

Public Relations and Strategic Communication

Identity, image, reputation, relationships—these are the key concepts of Public Relations and Strategic Communication. PRSC professionals monitor their clients or employers wherever those employers might be—in coffee shops, in the news, in blogs, on Web sites. Based on their research, they systematically plan the flow of information and design messages to inform, inspire and persuade target publics while enhancing the image, reputation and relationships of their clients or employers. Critical to the success of the client or employer, the PRSC professional is also the conscience of the corporation and thus critical to the public interest.

Contact us

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Visit the Communication
Department Website at
web.sau.edu/communication

For general information about
St. Ambrose or how to apply:
Admissions Office
563/333-6300 or 800/383-2627
email: admit@sau.edu
www.sau.edu

StAmbrose
University

Degrees offered and required credit hours

St. Ambrose University offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication. The major offers you the opportunity to learn communication principles and skills applicable to local, national and international organizations.

The Public Relations and Strategic Communication major requires 15 credit hours of core theory, 18 credit hours of research, writing, and skills, a 3 credit hour capstone course, and an approved minor or second major. Approved minors that accompany the major include: Broadcast Journalism, Communication Studies, Writing (English), Management, Marketing, and Radio/TV.

The Public Relations and Strategic Communication minor requires 15 credit hours.

Program highlights and courses

As a student majoring in Public Relations and Strategic Communication, you will learn how to help organizations create and promote a positive image by keeping the public informed of the organization's goals and policies and their effects on the community. You will develop skills in using public relations techniques and strategies based on communication theory and research. Students are also encouraged to contribute to the student newspaper to enhance journalistic skills and to work at the University's television and radio studio to develop an understanding of media.

Curriculum highlights include: Principles of Public Relations, Media Writing, Public Relations Techniques, Business and Professional Speaking, Media Theory and Ethics, and Public Relations Cases and Research. Students demonstrate mastery of their course work by completing a capstone course in Communication Campaigns.

The Communication Department at St. Ambrose also houses majors in Journalism, Radio and Television, and Media Studies. A full description of required and elective courses is online at www.sau.edu/course_catalog.html.

Internships and co-curricular activities

Experience is a vital part of preparing students to transition into a career following graduation. Through internships, students acquire hands-on experience from professionals within the field. Students have the option of completing an internship while at St. Ambrose. In the past, Public Relations and Strategic Communication majors have interned with DavenportOne, Euro RSCG, the Quad City Mallards, Happy Joe's, the Rock Island Arsenal, The Quad City Times, and local medical centers. Students also have the opportunity to write, design, edit, and publish The Buzz, St. Ambrose's bi-monthly student newspaper.

What can you do with a Public Relations/Strategic Communication degree?

Professionals in public relations and strategic communication concentrate on managing the relationships and reputation of an organization and promoting relationships between the organization and the community.

Recent St. Ambrose Public Relations and Strategic Communication graduates have had the opportunity to work at for profit and not-for-profit organizations as communication specialists. Graduates have also continued their education by attending graduate programs throughout the country.

About the faculty

Jon Anderson, BA, ASE, Chief Engineer
AndersonJonS@sau.edu

Assists in radio/television production and broadcast technology courses and is the Chief Engineer of the Communications Center. Anderson is a Certified Broadcast Technologist from the Society of Broadcast Engineers. Prior to joining St. Ambrose, he was an engineer at WQAD-TV and the Quad City Radio Group. Anderson received his degrees from Benedictine College in Political Science and Hamilton Technical College in Electronic Engineering Technology. He has been a department member since 1990.

Dave Baker, BA, KALA Operations Manager
BakerDavidW@sau.edu

Serves as the Operations Manager for KALA radio. Baker's work experience includes positions in engineering and production at the local ABC affiliate and reporting for the Argus/Dispatch/Leader newspaper group in Illinois. As a 1988 graduate of St. Ambrose, Baker has been a department member since 1989 and the Operations Manager since 1993.

Jim Baumann, PhD, Assistant Professor
BaumannJamesA@sau.edu

Teaches courses in human communication, argumentation, and public relations research. Prof. Baumann received his degree in Communication Studies from Bowling Green State University and has been a faculty member since 2008.

Matt Carroll, BA, Instructor & SAUtv Production Coordinator
CarrollMatthewF@sau.edu

Teaches Public Speaking and assists in television production courses. Carroll also coordinates the production of Dateline (SAUtv's weekly news broadcast), live sports broadcasts, and coaches' shows. A St. Ambrose graduate, Carroll has been a department member since 2007.

Ken Colwell, PhD, Professor
ColwellKennethE@sau.edu

Teaches Public Speaking, Desktop Communication, Digital Audio Production Techniques, and Broadcast Management. Prof. Colwell serves as Director of the Ambrose Communication Center and received his degree from the University of Iowa. A St. Ambrose graduate, Prof. Colwell has been a faculty member since 1981.

John Madsen, PhD, Associate Professor
MadsenJohnA@sau.edu

Teaches courses in interpersonal communication, public relations, and organizational communication. He is a contributing editor to the Encyclopedia of Public Relations. Dr. Madsen received his degree in Speech Communication from the University of Kansas and has been a faculty member since 2004.

Ann Preston, PhD, Professor and Department Chair
PrestonAnn@sau.edu

Teaches courses in journalism and public relations. She is a contributor to the Encyclopedia of Public Relations and the Encyclopedia of Rural America. Prof. Preston received her degree in Mass Communication from Ohio University and has been a member of the faculty since 2001.

Alan Sivell, MA, Clinical Faculty and News Director
SivellAlanR@sau.edu

Teaches Media and Society, Media Writing, Advanced Media Writing, Print New Practicum, News Broadcasting, and Advanced Broadcast Reporting. Prof. Sivell has extensive experience in all aspects of broadcast media for the local ABC affiliate. He also has worked as a media columnist for the Quad-City Times and Argus/Dispatch/Leader newspapers. Prof. Sivell received his Journalism degree from the University of Iowa and has been a department member since 1986.

M. Carla Stevens, PhD, Professor
StevensMCarla@sau.edu

Teaches human communication, group dynamics and methods of decision-making, public speaking, and business and professional speaking. She has served as the coach of the St. Ambrose Speech Team. Prof. Stevens received her degree in Higher Education from Illinois State University and has been a faculty member since 1987.

Donald "Duke" Schneider, Clinical Faculty and SAUtv
Operations Manager
SchneiderDonaldL@sau.edu

Teaches Radio and Television Production, TV Practicum, and Broadcast Technologies. Prof. Schneider is the operations manager for SAUtv and has done freelance work for a variety of regional and national networks, including ESPN, the National Weather Service, and TBS Sports. A St. Ambrose graduate, Prof. Schneider received his degree in Instructional Design Technology Video Production from the University of Iowa and has been a member of the department since 1979.

