

**Agendum  
Oakland University  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
June 26, 2026**

**BACHELOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

**A Recommendation**

**1. Division and Department:** Academic Affairs, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations.

**2. Introduction:** Oakland University proposes a new Bachelor of Strategic Communication online degree. This degree will prepare students to think critically and communicate strategically across a range of contexts. The program will integrate and leverage existing faculty expertise and coursework from our three undergraduate programs: Communication, Journalism & Media Studies, and Public Relations & Advertising. The program is responsive to the growing regional and state demand for professionals who can navigate complex communication environments with ethical judgement and practical skill. The program will equip students with a comprehensive skill set in strategic analysis, ethical communication, and practical execution consistent with key aspects of Oakland University's Strategic Vision 2030 in its particular emphasis on student success and stewardship of place.

**3. Previous Board Action:** None.

**4. Budget Implications:** This program uses existing Department courses and faculty and thus will be supported by existing department resources. As an online program, it does not require additional campus space.

**5. Educational Implications:** The proposed program provides an interdisciplinary approach to applied communication, blending coursework in digital media, advertising, public relations, persuasion, and organizations to provide non-traditional students with the foundational skills they will need to navigate the ever-changing communication landscapes.



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**6. Personnel Implications:** Initially, this program will be offered using existing faculty and staff. As the program grows, additional instructors and/or faculty may be required.

**7. University Reviews/Approvals:** The proposed program has been approved by the College of Arts and Sciences' Committee on Instruction, the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, the Oakland University Senate, and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

**8. Recommendation:**

WHEREAS, the Bachelor of Strategic Communication degree program is consistent with the objectives contained in Oakland University's Institutional Priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Bachelor of Strategic Communication degree program will build on existing faculty and academic and research strengths of the College of Arts and Sciences and provide new educational and community engagement opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees authorizes the College of Arts and Sciences to offer the Bachelor of Strategic Communication; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will complete annual reviews of the Bachelor of Strategic Communication degree program to evaluate academic quality and fiscal viability to determine whether the program should continue.




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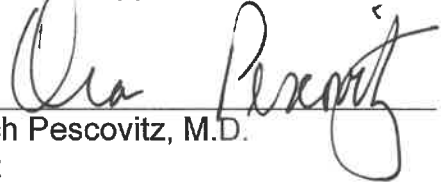
**9. Attachments:**


- A. Proposal for the Bachelor of Strategic Communication degree program.
- B. Proforma budget for the Bachelor of Strategic Communication degree program.

Submitted to the President  
on 6/8, 2026 by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Thompson, Ph.D., CHES, FESG  
Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommended on 6/11, 2026  
to the Board for Approval by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.  
President

Reviewed by  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua D. Merchant, Ph.D.  
Chief of Staff and  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees



**SBRC Proforma Template**

B.A. Strategic Communications

**FY2026**

Most Likely Scenario

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Est. New Students to Program	15	20	20	20	20
1st Year Cohort Revenue	\$ 66,300	\$ 88,400	\$ 88,400	\$ 88,400	\$ 88,400
2nd Year Cohort Revenue	\$ -	\$ 138,060	\$ 184,080	\$ 184,080	\$ 184,080
3rd Year Cohort Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 77,220	\$ 102,960	\$ 102,960
4th Year Cohort Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 77,220	\$ 102,960
Gross Tuition Revenue	\$ 66,300	\$ 226,460	\$ 349,700	\$ 452,660	\$ 478,400
Less: Avg Financial Aid (30%)	\$ (19,890)	\$ (67,938)	\$ (104,910)	\$ (135,798)	\$ (143,520)
<b>Net Tuition Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 46,410</b>	<b>\$ 158,522</b>	<b>\$ 244,790</b>	<b>\$ 316,862</b>	<b>\$ 334,880</b>

Expenses

Salaries

Faculty Salaries

6101					
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Special Instructors/PoP Salaries

6101					
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Visiting Faculty

6101					
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Administrative Professionals

6201					
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Clerical Technical

6211	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
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Administrative IC

6221					
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Faculty Inload/Replacement Costs

6301					
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Faculty Overload

6301		\$ 7,432	\$ 7,656	\$ 7,656	\$ 7,656
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Part-Time Faculty

6301	\$14,432	\$14,864	\$30,624	\$30,624	\$30,624
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Graduate Assistant

6311	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
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Graduate Assistant - Wellness

6311	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
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Casual/Temp

6401					
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Out of Classification

6401					
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Student Labor

6501					
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**Total Salary Expense**

	\$ 14,432	\$ 22,296	\$ 38,280	\$ 38,280	\$ 38,280
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Fringe Benefits

6701	\$ 1,155	\$ 1,784	\$ 3,062	\$ 3,062	\$ 3,062
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**Total Compensation**

	\$ 15,587	\$ 24,080	\$ 41,342	\$ 41,342	\$ 41,342
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Operating Expenses

Supplies and Services

7101					
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Graduate Tuition

7101	-	-	-	-	-
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E-Learning Support

7102					
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Travel

7201					
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Equipment

7501	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
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Maintenance

7110					
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Recruitment and advertising

7101	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
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Library

7401	\$ 8,560	\$ 7,458	\$ 8,204	\$ 9,024	\$ 9,927
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Faculty Startup Funding

	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
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Total Operating Expenses

	\$ 21,060	\$ 17,458	\$ 18,204	\$ 19,024	\$ 19,927
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**Total Expenses**

	\$ 36,647	\$ 41,538	\$ 59,546	\$ 60,366	\$ 61,269
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University Overhead

	\$ 45,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000
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**Net Income (Loss)**

	\$ (35,237)	\$ 11,984	\$ 65,244	\$ 136,496	\$ 153,611
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<sup>1</sup>The tuition calculations do not account for any attrition of students.



# New Undergraduate Degree Program Proposal

## Program Information

### Program Degree:

Strategic Communication, Bachelor of Arts

### Requested Program Implementation Term:

Fall 2027

### Department:

Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations

Date Approved: April 18, 2025

### School or College Governance:

Date Approved: October 21, 2025 (CAS Assembly)

### University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction (UCUI):

Date Approved: October 14, 2025

### Dean, School or College:

Date Approved: October 1, 2024 (Support Letter Date)

### University Governance:

#### Senate

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Board of Trustees

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Title of Undergraduate Degree	Strategic Communication, B.A.
Department(s)	Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
School(s)/College	College of Arts and Sciences
Intended Implementation Date	Fall 2027

**Provide a brief summary describing the proposed program (250 words max)**

Undergraduate strategic communication programs are inherently interdisciplinary, often combining key elements of communication, media studies, public relations, advertising, journalism, and writing. Our proposed program is designed to equip students with both theoretical and practical expertise, the program prepares graduates for a wide range of careers in corporate, non-profit, and public service sectors. Through a curriculum rooted in communication theory and media literacy, students explore how messages are constructed, interpreted, and strategically delivered across traditional and digital platforms. Courses in public relations and advertising focus on campaign development, audience engagement, and reputation management, while journalism and writing classes strengthen skills in storytelling, clarity, and professional content creation.

Students also develop competencies in creativity, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and strategic analysis—core skills essential for today’s fast-paced communication environments. The fully online format is designed for working professionals and returning students, offering the flexibility to balance academic goals with personal and professional responsibilities. Select courses or electives may be taken in person with departmental approval, adding further customization to the learning experience. The curriculum emphasizes leadership, teamwork, diversity, inclusion, and emerging media technologies, ensuring students are prepared to meet modern communication challenges. Graduates will leave the program with the ability to craft effective communication strategies, analyze audience dynamics, and deliver impactful presentations. With a strong emphasis on ethical communication, crisis management, and real-world application, this program prepares students to become thoughtful, strategic communicators in a wide range of industries and organizational settings.

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## I. Rationale

### A. Describe how the program will help promote the mission of the university

The proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication is crafted to embody Oakland University's mission of fostering critical thinking, creativity, and diversity. By leveraging the research expertise of our CJPR faculty and integrating coursework primarily from three undergraduate programs (COM, JMS, and PR [plus additional elective courses from WRT]), this innovative major creates a dynamic, interconnected learning environment that bridges classroom theory with real-world application. The interdisciplinary curriculum—merging public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication—equips students with a comprehensive skill set in strategic analysis, ethical communication, and practical execution.

Moreover, this online program prepares students for a wide range of careers in corporate, nonprofit, and public service sectors, including roles such as social media manager, research analyst, communications officer, and public affairs specialist. Demand for these positions is evident across Michigan; regional data from September 2024 to January 2025 shows robust activity with 1,319 unique job postings in the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn area, 533 in Lansing-East Lansing, and 391 in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming-Kentwood area. This program positions graduates for success in the ever-evolving landscape of strategic communication, effectively addressing both local and broader market needs.

### B. Program need:

- Provide evidence of need or workforce demand - Lightcast data ([OIRADA](#))  
**\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***
- Provide evidence of prospective student funnel data ([Admissions](#)) that reflects student desire for the program
- Describe aspects of the proposal that are unique or distinctive to Oakland

## A Competitive, Career-Ready Degree

Oakland University's proximity to Detroit, flexible online structure, emphasis on DEI, and industry-aligned coursework make this program a uniquely competitive option for students seeking a comprehensive and career-ready strategic communication degree. With few comparable fully online programs in Michigan, the proposed program fills a critical demand, providing an accessible, high-quality pathway to careers in media, public relations, corporate communication, and digital strategy. By aligning with employer expectations and industry trends, this degree prepares graduates for sustainable careers in an increasingly digital and media-driven job market.

## Evidence of Workforce Demand (Lightcast Data)

The proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication at Oakland University is uniquely designed to align with Michigan's workforce demands, particularly in key metropolitan areas. New Lightcast data from September 2024 to January 2025 reveals that the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn is the largest hub for

strategic communication careers, with 1,319 unique job postings, followed by Lansing-East Lansing with 533, Grand Rapids-Wyoming-Kentwood with 391, Ann Arbor with 259, and Kalamazoo-Portage with 98. These figures underscore a robust statewide need for professionals trained in strategic messaging, digital communication; and leadership—precisely the skills that the proposed program develops.

Nationally, significant demand for strategic communication professionals is evident with the highest number of job postings in California (12,735), followed by New York (9,008), Texas (8,829), Florida (6,327), and Illinois (5,430) from September 2024 to January 2025.

## Student Interest and Funnel Data (Admissions Evidence)

To support the development of the proposed online Strategic Communication program, admissions funnel data from similar undergraduate programs with both online and on-campus offerings—specifically Environmental Health & Safety, Pre-Interdisciplinary Studies, and Professional and Digital Writing—clearly demonstrate a strong and sustained student preference for online delivery.

For example, in the Environmental Health & Safety program, online applications consistently outpace on-campus applications. In Fall 2020, the online version received 32 applications and enrolled 7 students, compared to 19 applications and 7 enrollments for the on-campus version. By Fall 2023, this gap widened: online applications rose to 29 with 3 enrollments, while the on-campus option had just 11 applications and 1 enrollment. This pattern of higher online demand is repeated across multiple terms. In Winter 2023 (202330), there were 13 online applications and 3 enrollments versus 2 on-campus applications and 1 enrollment.

Pre-Interdisciplinary Studies shows a similar trend. In Fall 2022, the program received 27 online applications and enrolled 11 students, compared to 11 on-campus applications and 9 enrollments. In Fall 2023, online applications increased to 34, with 14 enrollments, while the on-campus track received 25 applications and enrolled 14 students. The number of online applications continues to grow, indicating increasing demand, particularly in flexible interdisciplinary and communication-related fields.

Professional and Digital Writing, which historically offered only an on-campus option, recently added an online version. The response was immediate: in Winter 2025, the online program received 3 applications, while the in-person option received none. Looking ahead to Fall 2025, the early application data show 4 applications for the in-person option and 2 for the online program, indicating that students are already expressing meaningful interest in the new online offering. This is especially notable given the relatively small size of the program.

These consistent trends—often showing two to three times more applications for online formats—clearly demonstrate that students are increasingly seeking flexible, online academic pathways. The strong and growing interest in online delivery across programs strongly supports the development and launch of an online

Strategic Communication program, which is well-positioned to meet this ongoing demand.

## Oakland University's Distinctive Advantages

### Regional Industry Focus & Workforce Alignment

The proposed program will prepare students for high-demand communication roles in automotive, healthcare, nonprofit, technology, and corporate sectors, which dominate Southeast Michigan's job market. With Detroit serving as a major media and public relations hub, students benefit from proximity to major corporations, media agencies, and PR firms, enhancing internship and job placement opportunities.

### Flexible, Fully Online Format with Local Career Impact

While fully online to accommodate working professionals and returning students, the program remains regionally relevant, ensuring graduates are prepared for career opportunities both in Michigan and beyond. Additionally, students can integrate in-person electives when available, offering networking and hands-on learning experiences.

### Comprehensive, Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Unlike other programs, the proposed Strategic Communication major blends public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication with the addition of WRT elective courses, providing students with a broad yet specialized skill set that enhances their career flexibility. The major is designed to address growing workforce demand by equipping students with the most sought-after skills, as identified by the Lightcast Q1 2025 data. Michigan employers consistently seek strategic communication professionals with expertise in communication (59%), writing (24%), presentation skills (19%), leadership (33%), and problem solving (25%), all of which are foundational to this program. Notably, presentation skills are experiencing rapid growth (+23.0%), while writing and problem-solving skills continue to expand at +11.8% and +11.3%, respectively.

National Lightcast data highlights strong demand for a wide range of skills relevant to strategic communication careers. Communication is the most frequently cited skill, appearing in 68% of postings (81,461) and featured in 22% of professional profiles, though its growth is modest at +3.6%. Writing, however, is noted in 35% of postings (42,112) and is experiencing notable growth at +11.8%, underscoring its critical role in professional communication. In Oakland University's proposed program, writing is a key competency emphasized across multiple courses. Courses such as JMS 3290 – Media Storytelling for Social Justice, JMS 2000 – Introduction to Journalism, PR 3700 – Research Methods in Public Relations and Advertising, and COM 2202 – Persuasion and Social Change all incorporate intensive writing components tailored to professional, media, and persuasive contexts. In addition, elective options such as WRT 2080 – Introduction to Professional Writing, WRT 3073 – Digital Storytelling, and WRT 3082 – Business Writing provide students with further opportunities to refine their writing, digital

content creation, and workplace communication skills—aligning closely with employer needs.

The data also show stable demand for management (34% of postings, +5.3% growth) and detail-oriented skills (29%, +7.1%), while leadership appears in 29% of postings with a steady +8.5% growth rate. Research skills are also in high demand, growing rapidly at +17.2%, and presentation skills stand out with +23.0% growth, highlighting the rising importance of effective message delivery. The proposed curriculum is designed to develop these high-value skills throughout the program, preparing graduates for success in a variety of communication-related careers.

Recent Lightcast data for Michigan further highlights the regional job market dynamics for strategic communication professionals. Job postings pulled between January 2024 and January 2025, there are 38,767 job postings with a projected growth of +5.8% between 2025 and 2035, and annual openings are estimated at 3,744 positions. Median earnings in Michigan are reported at \$29.74 per hour (or \$61.9K per year), which is about 10% below the national average, where median earnings stand at \$35.17 per hour (or \$73.2K per year) with a projected growth of +10.3%. This regional snapshot underscores the importance of developing robust, competitive skills tailored to both local and national market demands.

National Lightcast data for relevant strategic communication positions reveals robust demand across several roles. Communications/Public Relations Managers lead with 50,748 job postings, followed by Marketing Specialists with 26,969 postings, and Communications/Public Relations Specialists with 25,135 postings. Market Research Analysts are in high demand with 21,581 postings, while Sales Representatives register 23,894 postings. Additionally, Technical Writers and Advertising Sales Representatives demonstrate significant demand with 14,562 and 15,272 postings, respectively. Other in-demand roles include Health Educator/Coach (12,101 postings), Fundraising/Development Specialist (10,414 postings), Editor (7,939 postings), Social Media Strategist/Specialist (6,755 postings), Grants Manager/Administrator (6,757 postings), Creative Director (5,825 postings), Reporter (5,738 postings), Writer (5,182 postings), and Digital Content Producer/Manager (5,576 postings).

To meet these workforce demands, the program's curriculum integrates strategic communication, persuasion, leadership, and digital media to ensure students gain both theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The 40-credit major, which includes at least 20 upper-division credits, is structured to develop skills aligned with employer expectations:

- **Core Courses** (16 credits): Emphasize persuasion (COM 3200), organizational communication (COM 3401), public relations (PR 2400/PR 2500), and media studies (JMS 1650/JMS 2000)—all critical for professionals navigating corporate, nonprofit, and public service sectors.
- **Public Speaking and Professional Communication:** Courses such as COM 2000, COM 2001, or COM 2403 directly address the rising demand for presentation and leadership skills in the job market.

- **Capstone Experience:** (COM 4950 or COM 4970) Ensures students apply their learning in real-world strategic communication scenarios, further enhancing job readiness.
- **Electives** (16 credits): Provide opportunities for specialization in areas such as crisis communication (COM 4404), media design (JMS 4200), and PR campaigns (PR 3510)—all essential for today’s evolving communication landscape.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Integration

The proposal also integrates DEI across the curriculum, ensuring all students develop cultural competence. Courses such as Cultural Theory (COM 3002), Communication, Culture & Belonging (COM 3300), and Disability & Communication (COM 3302) prepare graduates to navigate diverse workplaces and develop inclusive communication strategies—a growing priority for Michigan’s workforce.

### Industry-Aligned Capstone and Experiential Learning

Students complete a Capstone Experience (COM 4950 or COM 4970) that allows them to apply their skills in real-world strategic communication scenarios, enhancing job readiness. Additional courses in crisis communication (COM 4404), PR campaigns (PR 3510), and media design (JMS 4200) provide practical, hands-on training to help students stand out in the job market.

### C. Discuss career options for students who graduate with the proposed degree

Recent Lightcast data reveals dynamic job market trends both regionally in Michigan and nationally. In Michigan, between January 2024 and January 2025, there were 38,767 job postings with an estimated 3,744 new openings annually and a projected growth of 5.8% from 2025 to 2035. However, median earnings in the state average \$29.74 per hour (or approximately \$61.9K per year), which is about 10% below the national median of \$35.17 per hour (or roughly \$73.2K per year) with a 10.3% projected growth rate. This data underscores the need for developing robust, competitive skills tailored to both local and national market demands.

Nationally, strategic communication positions are in high demand. Between September 2024 and January 2025, the highest volume of job postings was recorded in California (12,735), followed by New York (9,008), Texas (8,829), Florida (6,327), and Illinois (5,430). Key roles include:

- Communications/Public Relations Managers: 50,748 postings
- Marketing Specialists: 26,969 postings
- Communications/Public Relations Specialists: 25,135 postings

Other in-demand roles feature Market Research Analysts (21,581 postings), Sales Representatives (23,894 postings), Technical Writers (14,562 postings), and Advertising Sales Representatives (15,272 postings). Additional roles such as Health Educator/Coach, Fundraising/Development Specialist, Editor, Social Media

Strategist, Grants Manager, Creative Director, Reporter, Writer, and Digital Content Producer/Manager further highlight the broad demand across the field.

Strategic Communication majors can pursue diverse career paths, including positions like Social Media Marketing Manager, Content Marketing Strategist, Digital Communications Manager, Crisis Communications Consultant, Brand Communications Manager, and Marketing Communications Coordinator. These roles demand excellent written and verbal communication skills, strategic planning capabilities, and the flexibility to adapt messaging across a variety of platforms and audiences.

Focusing on regional demand within Michigan, Lightcast data shows robust local activity:

- Detroit-Warren-Dearborn: 1,319 postings
- Lansing-East Lansing: 533 postings
- Grand Rapids-Wyoming-Kentwood: 391 postings

Leading employers in Michigan include the University of Michigan-Flint (641 postings), Michigan State University (301), and General Motors (134). Nationally, top hiring companies include Amazon (2,085 postings), American Heart Association (2,744), Pearson Education (1,678), along with The Nature Conservancy, Lumen Technologies, Elevance Health, Prime Therapeutics, and Ford.

Graduates in Strategic Communication will be uniquely equipped to address modern communication challenges. They combine analytical thinking with creative execution, enabling them to craft compelling messages—from press releases to social media campaigns. Their skills in strategic planning, project management, and interpersonal communication, complemented by an awareness of ethical and multicultural considerations, make them valuable assets in today's complex business environment.

#### D. Goals and objectives:

## Program Learning Outcomes

The program's curriculum is designed to achieve several key learning outcomes:

1. **Effective Communication:** Students will learn to craft messages tailored to specific audiences, goals, and contexts using oral, written, and digital mediums.
2. **Audience Analysis:** The curriculum emphasizes understanding the unique characteristics of various audiences and the impact of communication as a transactional process.
3. **Professional Presentation:** Students will develop professional presentation skills, mastering visual aids, public speaking techniques, and storytelling.
4. **Ethical Communication:** Emphasizing integrity and transparency, students will navigate ethical dilemmas and maintain professionalism in diverse communication endeavors.

5. Leadership and Conflict Management: The program equips students with leadership skills in conflict management, crisis communication, and team building, essential for high-pressure situations.

#### **E. Comparison to other similar programs – State/Regional/National**

##### **\*\*\*MASU requirement\*\*\***

- Include links to at least 3 comparable programs within the state and/or nationally
- Describe any overlaps with other programs at O.U. or other Michigan public universities

Degrees conferred at Michigan institutions that offer similar programs (obtained from IPEDS) for the most recent academic year available (2021-2022):

- [Great Lakes Christian College](#) (hybrid, organizational communication, degrees conferred: 4),
- [Siena Heights University](#) (hybrid/fully online, organizational communication, degrees conferred: 12 [cease operations at the end of the 2025-2026]),
- [Western Michigan University](#) (hybrid, strategic communication, degrees conferred 8),
- [Western Michigan University](#) (hybrid, advertising, degrees conferred: 28).

**Comparison of Online Strategic Communication Programs:** Oakland University, Western Michigan University, Siena Heights University, and Great Lakes Christian College

The proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication at Oakland University differs from similar programs offered by Western Michigan University (WMU), Siena Heights University (SHU), and Great Lakes Christian College (GLCC) in curriculum structure, flexibility, career alignment, and regional advantages. While all programs prepare students for careers in media, public relations, corporate communication, and related fields, Oakland's program is distinguished by its interdisciplinary approach, focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and strong industry connections in Southeast Michigan.

#### **Program Structure and Focus**

**Oakland University:** Offers a broad interdisciplinary approach, integrating public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication to provide flexibility in career pathways. The fully online format ensures accessibility for working professionals and returning students, with the option to incorporate in-person electives for additional networking and hands-on learning.

**Western Michigan University (WMU):** Allows students to specialize by selecting one of four concentrations—Public Relations, Leadership and Teamwork, Diversity and Inclusion, or Media and Technology—providing targeted expertise. While it offers specialization, it may be less flexible for students who want a broader skill set. <https://wmich.edu/communication/academics/undergraduate/majors/strategic-communication>

Siena Heights University (SHU): Offers a Professional Communication degree available in hybrid or fully online formats, emphasizing advertising, journalism, multimedia, and broadcasting. The program is designed for students with prior experience or an interest in media and communication technology.

[https://catalog.sienaheights.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=2342&returnto=635](https://catalog.sienaheights.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=2342&returnto=635)

Great Lakes Christian College (GLCC): Provides a hybrid Organizational Communication program focused on leadership, interpersonal communication, and public speaking within a Christian framework. The curriculum is geared toward ministry, business, and nonprofit sectors.

<https://www.glcc.edu/academic/degrees/communication/>

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Integration**

A key distinction among these programs is how DEI is incorporated:

- Oakland University: Embeds DEI principles throughout the curriculum, requiring students to take at least one DEI-designated course such as Cultural Theory (COM 3002), Communication & Belonging (COM 3300), or Media, Gender, and Sexuality (JMS 3606). This ensures that all students develop inclusive communication strategies, a growing priority in modern workplaces.
- WMU: Offers DEI as a concentration, making it optional rather than an integrated part of the curriculum.
- SHU & GLCC: Do not have a specific DEI focus, though they may include general coursework related to workplace communication and diversity.

### **Industry Connections & Career Opportunities**

- Oakland University: Strategically positioned near Detroit, students have access to a major media market, corporate headquarters, and public relations firms, fostering internship and employment opportunities in automotive, healthcare, nonprofit, technology, and corporate sectors.
- WMU: Located in Kalamazoo, with fewer direct media and corporate connections than the Detroit area.
- SHU & GLCC: Smaller institutions with limited industry connections in major media hubs.

### **Capstone & Practical Experience**

- Oakland University: Requires a Capstone Experience (COM 4950 or COM 4970) where students apply their skills in real-world strategic communication scenarios, ensuring career readiness. Additional coursework in Crisis Communication (COM 4404), PR Campaigns (PR 3510), and Media Design (JMS 4200) further enhances professional training.
- WMU: May include applied learning but does not require a capstone experience.

- SHU & GLCC: Less emphasis on practical application, though some courses may integrate real-world projects.

### **Conclusion: Why Oakland's Program Stands Out**

Compared to WMU, SHU, and GLCC, Oakland University's online Strategic Communication program stands out due to its:

Compared to WMU, SHU, and GLCC, **Oakland University's online Strategic Communication program offers a uniquely flexible and career-focused curriculum**, with these distinctive features:

- **Interdisciplinary design** that integrates **communication, public relations, advertising, media studies, and professional writing**.
- **Embedded DEI coursework**, ensuring all students build cultural competence and inclusive communication skills.
- **Prime location near Detroit**, providing direct access to Michigan's largest concentration of communication-related jobs.
- **Required capstone and skill-based electives**, giving students meaningful, real-world experience and employer-aligned preparation.
- **Fully online and accessible format**, serving **working adults, stopouts, distance learners**, and students with **diverse needs**.

With few fully online communication programs in Michigan, Oakland's proposed major meets a growing regional and statewide demand, offering an accessible, high-quality, and workforce-driven education for the next generation of strategic communicators.

## **II. Academic Unit**

### **A. Describe how the goals of the School/College/Dept are served by the proposed program**

The proposed degree program is a natural and consistent extension of the educational mission of the department. We deliver access to an exceptional education — using state-of-the-art tools — that prepares students to enter the constantly changing media and communication industries and/or pursue graduate studies.

The department remains committed to translating our mission into practical outcomes. We emphasize the ways in which communication is inherently tied to the practices of everyday life, including our relationships and our careers. As such, the department has built our academic programs to emphasize communication practices, strategies and theories to develop and strengthen social responsibility and contribute to a more civil community. We teach our students to be both

conceptually grounded as well as pragmatic, critical thinkers, message analysts, and social actors.

This major presents an opportunity for a unique program not currently available at other peer institutions. It is interdisciplinary with its course offerings from the Communication, Journalism and Media Studies, and Public Relation and Advertising programs at its core.

#### **B. Describe how existing staff will support the proposed program**

The new program will leverage the research expertise of current communication, journalism and media studies, and public relations and advertising faculty, and will integrate existing coursework from the three undergraduate programs. Faculty across these areas bring a wealth of research and teaching experience that aligns seamlessly with the interdisciplinary focus of the program, which combines elements of public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication. This integration ensures the program will deliver a robust and dynamic curriculum without requiring a significant expansion of faculty resources. By drawing on these existing strengths, the Strategic Communication program will provide a seamless and sustainable addition to the department's offerings, addressing the needs of a growing and diverse student population.

#### **C. Faculty qualifications - current scholarly activity of the faculty in the proposed program - Appendix A for CVs \*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

Faculty in the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations are actively engaged in teaching and scholarship that directly supports the proposed online Strategic Communication program. Their scholarly activity spans areas such as public relations strategy, media effects, social media engagement, organizational communication, and health and risk communication. Faculty regularly publish in peer-reviewed journals such as *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Communication*, and *Communication Education*, and present at leading academic conferences including the National Communication Association (NCA), Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), and the International Communication Association (ICA). This ongoing scholarly engagement contributes to a dynamic, research-driven learning environment that benefits students in the online Strategic Communication program. Additionally, 12 of our faculty across the department have completed the e-LIS Quality Online Teaching Certification Course (QOTCC) - which focuses on how to teach effectively in the online environment.

#### **D. Describe current resources and how the new program will impact existing resources**

The Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations currently offers a range of courses in advertising, public relations, journalism, media studies, and communication, many of which are already available online. For example, the

percentage of online courses in the department for Winter 2025 is 36% (27 out of 75 total courses). Across the department, faculty members have expertise in such essential areas as persuasion, digital media, and applied communication, ensuring a strong foundation for the proposed program.

The university's existing learning management system, Moodle, supports online course delivery, providing tools for virtual lectures, discussion forums, and multimedia integration. Additionally, students have access to academic advising, library services, writing support, and career counseling, which are available both in-person and online.

To further support the Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication, e-Learning and Instructional Support (e-LIS) will play a vital role in ensuring high-quality online instruction. e-LIS offers software support in addition to providing a variety of workshops, online program development assistance, and a full-service instructional design team. Faculty and students will benefit from e-LIS's expertise in course design, technology integration, and best practices for online learning.

The new program will increase demand for faculty training in online pedagogy, instructional design support, and expanded digital resources. e-LIS support services are available to help with all of e-Learning and Instructional Support's supported software and tools. By leveraging these existing resources, the program will ensure a seamless and engaging online learning experience for students while maintaining academic excellence.

### III. Program Plan

#### A. Admission Requirements

- Unique GPA requirements, if any
- Academic term(s) and deadlines for applications for admission, if any
- Other specific admission requirements

There will not be any specific admission requirements for the Strategic Communication major. To earn the online Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in strategic communication, students must complete a minimum of 40 credits, of which 20 credits must be at the 3000 level or above.

#### B. Degree requirements **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

- Courses, credit hours and course prerequisite requirements - **Appendix B**
- Identify new courses to be added and % of a course distance delivered

The plan of study and course offerings are listed in Appendix B.

The Strategic Communication major will be delivered 100% online.

#### C. Intended program length (e.g. four years, 8 semesters, other) **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

40 credits (4 semesters)

#### D. Potential for collaboration with other units at OU

The online Strategic Communication program more likely complements other programs than overlaps with them including graphic design, marketing, and professional and digital writing. There is a strong potential for integrating double majors and majors and minors to offer students added value to their major degree. This program is clearly grounded in the disciplines of communication and media studies but also includes elective courses from Writing and Rhetoric. In addition, the overall program adds value to our department and Oakland University by utilizing existing courses and faculty expertise.

#### **E. Plan for transfer credits**

- Articulations with other community colleges, universities, or other institutions
- Assessment of how regional community college students will transfer to the proposed program

The online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication is designed to be transfer-friendly, allowing students to apply transfer credits toward degree completion. While there are no direct articulation agreements currently in place, the program is structured to accommodate students from regional community colleges by recognizing relevant coursework in communication, journalism, public relations, and media studies. Several nearby community colleges offer courses similar to those required in the Strategic Communication program, making transfer pathways more accessible:

- Oakland Community College (OCC) offers a Digital Media Communications Certificate, which includes courses in persuasion, public speaking, and advertising—all closely aligned with our program's core requirements.
- Macomb Community College provides courses in public speaking, group dynamics, and public relations, making it a strong feeder school for transfer students looking to fulfill foundational requirements.
- Wayne County Community College District (WCCCD) offers similar courses in media studies, public speaking, and business communication, which correspond to both core and elective courses in the Strategic Communication curriculum.
- Mott Community College has Media Arts & Entertainment Technology A.A., and Communication, A.A. programs, which include coursework in media literacy, media production, intercultural communication, persuasion, and public speaking making it another viable transfer option.

To further support transfer students, we will:

- Accept equivalent lower-division coursework from accredited institutions for foundational and elective courses such as Introduction to Media Literacy, Public Speaking, Group Dynamics, and Introduction to Advertising/Public Relations.
- Provide clear advising pathways to help students determine how their existing credits align with major requirements.
- Allow flexibility in elective coursework, particularly in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) courses, to ensure transfer students can apply relevant previous coursework while fulfilling programmatic goals.

- Ensure seamless integration of community college students by aligning common general education and introductory-level courses with those widely offered at two-year institutions.

By emphasizing credit transfer flexibility and clear degree completion pathways, the Strategic Communication major aims to attract and support transfer students, making it an accessible and efficient degree completion option for those transitioning from regional community colleges and other accredited institutions.

#### IV. Curriculum Overview

**A. Accreditation:** If the program is in an area in which professional or specialized accreditation is available, identify the name of the accreditation agency; indicate the timetable and the resource commitments needed to achieve accreditation.

NA

**B. The total must equal the number of credits from below *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

a) Number of credits of new courses developed for the new program that has not been offered at OU (required or elective)  
0 - No new courses are in development. The Strategic Communication major utilizes existing courses.

b) Number of credits from existing or repackaged inventory of courses at OU

- Repackaged refers to something such as course ABC 1000 was changed to course XYZ 1000

All 40 credits come from existing courses.

c) Number of credits from courses where content has been revised or redesigned for the new program

- Concept X was taught in course ABC 1000 and new state requirements are that Concept Y is taught in course ABC 1000
- Course DEF 2000 is a prerequisite for a new course, DEF 3000. DEF 2000 content needs to be updated to include new information required for DEF 3000.

0 - No courses are being revised for the new program.

**TOTAL**

40 credits

**C. Provide typical Plan of Study for students enrolled full-time in the program**  
**-Appendix C *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

#### Student Schedule (121 Credits)

Term	Course	Credits	Category/Notes
Fall I	CHM 1440	4	Natural Science
	CHM 1470	1	
	COM 2000	4	
	WRT 1050	4	
Winter I	COM 1500	4	Language

	PR 2500	4	
	WRT 1060	4	Writing Foundation
	Elective	4	
Summer I	—	—	—
Fall II	FLM 1150	4	U.S. Diversity / Arts
	JMS 2000	4	WIM / WIG
	JMS 2600	4	Social Science
	Elective	4	
Winter II	COM 2202	4	Western Civilization
	COM 3200	4	
	PHL 1000	4	Formal Reasoning
	Elective	4	
Summer II	—	—	—
Fall III	COM 3401	4	
	HST 2010	4	Global Perspective
	Exploratory	4	
	Elective	4	
Winter III	ART 1150	4	Knowledge Application
	COM 4402	4	
	Exploratory	4	
	Elective	4	
Summer III	—	—	—
Fall IV	COM 3303	4	WIM / WIG
	ENG 1500	4	Literature
	Exploratory	4	
	Elective	4	
Winter IV	COM 3405	4	U.S. Diversity / WIG
	COM 4970	4	
	Elective	4	
Summer IV	—	—	—

**D. Provide course descriptions or syllabi for all new courses in the program -  
Appendix D \*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

No new courses - existing courses from Communication, Journalism and Media Studies, Public Relations and Advertising, and Writing and Rhetoric will make up the program of study for the proposed online major.

**E. Academic Progress – Probation – Dismissal, *if applicable***

- Provide criteria by which a student is evaluated on academic progress
- Explain the steps that lead to probation and dismissal from the program

Students in the major are required to achieve minimum C grades in core and capstone courses.

#### **F. Academic oversight and direction for the program**

- Provide the name and position (or title) of the individual who will be responsible for the success of this program, and give the percentage of this individual's time that will be dedicated to the program

The leadership structure for the new Strategic Communication major will mirror other programs in the department which utilize a Program Director role. During its initial implementation phase, Dr. Kathleen Battles, as Department Chairperson, will temporarily oversee the program until a dedicated Program Director/Advisor is appointed. As the major primarily utilizes existing courses, the administrative burden on Dr. Battles should be manageable, requiring approximately 10% of her administrative time. This interim arrangement allows for a smooth program launch while ensuring thoughtful selection of permanent leadership, maintaining program quality and student support throughout the transition period.

#### **G. Interdisciplinary programs**

- Academic home - primary **college/school and department home** for the program
- Participating academic units
- Statement of support from the Deans and department chairs with responsibility for providing courses and faculty for the program.

The program will be housed in the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations and includes courses across the three programs. Three elective courses will come from the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

Oakland University  
Office of the Dean

October 1, 2024

Dr. Kevin Corcoran Interim Provost  
Oakland University Rochester, MI 48309  
Re: Support letter for Strategic Communication

Dear Dr. Corcoran:

I am writing this letter to enthusiastically support the proposed online degree in Strategic Communication. After reviewing the proposal and discussing the program with the faculty who also learned about the potential of it from Shaun Moore in E-LIS as well as their colleagues at other institutions, I am in full support of its development and planned implementation.

The Department of Communication, Journalism and Public Relations' proposal for an online program in Strategic Communication would leverage current faculty expertise from across the department. In particular, an online program in Strategic Communication will serve working professionals in the development of skills critical to careers across the corporate, non-profit, and public service sectors. The program comprises public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication and integrates existing coursework from the three undergraduate programs in the department. We also believe this program will also be attractive to students who have stopped-out of college and transfer students.

From a staffing standpoint, there is no additional full-time faculty line. It is anticipated this program will build on current offerings, requiring two Special Lecturers to teach one or two additional courses each year. Additionally, there will be a course-release for a faculty member to direct the program and advise the program's students, with the possibility of a Special Lecturer covering the course. The proposal includes support for purchasing peripherals for teaching online courses. University Communications and Marketing has been consulted regarding advertising the program. The anticipated costs are included in this proposal. We believe this program makes sense as a way to attract new students to OU and has our full support.

Sincerely,

Elaine Carey, Ph.D.  
College of Arts and Sciences

Varner Hall, Room 217 | 371 Varner Drive, Rochester, Michigan 48309-4485 (248) 370-2140 | Fax (246) 370-4280 | oakland.edu/cas

**H. Primary target audience for the program (e.g., full-time, part-time, traditional college age, working adults, transfer students, military personnel)**

**\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

The proposed online program is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners by offering flexible, accessible education tailored to the following key groups:

**Working Professionals:** The program is ideal for individuals already in the workforce who are looking to advance their careers, build new skills, or pivot into the field of strategic communication. By providing asynchronous coursework and flexible deadlines, the program enables working professionals to balance their education with full-time jobs and personal responsibilities. This approach makes higher education attainable without requiring significant lifestyle adjustments, aligning with the increasing demand for professional development opportunities in a competitive job market.

**Distant Learners:** The fully online format eliminates geographic barriers, making the program accessible to students who are unable to attend in-person classes due to location or commuting challenges. This includes rural residents, out-of-state students, and those living in underserved areas where educational opportunities are limited. By offering a robust online learning experience, the program appeals to learners who prioritize convenience and accessibility, allowing them to earn a degree from anywhere.

**Stop-Out Students:** The program is uniquely positioned to re-engage students who have started but not completed their college education. Many stop-out students face challenges such as competing responsibilities, limited access to campus-based programs, or the need for career-focused coursework. By offering a streamlined pathway to degree completion that is affordable and tailored to their needs, the program provides a second chance for these learners to achieve their academic and career goals, increasing graduation rates and addressing workforce development gaps.

This online program's focus on flexibility and inclusivity positions it as a practical and appealing option for working professionals, distant learners, and stop-out students. By addressing the needs of these target populations, the program supports institutional goals for enrollment growth, student success, and workforce readiness, while contributing to a more educated and skilled workforce.

**I. Source of Students (e.g., new target population, current enrollment shift, local community demand) \*\*\*MASU requirement\*\*\***

The proposed program aims to target three key populations as a source of enrollment, addressing both regional needs and the broader institutional mission to support student success:

**Stop-Out Students:** This program is designed to re-engage students who have previously enrolled in higher education but did not complete their degree. By offering a flexible, online format and a curriculum tailored to their needs, the program provides an accessible pathway for these students to return to school and finish their education. This aligns with growing institutional and state-level priorities to increase degree completion rates and workforce readiness.

**Adult Learners:** Recognizing the unique challenges faced by adult learners, including balancing work, family, and educational responsibilities, this program will cater to individuals seeking to upskill or pivot into strategic communication careers. By emphasizing flexibility, practicality, and relevance to industry demands, the program is positioned to attract adult learners seeking to enhance their career opportunities or meet employer expectations for advanced communication skills.

**Distant Learners:** The fully online nature of the program addresses the growing demand for accessible education options among students who are geographically distant or unable to commute to campus. This includes learners from rural areas, other regions within the state, or out-of-state students drawn to the program's unique focus and quality.

These target populations align with the goals of the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) by addressing educational access, workforce needs, and equity in higher education. By strategically engaging these groups, the program leverages untapped demand while supporting institutional priorities for enrollment growth and student success.

**J. Recruitment Plan**

UCM recommends a paid social media campaign to increase the awareness of the new Strategic Communication major and to drive clicks and website sessions to the program landing page. We recommend targeting adults ages 20-26 with some college experience (transfers, stop-outs) in OU’s primary and secondary counties. Additional targeting segments can also be implemented to include students at colleges in Michigan including MSU, Wayne State, Macomb Community College, Oakland Community College, CMU, Eastern, Grand Valley, Henry Ford, Schoolcraft, LCC, Mott, Mid- Michigan, Delta, and Washtenaw Community College.

Suggested budget of \$10,000 in Year 1, and \$5,000 per year in Years 2-5. Tactics recommended include Facebook, Instagram and Instagram Stories. Estimated production costs of \$500-\$1,000 for first year creative photo and video assets (can be deducted from media cost, or paid by unit). UCM to also design creative assets for organic use on social pages.

Table 1. Advertising Budget – \$5,000

Alt Text: Table showing media plan for \$5,000 budget including Facebook/Instagram ads and agency fee.

Media	Timing	Estimated Impressions	Estimated Net Cost
Facebook / Instagram	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	450,000	\$4,575
Agency Fee	—	—	\$425
<b>Total</b>	—	450,000	\$5,000

Table 2. Advertising Budget – \$10,000

Alt Text: Table showing media plan for \$10,000 budget including Facebook/Instagram and Stories ads with agency fee.

Media	Timing	Estimated Impressions	Estimated Net Cost
Facebook / Instagram	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	615,000	\$6,150
Facebook / Instagram Stories	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	300,000	\$3,000
Agency Fee	—	—	\$850
Total	—	915,000	\$10,000

**K. Planned enrollment**

- How has the estimated program demand been factored into realistic enrollment projections? **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***
- Describe how demand has been used in planning and budgeting to develop a quality program that can be sustained? **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***
- What future growth is anticipated and how will it be managed? **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***
- Describe how this proposal will shift current students from current programs (which programs) vs. attracting new students
- Provide evidence of student enrollment at peer institutions that offer the same/similar program using data obtained from IPEDS ([OIRADA](#))

**Estimated Program Demand and Realistic Enrollment Projections (no distinction in program modality)**

To ensure the sustainability and success of the proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication, enrollment projections have been based on multiple data sources, including regional labor market trends, student interest in related communication fields, and enrollment patterns in existing communication and media programs. Market research indicates a growing demand for professionals skilled in strategic communication, public relations, and digital media, particularly in corporate, nonprofit, and public service sectors. Additionally, the flexibility of the online format caters to working professionals and returning students, expanding the potential applicant pool beyond traditional undergraduate populations.

Realistic enrollment projections have been developed using historical enrollment data from similar programs at the university and peer institutions. Data from IPEDS (**data from 2023**) shows that institutions such as the University of Colorado Boulder (411 degrees conferred), Florida International University (222 degrees conferred), and the University of South Florida (182 degrees conferred) have successfully sustained large Public Relations and Strategic Communication programs, demonstrating strong national demand. Additionally, regional institutions

such as Michigan State University (25 degrees conferred) and Ball State University (35 degrees conferred) highlight interest in the field within the Midwest.

Additionally, Lightcast 2025 data set on program completions in Michigan reveals that while the majority of **communication-related** degrees are still conferred through traditional in-person programs, there is a growing presence of online (distance) programs.

**In-Person (Non-Distance) Programs:**

- 817 completions (95%)
- 15 institutions offering programs (83%)

**Online (Distance) Programs:**

- 44 completions (5%)
- 4 institutions offering programs (22%)

Despite the dominance of in-person programs, the demand for flexible, online learning options is increasing, particularly for working professionals and non-traditional students seeking career advancement in communication fields. The proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication aligns with this shift, offering greater accessibility while catering to regional and national job market needs.

Initial estimates project a gradual increase in student enrollment over the first five years, allowing for faculty workload adjustments and course offerings to scale accordingly. Retention strategies, including robust advising and faculty engagement, will support sustainable growth while maintaining academic quality. These projections align with the enrollment patterns observed at peer institutions and reinforce the viability of the program.

**Demand-Based Planning and Budgeting for Program Sustainability**

The projected demand for strategic communication professionals has directly informed the planning and budgeting process for this program. The breakdown of program completions in Michigan (2023) highlights strong student interest in communication-related fields:

- Advertising (09.0903): 470 completions (54.6%)
- Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication (09.0900): 181 completions (21.0%)
- Public Relations/Image Management (09.0902): 97 completions (11.3%)
- Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication, Other (09.0999): 50 completions (5.8%)

Historical enrollment data from peer institutions suggests strong national and regional demand for strategic communication programs. IPEDS data (2023) indicates that institutions such as:

- University of Colorado Boulder: 411 degrees conferred
- Florida International University: 222 degrees conferred
- University of South Florida: 182 degrees conferred

Similarly, regional institutions show sustained interest:

- Michigan State University: 25 degrees conferred
- Ball State University: 35 degrees conferred

The program has been designed to maximize existing faculty expertise and online course offerings, reducing the need for significant new investments in infrastructure. Additionally, the program leverages e-Learning and Instructional Support (e-LIS) resources to provide high-quality online instruction without requiring substantial additional costs.

Budgeting considerations have included faculty training in online pedagogy, instructional design support, marketing efforts to attract prospective students, and student services such as advising and career support. Revenue from tuition and increased enrollment will contribute to ongoing program development, ensuring long-term sustainability. By aligning program structure with workforce needs and institutional resources, the online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication is positioned as a financially viable and academically rigorous program that meets both student and employer demand.

### **Anticipated Future Growth and Management**

The proposed online Strategic Communication program is expected to experience steady growth over the coming years as it attracts new populations of students, including working professionals, distant learners, and stop-out students. The flexibility and accessibility of the program will make it highly appealing to these non-traditional audiences, as well as current students seeking additional online course options. Additionally, the program's alignment with industry needs in strategic communication positions it for sustained demand in a competitive educational market.

To manage this growth effectively, a dedicated Program Director/Advisor will oversee the program's operations, working closely with key stakeholders to ensure seamless scalability. The Program Director/Advisor will collaborate with the admissions team to facilitate real-time enrollment into the new major, ensuring that prospective students receive timely support and guidance during the registration processes. This real-time collaboration will allow the program to adapt quickly to enrollment trends and meet the needs of incoming students without delays.

As enrollment increases, the department will regularly assess course offerings and faculty resources to ensure high-quality instruction and manageable class sizes. The online format provides flexibility in scaling up course sections to meet demand, either by reallocating existing faculty or hiring part-time instructors with relevant expertise. Additionally, reserve seating will be used strategically to prioritize enrollment for new majors while still accommodating students from other programs where appropriate.

Regular program evaluations and feedback from students, faculty, and industry stakeholders will inform future curriculum adjustments and resource allocation to ensure the program remains competitive and sustainable. By leveraging the expertise of the Program Director, strong collaboration with admissions, and a

proactive approach to managing resources, the program is well-positioned for sustained growth and long-term success.

### **Impact on Current Students vs. Attracting New Students**

The proposed online Strategic Communication program is designed to primarily attract new student populations while also providing additional flexibility and opportunities for current students across the department's three programs: Communication, Journalism and Media Studies, and Public Relations and Advertising. While the primary audience for the program includes working professionals, distant learners, and stop-out students, the online courses within the program will also be accessible to current students through a combination of reserve and non-reserve seating. This ensures that current students in traditional programs can benefit from the added flexibility of online learning, allowing them to tailor their schedules to fit personal or professional commitments.

This approach enhances the overall appeal of the department's offerings without significantly shifting students away from existing programs. Traditional, in-person programs will continue to attract students who prefer campus-based experiences, such as face-to-face interactions, extracurricular activities, and hands-on learning opportunities. Programs like Public Relations and Advertising or Journalism and Media Studies will retain their unique appeal for students pursuing specialized tracks, while online courses serve as a supplemental option to meet their evolving needs.

By integrating online course availability for current students, the program adds value to the department's existing offerings while expanding the institution's reach to new audiences. The flexibility of online courses ensures that both traditional and non-traditional learners have access to a more personalized and accommodating educational experience. As a result, the program will primarily attract new student populations while fostering greater retention and satisfaction among current students.

### **Evidence of Student Enrollment at Peer Institutions that Offer the Same/Similar Program (no distinction in program modality)**

An analysis of student enrollment **2023** data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) using Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code 09.0900 (Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication), which most closely corresponds to the proposed online Strategic Communication major at Oakland University (OU), demonstrates evidence of similar program offerings at peer institutions, including those in Michigan. Michigan State University conferred 25 bachelor's degrees in Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication, reflecting a strong enrollment in this field. Nationally, larger institutions such as the University of Colorado Boulder conferred 411 degrees, Florida International University awarded 222, and the University of South Florida conferred 182, showcasing strong student interest in these programs. Additionally, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Houston awarded 139 and 130 degrees, respectively.

Comparatively, Ball State University conferred 35 degrees, while Central Connecticut State University awarded 39, reinforcing a consistent demand for Strategic Communication and Public Relations programs across different institutional sizes. However, it is important to note that enrollment information from IPEDS only reflects the number of degrees conferred, not the modality in which students completed their programs. Many online programs, especially at the bachelor's level, operate in both online and in-person formats, making it difficult to determine how many degrees were awarded specifically through online delivery. Despite this limitation, the presence of strong and growing Strategic Communication programs across Michigan and the nation highlights the viability and competitiveness of OU's proposed **fully online** major in this field.

Sample Institutions	Total Degrees Conferred (CIP code 09.0900) 2023
University of Colorado Boulder	411
Florida International University	222
University of South Florida	182
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	139
University of Houston	130
Michigan State University	25
Ball State University	35
Central Connecticut State University	39
Boise State University	18
Adams State University	2
Minnesota State University Moorhead	9
Minnesota State University-Mankato	15
University of Southern Mississippi	1

#### L. Advising students

- Describe the current academic advising structure and how the new program will be supported by advising
- Provide the current academic adviser:student ratio

Similar to other programs within the department, the Program Director will fill the advisor role. Additionally, an eSpace site will be available for students to access materials related to degree planning and career opportunities. This platform will also serve as a touchpoint for faculty-student engagement. Program director/advisor will also be available to meet with students virtually as needed.

#### M. Retention Plan

- Describe the process for assessing and improving student persistence and completion **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

The online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication is designed to provide students with a flexible and comprehensive education, preparing them for careers in communication- and media-related fields. To ensure student retention and success, the program will incorporate a variety of support mechanisms tailored to the needs of online learners, including working professionals and returning students. This retention plan will outline strategies to enhance student engagement, support academic success, and promote degree completion.

### **Student Support Services**

Academic advising will play a crucial role in student success. A dedicated program director will also serve as the program advisor, assisting students with course selection, degree planning, and career pathways. To accommodate students' diverse schedules, online advising appointments will be available, including evening options for added flexibility.

Faculty engagement will also be prioritized. Professors teaching online courses will hold virtual office hours and provide asynchronous discussion forums to foster meaningful interaction and support.

To ensure students feel confident navigating the online learning environment, a dedicated online learning orientation will be provided. This will familiarize students with the learning management system and virtual classroom expectations. Additionally, technical support will be available through the OU Help Desk, ensuring prompt and professional assistance for all IT-supported services and products. As part of their onboarding process, students will be connected to an online space that will provide continued communication with the program director and academic advisor.

To further enhance student engagement, a dedicated social media presence will be maintained. This platform will keep students informed about events, deadlines, and opportunities to build a sense of community within the program.

### **Reserve Seating**

Reserve seating rules allow students to register for courses based on their curriculum campus code, offering a more flexible approach to managing enrollment. This strategy is particularly effective when excluding some, but not all, of the maximum enrollment for specific courses. By implementing reserve seating, online program students gain priority access to required courses, ensuring they can register without competing with students in other modalities. This reduces scheduling conflicts and progression delays, ultimately enhancing retention among strategic communication majors in the online program. Aligning course availability with students' program pathways creates a more seamless and supportive academic experience, fostering timely degree completion and greater satisfaction with the program.

### **Academic Success Strategies**

Early intervention and academic alerts will be key components in supporting students. Faculty will implement early assessment checkpoints to identify students who may be at risk. The OU Early Alert System will flag students struggling in

courses, prompting proactive outreach from advisors and academic support services to ensure they receive the assistance they need.

Course offerings will be designed to maximize flexibility. Students will have the option to choose between asynchronous and synchronous courses based on their learning preferences. Additionally, those who wish to participate in select in-person courses will have the opportunity to do so, increasing their engagement and expanding their learning experience.

### **Career Development and Experiential Learning**

Students will benefit from a robust internship placement support system. The program will cultivate partnerships with corporate, nonprofit, and public service organizations to provide virtual (when possible) and in-person internship opportunities. We will work with Career and Life Design to assist students with resume building, LinkedIn optimization, and interview preparation through both in-person and online services as well as other career-related online events fall and winter semester.

As part of their academic journey, students will have the option to complete an internship capstone experience that will provide them with practical, hands-on projects real-world strategic communication challenges. To further enhance professional development, the program will host guest speaker series and industry panels, exposing students to current trends and networking opportunities.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion will be an integral part of the curriculum. Students will be required to complete at least one DEI-focused course, ensuring exposure to diverse perspectives and communication practices. Faculty will integrate DEI considerations into coursework and assignments, promoting inclusive and ethical communication strategies.

### **Retention Data Tracking and Continuous Improvement**

Student feedback mechanisms will be established to assess program effectiveness and areas for improvement. Regular student satisfaction surveys will be conducted, and input from the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) will be used to guide program enhancements. The PAC, consisting of faculty, alumni, and industry professionals, will provide valuable recommendations to ensure the program remains relevant and effective.

Retention and graduation rates will be systematically tracked to identify trends and areas requiring targeted intervention. Data analytics will be leveraged to personalize student support based on performance indicators, ensuring that every student has the resources and guidance necessary to succeed.

### **Conclusion**

This retention plan will be designed to create a supportive and engaging learning environment for students in the Online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication. By integrating academic support, faculty engagement, career development, and DEI initiatives, the program will foster student success and

ensure high retention and graduation rates. Through these efforts, students will be empowered to achieve their academic and professional goals, contributing to a thriving community of strategic communication professionals.

## V. Off-Campus or Online Information

### A. Location (e.g. main campus, OUWC, MUC, online, other) **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

Online

### B. Explain how the quality, access, and cost considerations for “off-campus sites” or online program proposals will be assessed. **\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\***

An “off-campus site” is a place where instruction is taking place and students can:

- Complete 50% or more of the courses leading to a degree program;
- Complete a full degree program (degree site); or
- Complete 50% or more of the courses leading to a Title IV eligible certificate

## **Assessment of Quality, Access, and Cost Considerations for the Online Strategic Communication Program**

### **Quality Considerations**

The quality of online instructional materials will be assessed utilizing the criteria established by e-learning Quality Online Teaching guidelines. To ensure the academic rigor and effectiveness of the **online Strategic Communication program**, the following measures will be implemented:

#### **1. Instructional Design Support**

- e-LIS **Instructional Designers (IDs)** will collaborate with faculty to enhance course design, engagement, and accessibility.
- Best practices for online pedagogy, including interactive lesson development and digital accessibility improvements, will be integrated into all courses.
- Faculty can receive individualized support to **review and refine course content**, ensuring alignment with learning objectives and industry standards.

#### **2. Faculty Training and Development**

- **Quality Online Teaching Certification Course (QOTC)** will be required for faculty new to online instruction, providing a **foundation in online pedagogy and best practices**. Currently, 12 faculty have completed the Quality Online Teaching Certification Course (QOTCC) - which focuses on how to teach effectively in the online environment.
- Faculty will have access to **workshops and on-demand resources**, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with **Quality Matters (QM) standards**.
- Department-specific training will be available to address **discipline-specific instructional challenges** in strategic communication.

#### **3. Course Review and Continuous Improvement**

- The program will follow a **structured course review process** using rubrics aligned with **OU e-LIS quality standards**.
- Faculty will be encouraged to incorporate **student feedback and learning analytics** to refine and improve course delivery.

### **Access Considerations**

Ensuring **equitable access** to the online Strategic Communication program includes:

#### **1. Flexible Learning Options**

- Courses will be **asynchronous** with **synchronous support options**, accommodating diverse student schedules.
- Students will have access to digital resources, discussion forums, and recorded lectures for **self-paced learning**.

#### **2. Accessibility & Inclusion**

- e-LIS IDs will assist faculty in **designing courses that meet digital accessibility standards** (e.g., ADA compliance).
- Closed captions, alternative text, and screen reader-compatible materials will be integrated into all courses.

#### **3. Student Support Services**

- Online students will have access to **academic advising, career services, and library resources**.
- Technical support will be available through **OU's Help Desk and e-LIS support team**.

### **Cost Considerations**

The financial feasibility and affordability of the online program will be addressed through:

#### **1. Instructional Development Investment**

- The program will leverage e-LIS instructional designers to **develop high-quality courses without additional costs to students**.
- Faculty will utilize existing **institutional resources and open educational resources (OERs)** where possible to **reduce textbook costs**.

#### **2. Competitive Tuition Structure**

- Out-of-state students enrolled in the online Strategic Communication program will receive **in-state tuition rates**, making the program more financially accessible and competitive.

#### **3. Scalability & Efficiency**

- The program will leverage **Moodle and e-LIS tools to streamline course delivery**, reducing operational costs.
- Faculty training and ongoing support will be integrated into existing university resources to **minimize additional expenditures**.

By implementing these measures, the **online Strategic Communication program** will uphold **high-quality instruction, broad accessibility, and cost efficiency**, ensuring student success.

**VI. Needs and Costs**

**A. New resources needed for the proposed program *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

- Number of new faculty to be hired
- Cost of faculty retraining or continuing education
- Source of new resources

To provide dedicated support, we anticipate using one course release for a current faculty member to act as program director and advisor. We might then use a SL instructor to cover that course release (\$6,800).

**B. Existing resources to be reallocated (e.g., closing a program, ending an initiative, existing faculty and staff who can support the proposed program)**

The new program will utilize existing faculty and staff from the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations.

**C. 5-Year budget and revenue from program - Appendix E *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

See Appendix E for [link](#) to budget and revenue.

**D. Library needs – Include library assessment report - Appendix F *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

**Library Budget** (see Appendix F for more information)

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Monographs <sup>1&amp;2</sup>	\$3,560	\$1,958	\$2,154	\$2,369	\$2,606
Support for current resources <sup>2</sup>	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$6,050	\$6,655	\$7,321
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,560</b>	<b>\$7,458</b>	<b>\$8,204</b>	<b>\$9,024</b>	<b>\$9,927</b>

<sup>1</sup> Presumes the purchase of 10 ebooks for the first year and 5 ebooks per year thereafter within the identified LC classifications.

<sup>2</sup> Presumes a 10% annual inflation rate.

**E. UCM Assessment plan for recruiting and marketing needs (contact your UCM liaison) *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

See Appendix I

**F. Classroom, laboratory, space, tech, renovation needs *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

- What are the physical facilities and equipment needed to support the program

- Indicate the impact that the proposed change will have on the physical resources and laboratories that currently accommodate existing programs and services, or identify new laboratory and preceptor needs

No additional upgrades or changes to existing space are required.

#### **G. Equipment needs *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\****

Given the demands of a fully online program, we anticipate that faculty might need access to technology, for example recording peripherals such as microphones, cameras, and lighting; presentation software subscriptions, etc. Laptop equipment funds will also need to be raised for the computing demands of faculty teaching online. So we anticipate a need of approximately \$2500 a year for the first five years.

### **VII. Appendices**

- A. Abbreviated Faculty Vitae *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- B. Degree Requirements *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- C. Typical Student Plan of Study – Full-Time Schedule
- D. Detailed New Course Descriptions or Syllabi *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- E. Pro Forma Budget *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- F. Library Budget Report *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- G. University Assessment Plan *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**
- H. Support Letters (e.g., Professional Societies, Governmental Agencies, Prospective Employers, Professionals in the Field)
- I. University Communications and Marketing plan *\*\*\*HLC requirement\*\*\**

APPENDIX A

## Faculty Qualifications

Include information relevant to the proposed program for each faculty member who will be involved

<b>Faculty Member 1</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Robert Sidelinger	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relation
<b>Academic Qualifications (100 words max)</b>	I hold a doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Communication Studies and have experience teaching courses in research methods for public relations and advertising, relational communication theory, and the dark side of communication. I've designed and taught both hybrid and online courses, incorporating best practices in digital learning. My research focuses on instructor-student communication and relational dynamics, as well as health and risk which aligns well with strategic message design and audience engagement. I'm actively involved in curriculum development and connecting communication programs to career outcomes. These experiences position me well to teach and contribute meaningfully to the proposed online Strategic Communication program.	
<b>Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)</b>	I have taught courses in public relations and advertising research methods, interpersonal communication, relational communication, and the dark side of communication. I've designed and taught both online and in-person courses, emphasizing applied learning and student engagement. My experience includes mentoring graduate research and advising honors theses, along with contributing to curriculum development that bridges theory and practice. I also collaborated with industry professionals to integrate career readiness into coursework. These experiences align well with the goals of the Strategic Communication program and prepare me to teach courses that emphasize research, message design, and professional application.	
<b>Course Load New Program</b> 0-1 a year	<b>Current Course Load</b> 1/2	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Faculty Member 2</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Jennifer Heisler	<b>Title</b> Associate Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
<b>Academic Qualifications (100 words max)</b>	I hold a doctoral degree in (Ph.D.) in Interpersonal Communication with a concentration in Family Studies. I have a background in diverse methodologies, including quantitative approaches (like surveys) and qualitative approaches (interviews or focus groups). I am conversant in both statistical analyses of data, as well as grounded theory and thematic analyses. My teaching often includes the interpersonal curriculum, such as Relational Communication Theory, Gender Communication, and Foundations of Communication Studies. I regularly teach the senior capstone course which prepares students for post-graduate life and work. I am actively connected to the Career and Life Design professionals at Oakland University, as well as the larger post-graduate networking opportunities.	
<b>Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)</b>	I am primarily responsible for courses within the interpersonal curriculum, such as relational Theory, Interpersonal Communication, and Gender Communication. I often teach the introductory course - Foundations of Communication Studies where new students are introduced to the key concepts within the Communication discipline. I also regularly instruct senior and graduating students in the Communication capstone course, focusing on ethical approaches to message design in work and personal contexts.	
<b>Course Load New Program</b> 1-2 a year	<b>Current Course Load</b> 2/3	
<b>Faculty Member 3</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Erin Myers	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
<b>Academic Qualifications (100 words max)</b>	I hold a doctoral degree in Communication and have experience teaching courses related to new/social media. I have designed and taught both hybrid and online-only courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level. I am a media studies scholar with experience researching and	

	teaching about advertising/consumer culture, new/social media, media industries, and audience reception, all of which are relevant to the proposed Strategic Communication program.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have taught courses on advertising/consumer culture, new/social media, media industries, audience reception, and qualitative research methods. I have experience designing and teaching in both hybrid and online-only modalities with close attention to promoting student engagement in digital spaces and connecting theory and practice in meaningful ways. I also have experience advising graduate student research and undergraduate honors college theses.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/2	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Faculty Member 4</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Valerie Palmer Mehta	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I possess a Ph.D. in Communication with a specialization in Rhetorical Studies (the study of persuasion in public culture). I also possess a B.A. and M.A. in Communication Studies. With over twenty years of experience, I have taught a variety of courses, including Persuasion, Rhetorical Theory, Communication Theory, Political Communication, and Women, Power & Persuasion. My research focuses on the persuasive strategies women use to influence and reshape public culture, particularly in the realm of women's political rhetoric. My research has been published in a wide variety of national and international peer-reviewed journals, as well as in edited collections.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	With a specialization in persuasion, I bring over twenty years of experience teaching various courses that examine the influence of persuasion in society. These courses include Persuasion, Rhetorical Theory, Political Communication, Women, Power & Persuasion, and Feminist Rhetorical Theory, among others. I have designed and instructed in-person, hybrid, online synchronous, and online asynchronous courses, and I have been teaching an online asynchronous persuasion course since 2020. My teaching experience spans several higher education institutions, including Oakland University, Wayne State University, and the University of Alabama. Additionally, my students frequently present their class papers at academic conferences.	
Course Load New Program 1-2 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		

<b>Faculty Member 5</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Scott Crabill	<b>Title</b> Associate Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I received my Ph.D. in Communication, a Master's Degree in Counseling, and a Bachelor's degree in psychology. My research focuses upon how white supremacist groups use computer mediated communication to recruit and entice adolescent males to engage in their online groups. My other area of research focuses upon the pedagogy of civic engagement, specifically the experiential components of knowledge integration. I coedited a book on the disruption of online education within the traditional academic delivery model, focusing on how civic engagement can serve as a place-based model for student educational objectives.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have taught Group Dynamics and Listening in Communication fully online in synchronous and asynchronous formats.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		

<b>Faculty Member 6</b>		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Kellie Hay	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a doctoral degree in Communication, with specialization in cultural studies. While I have consistently taught courses like Communication, Culture, and Belonging, Race and Communication, and Hip Hop, Race, and the City, I teach across the curriculum in Communication. I have taught Public Speaking, Organizational Communication at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as Foundations in Communication, Communication theory, and Performance Communication. In my early career I did considerable work developing curriculum, creating new courses and making policy	

	decisions. I have directed six honors theses during my twenty-five-year tenure here. I advise and mentor undergraduate and MA students. <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	Beyond teaching and doing research, I am an organizational communication consultant. DEI and creating sustainable organizational cultures are where my expertise lies. I use this experience and bring it to bear in my classroom, not only in organizational courses but also in every course I teach. Organizational life is where we live, often accounting for more time than we spend sleeping or with family. As such, organizational experience seeps into everything I teach. Public Relations constitutes half of my undergraduate major; it still shapes how I see the role of message construction, ethics, conflict resolution.
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/3
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	

### Faculty Member 7

<b>Faculty Name</b> Kathleen Battles	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relation
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a PhD in Communication Studies from the University of Iowa. My research focuses on media history, sound studies, surveillance studies, and issues related to gender, sexuality, and the media. My publication record includes two books, one edited collection, a number of journal articles, as well as review essays and popular scholarly blog posts. I was active in sound heritage preservation through my decade-long work with the Library of Congress's Radio Preservation Task Force. I have been active in program development at Oakland, including spearheading curricular change, serving as our MA Program Coordinator, and now serving as Department Chair.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have taught courses from the introductory through the MA level across multiple modalities, including media history, media and gender/sexuality, media and consumer culture, media theory, social media, media influencers, television studies, and internet studies, as well as communication courses. I have supervised a number of MA thesis projects, developed new courses, and worked towards adopting affordable course materials. As many of the courses I teach are concerned with the ways media interact with social processes and their impact on us, they will serve to help students understand the broader media landscape in which communication strategies are designed.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 1/1	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>		

### Faculty Member 8

<b>Faculty Name</b> Chiaoning Su	<b>Title</b> Associate Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a doctoral degree in Media and Communication Studies and have experience teaching courses in Public Relations, Communication, and Journalism Studies. My research spans two interconnected areas: journalism of crisis and journalism in crisis. The former examines the representation and production of crisis news, while the latter explores journalism's role in public life amid the challenges of declining democracy. Before transitioning to academia, I worked as a communication specialist at Ogilvy Public Relations and contributed to several political campaigns in Taiwan, where I developed expertise in strategic messaging and crisis management.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I am primarily responsible for courses in the field of Public Relations, such as Introduction to Public Relations, Social Media in Public Relations, and Crisis Communication. Previously, I also taught Introduction to Journalism, Public Relations and News, and Nonprofits in Public Relations. In addition, I oversee the development and revision of the curriculum for the PR & Advertising major.	
Course Load New Program 1 a year	Current Course Load 1/2	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>		

### Faculty Member 9

<b>Faculty Name</b> Tom Discenna	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
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Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	My PhD is in Communication with a focus on rhetorical studies, specifically as it relates to the study of social movements. My dissertation research focused on labor as a social movement. I've authored research on movements for social change and participated in invited seminars dedicated to advancing the study of movement rhetoric. In addition, I have for three years hosted a podcast on the New Books Network that invites movement scholars and activists to share their work in advancing the cause of social change.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I developed the Communication Program's course in Persuasion and Social Change, assisted in its conversion to General Education offering and have taught it regularly for several years. This summer I will be adapting this course to an online environment so as to facilitate continuing to offer it in this format regularly in the future.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	

If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position  
Click or tap here to enter text.

### Faculty Member 10

<b>Faculty Name</b> Christine Stover	<b>Title</b> Instructor of Practice	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold an MA in Broadcast and Cinematic Arts from Central Michigan University (2004) and an MA in Media Studies from Wayne State University (2014), where I focused on crisis communication. While at Wayne State, I served as a research assistant with the National Center for Food Protection and Defense, studying producer and consumer responses to foodborne outbreaks and recalls, my academic background and hands-on research experience provide a strong foundation and application in strategic communication.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have instructed university students since 2002 at both Central Michigan University and Oakland University. My most relevant experience in strategic communication has been my instruction of the persuasion class within our program. My academic background can be resourcefully used in the development of this program.	
Course Load New Program 1-2 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	

If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position  
Click or tap here to enter text.

### Faculty Member 11

<b>Faculty Name</b> Holly Gilbert	<b>Title</b> Instructor of Practice	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold an MA in Broadcast and Cinematic Arts from Central Michigan University (2004) and an MA in Media Studies from Wayne State University (2014), where I focused on crisis communication. While at Wayne State, I served as a research assistant with the National Center for Food Protection and Defense, studying producer and consumer responses to foodborne outbreaks and recalls, my academic background and hands-on research experience provide a strong foundation and application in strategic communication.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	With a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies and a journalism career dating back to 1979, I spent two decades as a newspaper feature writer and editor before transitioning to freelance writing, design, and public relations. In 1995, I was asked to develop and teach Oakland's first media publication design course, which continues to run twice a year. My cross-disciplinary work and continued practice in the field enrich the classroom and connect students from diverse majors to the power of media storytelling.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/2	

If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position  
Click or tap here to enter text.

### Faculty Member 12

<b>Faculty Name</b> Rebekah Farrugia	<b>Title</b> Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a doctoral degree in Communication Studies and have experience teaching courses in research methods, mass communication and media studies theory, and Internet studies. I'm actively involved in curriculum development and connecting communication and media studies subject matter to career outcomes. These experiences position me well to teach and contribute to the proposed online Strategic Communication program.	

Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have taught courses in mass media and media theory as well as communication studies at both the undergraduate and master's levels. Relevant master's level courses include Communication Studies Scholarship and Mass Communication & Media Theory. Undergraduate courses include introduction to communication as well as Mass Communication & Media Theory. My experience includes mentoring graduate research and advising honors theses, along with contributing to curriculum development that bridges theory and practice. These experiences align well with the goals of the Strategic Communication program and prepare me to teach courses that emphasize the media's role in crisis communication.	
Course Load New Program 0-1 a year	Current Course Load 2/2	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		

Faculty Member 13		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Rebecca Jones	<b>Title</b> Associate Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a Doctorate in Philosophy in Communication specializing in Rhetoric and Public Culture with a focus in Gender and Race Studies. I have experience teaching a wide variety of courses, both online and in person. My research and teaching surrounds critical cultural communication studies and women and gender studies.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I teach communication, culture and belonging, disability and communication in everyday life, cultural theory, introduction to women and gender studies and to communication studies. Beyond my classroom experience I also serve on the board of two non-profit organizations and on the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Council within our national professional organization. The breadth of these experiences enable me to showcase to my students how vital and diverse strategic communication skills are.	
Course Load New Program 1 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		

Faculty Member 14		
<b>Faculty Name</b> Jeff Youngquist	<b>Title</b> Associate Professor	<b>Department</b> Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations
Academic Qualifications (100 words max)	I hold a Ph.D. in Communication and have experience teaching and designing both undergraduate and graduate courses related to organizational communication, relational communication, and leadership and communication. I have taught and designed courses in online formats and face-to-face. My research and writing explores leadership, and it often focuses on academic leadership, ethics, and leadership. I have the experience and qualifications to teach a number of different courses that are important to the Strategic Communication program.	
Prior Instructional responsibilities and other experience relevant to the course they will teach in the program. (100 words max)	I have taught and designed both undergraduate and graduate courses related to organizational communication, relational communication, and leadership and communication. I have taught and designed courses in online formats and face-to-face. I have written a textbook addressing public speaking (one of the core courses for the Strategic Communication program), and I have also taught public speaking and leadership for Oakland University's Executive MBA Program. These experiences align well with the goals of the Strategic Communication program and have prepared me to teach the courses that are required for this program.	
Course Load New Program 1 a year	Current Course Load 2/3	
If not yet hired, provide the ad and job description for the position Click or tap here to enter text.		

## APPENDIX B

## Degree Requirements

CORE COURSES					
Course	Title	Credits	Prerequisites	New	% Distance
JMS 1600	Introduction to Media Literacy	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 2000	Introduction to Journalism	4	Prerequisite(s): WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 2000	Public Speaking	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 2001	Professional Communication	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 2403	Group Dynamics and Communication	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3200	Persuasion	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3401	Communication in Organizations	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 4950	Internship	4	Junior/senior standing and at least 20 credits of major courses for COM, JMS, and PR majors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 4970	Communication Capstone	4	Junior/senior standing and at least 20 credits of major courses for COM, JMS, and PR majors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 2400	Introduction to Advertising	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 2500	Introduction to Public Relations	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%

REQUIRED ELECTIVE COURSES					
Course	Title	Credits	Prerequisites	New (x if yes)	% Distance
COM 1000	Foundations of Communication Studies	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 2202	Persuasion and Social Change	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3000	Relational Communication Theory	4	Additional Requirement(s): Sophomore standing Prerequisite(s): COM 1000 or permission of instructor or public relations and advertising major standing	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3002	Cultural Theory	4	Additional Requirement(s): Sophomore standing Prerequisite(s): COM 1000 or permission of instructor or public relations and advertising major standing	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3300	Communication, Culture and Belonging	4	Additional Requirement(s): Junior standing Prerequisite(s): WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3302	Disability and Communication in Everyday Life	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3402	Communication in Leadership	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 3405	Gender Communication	4	Prerequisite(s): WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 4203	Women, Power, and Persuasion	4	Additional Requirement(s): Junior/senior standing, or permission of instructor required Prerequisite(s): WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of C or higher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 4402	Health Communication	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
COM 4404	Crisis Communication	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 1600	Introduction to Media Literacy	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%

JMS 2000	Introduction to Journalism	4	Prerequisite(s): WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 2600	Media and Social Identity	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 3003	Media Theory	4	Prerequisite(s): JMS 1600 with a grade of (C) or higher or public relations major standing or permission of instructor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 3290	JMS 3290 Media Storytelling for Social Justice	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 3602	Television Studies in the Streaming Age	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 3606	Media, Gender and Sexuality	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
JMS 4200	Media Design	4	Prerequisite(s): JMS 2000 or instructor permission	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 2400	Introduction to Advertising	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 2500	Introduction to Public Relations	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 3510	Public Relations and Advertising Campaigns	4	Prerequisite(s): PR 2400 or PR 2500		100%
PR 3520	Internal Public Relations	4	Prerequisite(s): PR 2500	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 3540	Social Media in Public Relations	4		<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
PR 3700	Research Methods in Public Relations and Advertising	4	Additional Requirement(s): Major standing or instructor permission. Prerequisite(s): PR 2400 or PR 2500	<input type="checkbox"/>	100%
WRT 2080	Introduction to Professional Writing	4	Prerequisite(s): Completion of the university writing foundation requirement (WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher)		100%
WRT 3073	Digital Storytelling		Prerequisite(s): Completion of the university writing foundation requirement (WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher)		100%
WRT 3082	Business Writing		Prerequisite(s): Completion of the university writing foundation requirement (WRT 1060 or equivalent with a grade of (C) or higher)		100%

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

To earn the online Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Strategic Communication, students must complete a minimum of 40 credits, of which 20 credits must be at the 3000 level or above.

### 1. Core (must be completed with a grade of (C) or higher)

- JMS 1600 Introduction to Media Literacy *or* JMS 2000, Intro to JRN
- COM 3200 Persuasion
- COM 3401 Communication in Organizations
- PR 2400 Introduction to Advertising *or* PR 2500 Introduction to Public Relations

### 2. Plus one of the following (must be completed with a grade of (C) or higher):

- COM 2000 Public Speaking
- COM 2001 Professional Communication
- COM 2403 Group Dynamics and Communication

### 3. Capstone - choose one (must be completed with a grade of (C) or higher)

- COM 4950 Internship
- COM 4970 Communication Capstone

### 4. Electives (Choose four; Students must take one department approved diversity, equity, and inclusion [DEI] course. Approved DEI courses have an asterisk)

- COM 1000 Foundations of COM Studies

- COM 2202 Persuasion and Social Change
  - COM 3000 Relational Communication Theory
  - \*COM 3002 Cultural Theory
  - \*COM 3300 Communication, Culture and Belonging
  - \*COM 3302 Disability and Communication in Everyday Life
  - COM 3402 Communication in Leadership
  - \*COM 3405 Gender Communication
  - \*COM 4203 Women, Power, and Persuasion
  - \*COM 4402 Health Communication
  - COM 4404 Crisis Communication
  - JMS 1600 Introduction to Media Literacy (can count as either a required course or an elective course but not both)
  - JMS 2000 Introduction to JRN (can count as either a required course or an elective course but not both)
  - JMS 2600 Media and Social Identity
  - JMS 3003 Media Theory
  - \*JMS 3290 Media Storytelling for Social Justice
  - JMS 3602 Television Studies in the Streaming Age
  - \*JMS 3606 Media, Gender and Sexuality
  - JMS 4200 Media Design
  - PR 2400 Introduction to Advertising (can count as either a required course or an elective course but not both)
  - PR 2500 Introduction to Public Relations (can count as either a required course or an elective course but not both)
  - PR 3510 Public Relations and Advertising Campaigns
  - PR 3520 Internal Public Relations
  - PR 3540 Social Media in Public Relations
  - PR 3700 Research Methods in Public Relations and Advertising
  - WRT 2080 Introduction to Professional Writing
  - WRT 3073 Digital Storytelling
  - WRT 3082 Business Writing
5. Students must complete one department approved diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) course. **Approved DEI courses have an asterisk.**

**APPENDIX C**

**Typical Plan of Study – Full-Time Schedule**

<b>Student Schedule</b>		
<p><b>Fall I</b>            CHM 1440 ([natural science] 4)            CHM 1470 (1)            COM 2000 (4)            WRT 1050 (4)</p>	<p><b>Winter I</b>            COM 1500 ([language] 4)  <u>PR 2500 (4)</u>            WRT 1060 ([writing foundation] 4)            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Summer I</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>
<p><b>Fall II</b>            FLM 1150 ([US diversity/arts] 4)  <u>JMS 2000 ([WIM/WIG] 4)</u>  <u>JMS 2600 ([social science] 4)</u>            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Winter II</b>  <u>COM 2202 ([western civ.] 4)</u>  <u>COM 3200 (4)</u>            PHL 1000 ([formal reasoning] 4)            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Summer II</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>
<p><b>Fall III</b>  <u>COM 3401 (4)</u>            HST 2010 ([global perspective] 4)            WRT 2070 ([exploratory] 4)            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Winter III</b>            ART 1150 ([knowledge app.] 4)  <u>COM 4402 (4)</u>            WRT 3070 ([exploratory] 4)            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Summer III</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>
<p><b>Fall IV</b>  <u>COM 3303 ([WIM/WIG] 4)</u>            ENG 1500 ([literature] 4)            WRT 3073 ([exploratory] 4)            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Winter IV</b>            COM 3405 ([US diversity/WIG] 4)  <u>COM 4970 (4)</u>            ELEC (4)</p>	<p><b>Summer IV</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>
<p><b>Fall V</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>	<p><b>Winter V</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>	<p><b>Summer V</b>            Enter Student Schedule</p>

## APPENDIX D

### New Course Descriptions or Syllabi

\*No new courses for the proposed program.

## APPENDIX E

### Proforma Budget

**Insert Budget using Proforma Budget Template ([Budget Template](#))**

<https://www.oakland.edu/senate/guidance-documents-for-senate-processes/>

Budget:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ZF5lzOxC45W61RMprojQ3Faja2efy8aY/edit?gid=311961213#gid=311961213>

## APPENDIX F

# Library Budget Report

April 18, 2025

**To:** Robert Sidelinger, Professor and Communication Program Director - Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations

**From:** Helen Levenson, Associate Professor and Collection Development Librarian, University Libraries

Molly McGuire, Assistant Professor and Liaison Librarian to the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations, University Libraries

**Re:** Library collection evaluation for proposed online B.A. program in Strategic Communication

In preparing this collection evaluation, we examined the draft proposal for the Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication and reviewed core journal and resource title lists in the field. Overall, the library is well-equipped to support the new program, with only a few additional resources needed to enhance coverage in key subject areas. The following summary outlines the resources currently available, identifies recommended acquisitions, and provides a five-year cost estimate to support the proposed program.

### Databases and Indexes

As noted in the draft proposal, strategic communication is a highly interdisciplinary research area, incorporating coursework from public relations, advertising, media studies, journalism, and communication. To access the journal literature in these disciplines, Kresge Library maintains subscriptions to a number of online indexes and databases; these include Communication & Mass Media Complete, Business Source Elite and ProQuest One Business (two business databases that provide full-text access to numerous journals focusing on public relations, media studies and other communication topics), Social Sciences Citation Index Expanded, Film & Television Literature Index, PsycInfo, JSTOR, ERIC and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts. Subscriptions to news databases such as World Newsreels Online: 1929-1966, International Newsstream, and US Newsstream along with historical newspapers such as the Detroit Free Press and the New York Times provide good support for the program's offered journalism courses. Academic Search Complete is a more general database that provides access to a variety of scholarly and popular sources relevant to the program's coursework. However, access to Academic Search Complete is through the Michigan eLibrary which is currently dependent on funding from the federal government entity, Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which may be eliminated in the coming fiscal year. If IMLS ceases to exist and alternative funding is not provided, this resource may no longer be accessible.

### Journals

The library's coverage of the journal literature in the areas of study relevant to strategic communication is strong. Based on our review of the major journals in this field (see Appendix A), we find that the library's current journal holdings will offer robust support for the new program. Most major journals are accessible via the library's discovery tool, the periodical databases mentioned above, and various e-journal publisher packages. Numerous journals are available full-text as a result of our subscription to Communication & Mass Media Complete. However, some journals do restrict access due to a one-year embargo placed on certain titles by the publishers. For articles not immediately available, interlibrary

loan (ILL) ensures prompt digital access to additional relevant materials.

**Monographs and Reference Sources**

The library’s reference collection contains a range of subject encyclopedias in the topics related to strategic communication, including *The Encyclopedia of International Media and Communications*, *The Encyclopedia of Mass Communication*; *The Encyclopedia of Media and Communication*; and *The Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. In addition, the library offers reference works that address cultural topics. Given the interdisciplinary scope of the program, the department also benefits from resources acquired through the collection budgets of related programs, including women’s studies, film studies, sociology, business, and education.

Table 1 presents the library’s holdings—both total and recently acquired—within the Library of Congress subject classifications most pertinent to the Strategic Communication program. To ensure the monograph collection sufficiently supports the new online program, we recommend purchasing ten ebooks in the first year, followed by five additional ebooks each subsequent year, appropriate for undergraduate study. The program would benefit from more up-to-date works focusing on interdisciplinary areas bridging communication, business, technology, public relations, and strategic messaging. Library of Congress subject classifications that should be prioritized for collection development are highlighted in Table 1.

**Library Budget Request**

Appendix B provides cost estimates for new resources needed to support the proposed online program which calls for funding to purchase ten ebooks in the initial year of the program and five ebooks in subsequent years, within the subject areas relevant to the online program for which more current ebook content should be acquired.

**Support for Existing Library Resources**

Because this program will rely largely on existing library resources, we have also included funding to cover anticipated annual inflationary cost increases for the library’s current journals and research databases (estimated at ten percent per year) related to Strategic Communication. Without additional funding, the library cannot guarantee that we will be able to continue to subscribe to our current resources. Therefore, we ask that the library be given funds each year to assist us in continuing to subscribe to these necessary resources for the Department of Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations’ faculty and students.

**Table 1: Monographic titles held by OU in subjects relevant to the proposed online B.A. in Strategic Communication program**

LC class / Subject	Print books (all years)	Print books (2020-present)	Ebooks (all years)	Ebooks (2020-present)
HD 59-59.6 Public relations, corporate communication	19	0	25	2
HD 60-60.5 Social responsibility of business	143	5	192	27
HF 5718-5720 Business communication	68	5	140	0

HM 741-742 Groups and organizations. Social Media.	13	0	193	39
HM 1206-1212 Social influence. Social pressure. Social groups.	41	4	98	6
HM 1236 Public opinion	10	3	58	10
P 87-100 Communication. Mass media. Interpersonal communication. Oral communication. Speech. Natural language processing. Signs and symbols. Nonverbal communication.	1285	58	1265	155
PN 87-96 Criticism	78	2	265	14
PN 4001-4500 Oratory, Elocution, etc.	336	0	387	79
PN 4699-5650 Journalism	1775	26	705	89

**Note:** Shaded rows indicate subject areas for which more current ebook purchases are recommended for this online program.

**Table 2: Major Journals – Strategic Communication**

Title	Publisher	OU Access
Case Studies in Strategic Communication	USC	yes (open access)
International Journal of Strategic Communication	Taylor & Francis	yes
Communication Quarterly	Taylor & Francis	yes
Communication Research	SAGE	yes
Information, Communication & Society	Taylor & Francis	via Interlibrary Loan
Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly	SAGE	yes
Journal of Applied Communication Research	Taylor & Francis	yes
Journal of Communication	Oxford University Press	yes
Mass Communication & Society	Taylor & Francis	yes

International Journal of Advertising	Taylor & Francis	yes
International Journal of Market Research	SAGE	yes
Journal of Advertising	Taylor & Francis	yes
Journal of Marketing	SAGE	yes
Journal of Marketing Communications	Taylor & Francis	yes
Journal of Marketing Research	SAGE	yes
Journal of Promotion Management	Taylor & Francis	yes
Marketing Letters	Springer Nature	yes
Social Marketing Quarterly	SAGE	yes
Public Relations Review	Elsevier	via interlibrary Loan
Journal of Public Relations Research	Taylor & Francis	yes
Journal of Public Affairs	Wiley	yes
Management Communication Quarterly	SAGE	yes
International Journal of Business Communication	SAGE	yes
Communication World	International Association of Business Communicators	yes
Business and Professional Communication Quarterly	IEEE	yes (until 2019)
American Communication Journal	American Communication Association	yes (open access)
International Journal of Communication	USC Annenberg Press	yes (open access)
Journal of Consumer Research	Oxford University Press	yes
Discourse Studies	SAGE	yes
Global Media and Communication	SAGE	yes
Discourse & Society	SAGE	yes
Communication Theory	Oxford UP/International Communication Assn.	yes
Media, Culture and Society	SAGE	yes
Cultural Studies	Taylor & Francis	yes
New Media & Society	SAGE	yes
Journal of Communication Management	Emerald	yes

Table 3: Library Budget for Proposed Online B.A. in Strategic Communication Program

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Monographs <sup>1&amp;2</sup>	\$3,560	\$1,958	\$2,154	\$2,369	\$2,606
Support for current resources <sup>2</sup>	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$6,050	\$6,655	\$7,321
Total	\$8,560	\$7,458	\$8,204	\$9,024	\$9,927

<sup>1</sup> Presumes the purchase of 10 ebooks for the first year and 5 ebooks per year thereafter within the identified LC classifications.

<sup>2</sup> Presumes a 10% annual inflation rate.

## APPENDIX G

### University Assessment Plan

<https://www.oakland.edu/oira/>

#### **Step 1: Basic Information**

Program Name: Strategic Communication

School or College your program resides in: Arts and Sciences

Program Level (check all that apply):

Undergrad   
Master's   
Doctoral

Date Plan Submitted: May, 2025

Current Assessment Contact Representative (& E-mail): Jennifer Heisler  
([heisler@oakland.edu](mailto:heisler@oakland.edu))

Current Department or Program Chair (& E-mail): Kathleen Battles  
([battles@oakland.edu](mailto:battles@oakland.edu))

Current Dean (& E-mail): Elaine Carey ([ecarey@oakland.edu](mailto:ecarey@oakland.edu))

#### **Step 2: Type of Assessment Plan**

**Option B.** If you are not accredited by an external body (or your accreditor's standards do not meet the standards set by the Higher Learning Commission), then proceed to Steps 3-5 to create your assessment plan. Members of the UAC are always willing to work with individuals from any department to develop or revise their assessment plans. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) has some very helpful tools for faculty and departments listed [on their website](#). If at any time you have any questions, need any assistance, or would like to schedule a meeting with any UAC representatives, please contact the UAC and OIRA liaison, Reuben Ternes ([ternes@oakland.edu](mailto:ternes@oakland.edu)).

#### **Step 3: Aligning Program Goals, Student Learning Outcomes, and Assessment Measures**

Please begin your program assessment plan by completing the table below. Use the "Table" menu in Word to add rows, merge cells, etc. as needed.

- o In column 1, record your program goals as they relate your unit's program goals.
- o In column 2, record your program's planned student learning outcomes related to each program goal.

- o SLOs should be written using observable and measurable verbs (e.g. write, state, explain, apply, demonstrate, etc.) as opposed to verbs that are difficult to observe directly (e.g. learn, know, etc.).
- o In column 3, record the assessment measure(s) that evaluate each student learning outcome (note: each learning outcome should have an associated assessment measure).
- o Add rows to the table as necessary.

(1) Program Goals	(2) Student Learning Outcomes	(3) Assessment Measures	Items
<p>As a result of their experience as a student in the Communication Program, our students will develop <b>communicative</b> competence.</p>	<p>SLO #1: Students will compare, evaluate, and demonstrate different approaches to communication across diverse contexts.</p>	<p><b>COM 4950 (capstone) supervisor survey:</b> multi-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire requesting feedback on student's performance in various contexts.</p> <p><b>COM 4950/4970 (capstones) student survey:</b> 8-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire addressing self-perception of communicative behaviors and ethics.</p>	<p><b>Capstone student survey:</b>            ...communicate effectively using strong written communication?            ...communicate effectively using strong verbal communication skills?            ...present your work in a professional manner appropriate to the setting?            ...conduct yourself in a professional manner appropriate to the setting?</p> <p><b>Capstone supervisor survey:</b>            ...listens to others in an active and attentive manner.            ...communicates ideas and concepts clearly in writing.            ...effectively participates in meetings and group settings.            ...demonstrated the ability to use strong written communication skills.            ...demonstrated the ability to use strong verbal communication skills.</p>
<p>As a result of their experience as a student in the Communication Program, our students will</p>	<p>SLO #2: Students will recognize and demonstrate cultural competence including sensitivity and understanding of</p>	<p><b>COM 3300 (Com, Culture &amp; Belonging) student survey:</b> 6-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire addressing student's self-perception of</p>	<p><b>Capstone student survey:</b>            ...value and respect the diversity of people and perspectives you will encounter in life?</p> <p><b>Capstone supervisor survey:</b></p>

(1) Program Goals	(2) Student Learning Outcomes	(3) Assessment Measures	Items
develop <b>cultural</b> competence.	difference in communicative settings.	<p>cultural communication, race, identity.</p> <p><b>COM 4950/4970 (capstones) student survey:</b> 8-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire addressing self-perception of communicative behaviors and ethics.</p> <p><b>COM 4950 (capstone) supervisor survey:</b> multi-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire requesting feedback on student's performance in various contexts.</p>	<p>...was successful at adapting to diverse people and situations.</p> <p><b>COM 3300 student survey:</b>  ... encouraged you to discover your own cultural and ethnic identity.  ...learn about others' cultural and ethnic identity.  ...stimulates an exploration of how the historical and sociological constructions of race and identity influence your perceptions today.  ...influenced your beliefs, attitudes, or values about issues of difference in communication contexts.  ...increased you sense of responsibility as a member of my local community.  ...increase my sense of responsibility as a member of the larger, global community.</p>
As a result of their experience as a student in the Communication Program, our students will develop <b>disciplinary</b> competence.	SLO #3: Students will articulate the history of the communication discipline, including connections between the past and present communicative paradigms. Students will describe the diversity of the communication field; compare and contrast the branches of the	<p><b>COM 4950/4970 (capstones) student survey:</b> 8-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire addressing self-perception of communicative behaviors and ethics.</p> <p><b>COM 4950 (capstone) supervisor survey:</b> multi-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire requesting feedback on student's performance in various contexts.</p>	<p><b>Capstone student survey:</b>  ...apply theories and concepts you learned in class to settings outside the classroom?</p> <p><b>Capstone supervisor survey:</b>  ...demonstrated evidence of academic preparation that enabled him/her to be successful in this setting.</p>

(1) Program Goals	(2) Student Learning Outcomes	(3) Assessment Measures	Items
	communication tradition.		
As a result of their experience as a student in the Communication Program, our students will develop <b>ethical</b> and <b>professional</b> competence.	SLO# 4: Students will appraise the complexities of communicative ethics in professional and interpersonal interactions. They will integrate ethical communicative behaviors into their professional and personal interactions.	<p><b>COM 4950/4970 (capstones) student survey:</b> 8-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire addressing self-perception of communicative behaviors and ethics.</p> <p><b>COM 4950 (capstone) supervisor survey:</b> multi-item Likert and open-ended questionnaire requesting feedback on student's performance and ethics</p>	<p><b>Capstone student survey:</b>  ...live and work in an ethical manner?  ...possess the skills and knowledge to be successful in your chosen career or employment?</p> <p><b>Capstone supervisor survey:</b>  ...demonstrates professional and mature verbal communication skills.  ...exhibits professional behavior and attitude.  ...conducted him/herself in an ethical manner.  ...conducted him/herself with professionalism.</p>

#### Step 4: Participation in Assessment Process

Who Will Participate in Carrying Out the Assessment Plan	What Will Be Their Specific Role/s
Our department has an Assessment Committee with representatives from each of the majors/programs in the department. The Assessment Committee Chair oversees the data collection, analyses and reporting for the Program reports. The Assessment Committee Chairperson reports to the Program Director and the Department Chairperson throughout the semester.	<p>Assessment Chair: Erin Meyers  Program Director: TBD  Department Chair: Kathleen Battles</p>

#### Step 5: Plan for Analyzing and Using Assessment Results to Improve Program

A. How will you analyze your assessment data?

The Assessment Chair provides surveys (and reminders) to the instructors of assessment courses at the beginning of each semester. Instructors post surveys in Moodle and provide class time for students to complete near the end of the term. The department utilizes OU's Qualtrics program for survey/data storage. In reporting semesters, data from each source (e.g., capstone student survey) are aggregated and summarized by item, major, and modality.

B. How will you use results to improve your program?

As this is a new program, the initial data collection will be very informative to the department as a baseline measure of student learning outcomes. Additionally, the department is keenly interested in any variations by modality, particularly online vs in-person/hybrid classes. Results will assist in determining if changes to content, assignments, or scheduling are needed.

**Step 6: Submit Assessment Plan**

Send completed form electronically to [ternes@oakland.edu](mailto:ternes@oakland.edu).

## APPENDIX H Support Letters



To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to offer my enthusiastic endorsement of the proposed Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication major at Oakland University.

The communications and public relations programming at OU has evolved considerably since my time at the University ('06, Communication). Today's Department of Communication, Journalism and Public Relations (CJPR) shows incredible promise. Thanks to department's commitment to fostering an environment of impactful learning and meaningful growth, students interested in professions that rely heavily on communication and PR strategy and skill benefit from a diversity of classes and resources. I'm confident that if I had access to the thoughtful programming available today when I was a student, it would have made a positive impact on my confidence, drive and professional trajectory within the world of public relations.

As a nearly twenty-year practitioner and partner at Michigan's largest, independent public relations agency, I have the rare opportunity to meet young talent at many different stages in their professional journey. We have incredibly high expectations for our junior staff and apprenticeship participants. Young talent who possess strong acumen in team building, conflict resolution and overall communication across multiple mediums are in the greatest position to succeed. Hands-on, real-world application and practice in the key areas of strategic communication can make a significant difference in how quickly a young professional can scale their abilities, flex their capacity and participate in meaningful work.

Moreover, our PR agency operates in a remote-first environment. While we have intentional face-to-face meetings, culture moments and significant levels of client and media interactions, the foundation of our agency now orients around a remote setting. A virtual learning environment creates important muscle memory related to virtual communication and ideation, which are key—and required—skills for thriving in a remote-first company like Identity.

I applaud the Department of CJPR for thinking critically about the needs of today's students entering tomorrow's workforce and look forward to welcoming OU graduates of this program into our agency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Crow', is written in a cursive style.

Brandon Chesnutt  
Partner, Identity



550 WEST LAFAYETTE BOULEVARD DETROIT, MI 48226-3140  
313.242.0444

**WDIV/DETROIT**



March 22, 2025

To members of the Oakland University community,

I am delighted to write in support of the proposed online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication at Oakland University. As an anchor/reporter at WDIV and an adjunct professor at Oakland University, I see firsthand the critical importance of effective communication skills. I believe this new program offers a timely and much-needed opportunity for students, particularly working professionals and returning students, to develop their communication expertise in a way that fits into their busy lives.

The online nature of this program offers a unique advantage by providing flexibility for students to learn and grow in their careers while still pursuing their education. In both my professional career and as a professor, I have seen how crucial it is for students to be able to balance work, life, and study. This online program allows students to earn a degree from anywhere, at their own pace, and on their own schedule - an ideal format for those who are juggling personal commitments, careers, or other responsibilities.

The program's comprehensive approach to strategic communication is particularly valuable. Offering courses that integrate public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication, the program will equip students with the practical skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a wide range of fields. In addition, the flexibility of the online format makes this accessible to a wide range of individuals who might not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue such a degree.

The program's design, focusing on practical application and skill development in areas such as ethics, leadership, crisis communication, and diversity, prepares students for the challenges of modern communication environments. Whether communicating with diverse audiences, managing crises, or crafting compelling messages for different platforms, students will leave this program ready to step into leadership roles in communication fields. The program's emphasis on strategic thinking and problem solving will provide students with the critical thinking and creativity they need to navigate the ever changing media landscape.

I am confident the online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication will provide students with the tools they need to excel in the field of communication, all while accommodating the demands of their busy lives. This program is a forward-thinking initiative that will serve students at Oakland University and beyond.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I wholeheartedly support this program and look forward to its success.

Nick Monacelli  
Anchor/Reporter  
WDIV – NBC Detroit



Megan Wolowiec  
Public Relations Manager  
Lambert by LLYC  
mwolowiec5@gmail.com  
248-882-8744  
March 21, 2025

Review Committee at Oakland University  
318 Meadow Brook Rd

Rochester, MI 48309

Dear Review Committee:

I am writing to express my support for the establishment of a fully online Strategic Communication major at Oakland University. As an alumna of the Department of Communication, Journalism and Public Relations, and as a professional working in the field of integrated communication, I strongly believe this program would be a vital addition to the university's academic offerings.

In today's digital landscape, the demand for skilled strategic communicators has never been higher. A degree that combines courses from public relations, advertising, media studies and communication will allow Oakland University to provide students with the skills needed to develop a broad skill set encompassing creativity, critical thinking, strategic analysis, ethics and practical application. Providing this as an online major would allow students the flexibility to develop these essential skills while accommodating the realities of their personal and professional lives.

Furthermore, this program would expand access to education for a broader range of students, including working professionals, non-traditional learners and those unable to attend in-person classes. By leveraging online learning technologies and industry-relevant coursework, Oakland University would be preparing graduates to excel in a rapidly evolving communication environment.

As a communications professional, I have seen the growing demand for individuals who can navigate the complexities of digital media and public relations for corporate, non-profit and public service industries. I wholeheartedly support this initiative and encourage its approval.

Please feel free to reach out if I can provide any further insight or assistance. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Megan Wolowiec  
Public Relations Manager  
Lambert by LLYC



BOEING

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to offer my strong support for the creation of the fully online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication at Oakland University (OU). As a member of the Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations (CJPR) Professional Advisory Council, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the evolution of higher education and its response to the dynamic needs of the modern workforce. Throughout our advisory council meetings, we've often discussed how OU might differentiate itself from competing colleges and universities - I believe the proposed online Strategic Communication major will do just that. It represents a timely and forward-thinking initiative that will provide students with a comprehensive and versatile skill set for success in an increasingly digital and global workforce.

The online format of this degree program is particularly appealing, offering working professionals the flexibility to pursue their academic goals without disrupting their careers. Additionally, this flexibility extends to returning students who require an adaptable learning environment to balance education with other personal commitments - as a working mom, I know many other parents and caregivers would benefit from the flexibility of this program. The combination of accessible, remote learning with the integrated approach to public relations, leadership, media, diversity, and technology makes this program unique and highly valuable to those pursuing careers in communications.

Quite frankly, I wish I had this major available when I enrolled at OU nearly 15 years ago. From my perspective working in executive communication at Boeing, this program offers a well-rounded, multidisciplinary curriculum, equipping students with both strategic and practical skills for diverse communication roles across various sectors. By integrating courses from public relations, advertising, media studies, and communication, the program provides students a broader picture of what their career paths could look like. In a world where many are questioning if the return-on-investment of a bachelor's degree is worth it in today's economy, I can't think of a better major to introduce at OU.

I wholeheartedly endorse the creation of the online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication. This program will not only serve the current needs of students, but it will also help shape the future of communication education. I am confident that this new major will contribute significantly to the university's mission and to the continued success of its students..

Kayla McClelland  
Executive Communications

6

BOEING

569 Pioneer Drive, 201 Recreation and Athletics Center,  
Rochester, MI 48309-4482 | Email: cdround@oakland.edu |  
goldengrizzlies.com

Clarence Round  
Coordinator of Creative and Emerging Media  
cdround@oakland.edu  
March 14, 2025

I am writing to offer my full support for the development of an online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication program at Oakland University. Having been closely involved with the Communication, Journalism, and Public Relations (CJPR) Professional Advisory Council, I am confident that this online program will be a successful addition to both current and prospective OU students.

I believe that the creation of the online program will provide much-needed flexibility, especially for working professionals, and will be a significant asset to the ongoing growth of an already strong program at Oakland University. Through my involvement with the CJPR Council, I have witnessed the dedication of the staff and leadership in their efforts to continually improve the program and enhance students' knowledge, ensuring that it remains competitive and recognized as one of the best in the nation.

The program's goals and outcomes align perfectly to reflect the key objectives that communication professionals strive to achieve in their careers, aiming to instill these same standards in future students. As someone who applies strategic communication daily to brand the Oakland University Athletic Department, I recognize the value this program offers in preparing students to become effective communicators.

As the Coordinator of Creative and Emerging Media, I see this online Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication program as a perfect fit for developing the essential skills needed to manage and lead creative media projects. The program's focus on strategic communication across digital, written, and oral platforms is crucial for developing effective media strategies that are essential in today's communication landscape. Additionally, the emphasis on audience analysis will ensure that students can tailor their messages across diverse media channels, which is key to success in an ever-evolving industry. The program's attention to ethics will also equip graduates to responsibly navigate the complexities of communicating with diverse, global audiences. Furthermore, the development of leadership skills in crisis communication and team building will help students manage media projects and lead creative teams effectively in dynamic environments.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support the implementation of the Strategic Communication program at Oakland University. I am confident that it will make meaningful contributions to student success, enrich the academic community, and prepare graduates for success in their professional endeavors. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

Clarence Round



**APPENDIX I**

**BROGAN  
& PARTNERS**



[brogan.com](http://brogan.com)

## Oakland University Strategic Communications Major Media Plan

### FY26 Media Recommendations

The below outline includes media recommendations for \$5,000 - \$10,000 to run winter 2026 through spring of 2027.

The primary target audience is people A20-26 with some college experience in primary and secondary counties. Targeting segments will also be implemented to include students at colleges in Michigan including MSU, Wayne State, Macomb Community College, Oakland Community College, CMU, Eastern, Grand Valley, Henry Ford, Schoolcraft, LCC, Mott, Mid-Michigan, Delta, and Washtenaw Community College. The overall marketing objective is to increase the awareness of the new strategic communications major and to drive clicks and website sessions to the program landing page.

**Geo:** Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Huron, Ingham, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lapeer, Livingston, Monroe, Muskegon, Ottawa, Saginaw, Sanilac, St. Clair, Tuscola, and Washtenaw counties.

**Budget: \$5,000**

MEDIA	TIMING	ESTIMATED IMPRESSIONS	ESTIMATED NET COST
<b>Facebook/ Instagram</b>	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	450K	\$4,575
<b>Agency Fee</b>			\$425
<b>Total:</b>		<b>450K</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

**Budget: \$10,000**

MEDIA	TIMING	ESTIMATED IMPRESSIONS	ESTIMATED NET COST
<b>Facebook/ Instagram</b>	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	615K	\$6,150
<b>Facebook/ Instagram Stories</b>	12/1/26 – 4/30/27	300K	\$3,000
<b>Agency Fee</b>			\$850
<b>Total:</b>		<b>915K</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>



