GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

SUBMITTED BY

BRIAN LAMB SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

WEST LAFAYETTE CAMPUS

FINAL DOCUMENT

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4/06/12
Application for Graduate Certificate Program

Title: Graduate Certificate in Strategic Communication Management  
Program: Brain Lamb School of Communication Graduate Certificate  
College: Liberal Arts  
Campus: Online through the West Lafayette Campus  
Major: Brian Lamb School of Communication  
Minor: Graduate Certificate in Strategic Communication Management

Purpose of Program
Strategic Communication as a field of study combines aspects of applied persuasion, public affairs, integrated marketing communication and public relations. This area has developed over the last decade as a result of changes in technology, the need for coordinated responses between separate organizational units and a need for more professionalism within the area at large.

At the present time, there is a demand for trained individuals in the private, government and not-for-profit sectors. The proposed Certificate in Strategic Communication Management will provide working professionals in advertising, and allied communication fields such as integrated marketing communication (IMC), corporate communication, and organizational communication with advanced credentials and skills needed to lead integrated campaign teams, to manage communication programs, and to advance in their careers. The Brian Lamb School of Communication will offer this certificate program completely online. There is no other such program on campus or within the state.

Demand for Program
A major focus within the mission of Purdue University is to “Reach out to an expanded audience of learners through residential and distance education utilizing a variety of learning media and technologies.” In addition, that mission seeks activities that “promote human and intellectual diversity by providing equal access and opportunity to representatives of a rich variety of populations and cultures” (Purdue University Strategic Plan – Mission). Purdue University embraces a national and international engagement mission. An online certificate program in strategic communication furthers these aspects of our mission by providing a high quality program in this area to regional, national and global audiences of professionals who seek to improve and/or enhance their skill set and credentials.

The planning process for this program began several years ago and was initially conceptualized as a program designed for on-site delivery through one or more of Purdue’s Technology Parks. This model is similar to other successful on-site programs at our peer communication programs and focuses on professional full-time employees (typically in urban areas) who need advanced degrees. These programs have been moving online or are now delivered in hybrid formats and this trend is predicted to continue. We feel that an online format is the now the best way
to reach the desired demographic and we feel it fits with current programs in the Brian Lamb School and with Purdue’s global outreach efforts.

As part of this effort we undertook a market analysis in Indianapolis and with Purdue’s partner in professional online education, Deltak. Executives at various companies in Indianapolis were interviewed in the fall of 2009. Student research teams also interviewed 55 Purdue alumni residing in the Indianapolis metropolitan area who are employed in marketing/PR/Advertising companies. These alums were asked to describe their professional needs and to share their perceptions of the viability of such a program, etc. Strong support for such a program emerged and supported our own assessments of the potential value of this endeavor. Based on market analysis we expect 20 students to enroll in the certificate program the first year. We do not expect these students to be concurrently working toward a graduate degree at Purdue.

A market analysis was also conducted by Deltak (http://www.deltak-innovation.com/). Their analysis showed a strong national (and likely international) need for such a program and a benchmarking study showed that there was an extremely strong interest in similar programs across the U.S. In some cases the growth has bordered on “extraordinary” and Deltak recommended that Purdue move quickly to provide this program.

Finally, representatives of the School of Communication contacted a number of domestic and international programs directly and spoke with program administrators... in every case, the program directors reported strong enrollments. Comparable international programs, especially in Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai and Beijing) were very strong, with an average of 10 applicants for every open seat. Furthermore, the program directors anticipated strong demand for the foreseeable future.

**Clientele to be Served:**
The target market for the Certificate in Strategic Communication Management will include recent graduates in PR, Corporate Communication, and Marketing programs with some work experience as well as seasoned professionals with various educational backgrounds interested in strategic communication. These individuals might be employed by not-for-profit and for-profit organizations and would include a global audience of professionals in industry, NGOs and/or government. The program will provide mid-career professionals with the tools and experiences to take advantage of management and career growth opportunities.

**Description of Program Requirements**
- **Certificate Requirements:** The certificate requires nine hours of credit, taken for a letter grade. And includes the following courses:
  - **COM 60111 Seminar in Strategic Communication**
  - **COM 60211 Seminar in Global Strategic Communication**
- **COM 60311 Seminar in Crisis Communication**

  b. GPA Requirements: Students must receive a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 to fulfill certificate requirements. Students cannot earn lower than a “C” in any course applied toward the certificate.

c. No credits can be transferred from another institution.

d. No credit hours from undergraduate-level courses may be applied toward the certificate.

e. Courses may not be applied for credit toward more than one certificate.

f. Three hours of credit taken prior to admission to the certificate program may be counted toward completion of the certificate.

g. Certify Completion: An audit will be prepared that will be forwarded to the Graduate School Records Office. The audit will contain information on the completion of the required courses for this certificate, and the grades earned for each course.

h. Dissemination of the Certificate: The certificate will be included with the student’s diploma if they have also completed a graduate degree program. If they have only completed the graduate certificate program, then it is mailed to the student by the Office of the Registrar.

**Admission Requirements**

a. **Admission Requirements**

   The admissions requirements are standard for the institution and existing master’s degree programs in the School with the exception that applicants for this “professional” program will be expected to have some work experience.

b. **Graduate Record Examination**

   All applicants will take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) before they can be considered for admission. The target GRE scores are 400/146 Verbal and 500/144 Quantitative. Lower GRE scores will not disqualify a candidate for admission but will lead to a more in-depth examination of the applicant’s admission materials.

c. **English Language Proficiency**

   The language of instruction at Purdue University, West Lafayette Campus is English. Therefore, proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and understanding English is vital to success in this program. International applicants, whose native language is not English will be required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the Pearson Test of English (PTE). The current score requirements for these exams can be found at [http://www.gradschool.purdue.edu/admissions/apply_toefl.cfm](http://www.gradschool.purdue.edu/admissions/apply_toefl.cfm).

d. **Transcripts**

   All applicants will be required to submit an official transcript from each college or university attended prior to enrolling in the program. Evidence of completion of the baccalaureate degree will also be required.

e. **Recommendation Letters**
Letters of recommendation will be solicited from at least three people that can attest to the applicant’s professional abilities, goals and background as they relate to strategic communication.

**Professional Experience**

Two to three professional years of work experience will be required.

b. **Prerequisite Course Work or Degrees**

Applicants for unconditional admission to the MS in the Strategic Communication degree program will be required to have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. In addition, all applicants will be required to meet the GRE and English proficiency requirements as well as have two to three years of professional work experience.

c. **Student Clientele**

The program will be designed to meet the needs of professionals employed full or part-time who require flexibility because of family or work issues and cannot take the time off to move to a residential location. The program might be especially attractive to working professionals, non-traditional students.
Signature Page

Graduate Certificate Title: Graduate Certificate in Strategic Communication

Program: Brain Lamb School of Communication Graduate Certificate

College: Liberal Arts

Campus: Online through the West Lafayette Campus

Approvals:

Signature of Department Head
Howard Sypher, Ph.D.

Signature of Academic Dean
Irwin Weiser, Ph.D.

5/8/12
Date

3-8-12
Date