it.
- Don't forget to take breaks.



# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



## Dr. Hyang-Sook Kim

Dr. Kim recently published a co-authored paper in *Health Communication* titled “A motivational technology perspective on the use of smart wrist-worn wearables for postpartum exercise and weight management.”

Drs. Hyang-Sook Kim and Mun-Young Chung conducted a study investigating the role of smart wrist-worn wearables in promoting exercise and supporting weight management among postpartum women. Their survey of 309 postpartum women in the U.S. found that smart wrist-worn wearables encouraged users to meet fitness goals through features like customization and interactivity. The findings highlight the potential to enhance postpartum care.

### *Expertise:*

- *Health communication*
- *Persuasion in communication technology*
- *Consumer psychology in strategic communication*



## Dr. Palavi Guha

Dr. Guha is one of 52 faculty fellows to receive a \$1,000 grant through the Faculty Champions and Fellows program at the Center for Community News at the University of Vermont. She will use this grant to support the Fall 2024 political reporting in the Baltimore Watchdog.

### *Expertise:*

- *Anti-rape and sexual harassment media activism*
- *Social media and activism*
- *Politics and journalism in the Global South*
- *#MeToo with anti-rape and sexual harassment media activism*



## Dr. Juan Liu

Dr. Liu recently presented her co-authored work titled “The complicity of corporate sustainability on social issues: Investigating the mediating roles of valence and perceived authenticity” at the 74th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, held in Gold Coast, Australia.

This study explored how media coverage of corporate sustainability affects public perception. Two experiments were conducted, revealing that positive coverage enhanced perceived authenticity, which, in turn, led to more favorable attitudes and increased word-of-mouth.

### *Expertise:*

- *Strategic communication*
- *Stakeholder engagement*
- *Communication and technology*
- *Public opinion*
- *Corporate social advocacy*
- *Social media and misinformation*
- *Media surveillance*



## Dr. John Kirch

Dr. Kirch published a paper in *Journalism History* titled “**The New York Times on the day after: News coverage of the Hiroshima atomic bomb.**”

The paper is a textual analysis that compared news frames contained in U.S. military press releases about the bomb that were given to the news media on Aug. 6, 1945, with the frames that appeared in Times' stories on Aug. 7 and 8, 1945. The study found that the Times essentially acted as a propaganda arm of the U.S. military.

### Expertise:

- **News reporting**
- **Journalism history**
- **Media analysis**
- **Political campaign coverage**
- **News writing**
- **Media literacy**
- **Political journalism**
- **Coverage of dissent**



## Dr. Enakshi Roy

Dr. Roy published a co-authored paper in the *Korean Journal of Communication* titled “**Displays of parasocial interaction in K-pop: A content analysis of YouTube comments in BTS’ music videos.**”

The authors conducted a content analysis of 1,114 fan comments on BTS’ YouTube videos to explore the prevalence of parasocial interaction. The finding revealed that two-thirds of the comments exhibited indicators of parasocial interaction, with social attraction being the most common. Music videos emphasized fandom, while non-music videos highlighted social attraction, offering insights into how fans engage with celebrities through online media.

### Expertise:

- **Freedom of speech**
- **Media and journalism in India**
- **Women gender and sexuality studies**
- **Internet policies**
- **Bollywood industry**



## Dr. Christopher Vardeman

Dr. Vardeman recently published a paper in *Qualitative Market Research* titled “**Advertising to Gen-Z college students with memes? A focus group study.**”

This exploratory study investigated how Gen-Z perceives and regards brands’ use of internet memes as advertisements. Participants express that memes are well suited for nonserious, lighthearted brands with a consistent social media presence, but less appropriate for serious brands or brands that try to appropriate internet meme culture for financial gain. The importance of humor, cultural narratives, and social connections are also discussed.

### Expertise:

- **Strategic communication**
- **Digital advertising**
- **Advertising psychology**
- **Media effects**





## Dr. Lingling Zhang

Dr. Zhang was awarded a grant of \$3,000 in summer start-up funds from the School of Emerging Technologies for her collaborative research titled “**Going the extra mile: Using Artificial Intelligence to provide personalized customer experience.**”

This research explores consumer responses to the various applications in customer engagement, including chatbots, recommendation systems, and personalized marketing.

**Expertise:**

- **Media processes and effects**
- **Social media branding**
- **Consumer behaviors**
- **Marketing communication**



## Dr. Elia Powers

Dr. Powers published a book titled *Performing the news: Identity, authority, and the myth of neutrality.*

His research focuses primarily on how news organizations can assess their civic impact, promote their relevance, and better reflect our increasingly diverse society.

**Expertise:**

- **Multimedia journalism**
- **Data journalism**
- **Sports journalism**
- **News/media literacy**
- **Journalism pedagogy**



## Dr. Kyongseok Kim

Dr. Kim presented a paper at the 2024 International Communication Association conference in June, titled “**Assessing politically motivated reasoning in climate change communication: An empirical model of subjective beliefs, factual knowledge, and cognitive response.**”

This study proposes a model to accurately assess how political party affiliation influences message evaluations related to climate change. The paper received a **Top Paper Award** from the Environmental Communication Division.

**Expertise:**

- **Theory extension**
- **Audience information processing and motivation**
- **Media and advertising cognitive effects**
- **Environmental and health communication**

# EVENTS



## GRADUATE SOCIAL

The Communication Management Graduate Program hosted a social event for students to connect with their peers and faculty. The Fall 2024 Graduate Social took place on Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. in VB 107. Eighteen students and faculty attended the event to meet and share survival tips. Students appreciated enthusiastic faculty support for their journey in the graduate program.



## INFO SESSION

Students are invited to an information session to hear faculty talk about their research expertise. Alumni will also share their milestone experiences with the thesis, graduate project and comprehensive exams.

# OPEN HOUSE



SPRING OPEN HOUSE

**SATURDAY**  
**APRIL 5, 2025**

WEST VILLAGE COMMONS

*"The people made the experience for me, and the support of Dr. Zhang, Dr. Kumble, and many others was profound. I feel more ready to take my next step."*  
—Rudaelle Elian

*"I enjoyed working with my cohort and sharing our experiences with each other."* —Naya Washington

*"Because of this program, I've formed great relationships and expanded my professional network. Many of the projects I've completed during my time have made great additions to my professional portfolio."* —Morgan Hushour

*"The courses delved into using theory to handle crisis, corporate, and international communications. The knowledge and excitement from the program's professors made learning fun and a breeze."* —Meredith Devereux

