ADVERTISING, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA DESIGN

The Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design (APRD) strives to produce leaders in the area of strategic communication who have mastered a design-thinking process grounded in analytical and creative thought. We believe in amplifying our students’ curiosity, increasing their tolerance for risk and encouraging them to look at life and a career with an entrepreneur’s eye for opportunity. APRD is committed to providing students the necessary tools and techniques to think critically, adapt, create and above all lead in a rapidly changing media world.

Our goal is to help students acquire the kind of in-depth expertise in at least one area of strategic communication and design that will enable them to generate ideas and solve problems for a variety of organizations, including but not limited to ad agencies, PR firms, publishing and design firms, nonprofits, start-ups and personal ventures. We produce graduates who are forward-looking and have a deep interest in and knowledge of diverse cultures both within the United States and throughout the world.

The department actively encourages students to enroll in courses offered both within and outside CMCI. Similarly, many of our courses are open to students in other units on the grounds that the design-thinking process can be used to solve problems in a wide variety of disciplines.

Course code for this program is APRD.

Master’s Degree

- Strategic Communication Design - Master of Arts (MA) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/programs-study/advertising-public-relations-media-design/strategic-communication-design-master-arts-ma)

Doctoral Degree

- Media Research and Practice - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/programs-study/media-studies/media-research-and-practice-doctor-philosophy-phd)

Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member’s home department.

Colman, Jennifer
Instructor

Curry, Jeffery
Instructor

Doty, Dawn
Instructor

Duncan, Thomas R.
Professor Emeritus

Fisher, Jolene
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Oregon

Gangadharbatla, Harsha (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_153279)
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Griffin, Glenn
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Hopp, Tobias (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_157745)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Oregon

Lee, Seow Ting (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_157994)
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Missouri-Columbia

Ligon, Daniel
Instructor

Logan, Kelty Irene (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_147340)
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Texas at Austin

Moriarty, Sandra E.
Professor Emeritus

Robbs, Brett
Professor Emeritus

Schauster, Erin E (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156310)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Missouri-Columbia

Slayden, David Lee (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_113297)
Associate Professor; PhD, Indiana University Bloomington

Smail, David (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158316)
Instructor

Vargo, Christopher (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158320)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of North Carolina

Willis, Erin N (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156068)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Missouri-Systems office

Courses

APRD 5001 (3) Brand Design Studio 1
Focuses on the challenges of designing brands targeted to customer needs and desires. The course is structured around the process of identifying brand opportunities, idea generation, design, testing and launch opportunities. Through a series of projects, students address aspects of practice and theory, from brand adaptation of cultural values to maintenance of brand integrity and global design strategies. Where applicable, case studies will supplement studio execution.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5002 (3) Experiential Design Studio 1
Provides a comprehensive understanding of design thinking and its processes to design innovative branded experiences and exchanges in a variety of strategic communication contexts. Students learn design methods applications that can be applied not only to experiential design, but to a problem where design thinking is meaningful to branded experiences. They learn standard and currently practiced design methods and, through repeated application, internalize them into a personal design aesthetic.
APRD 5003 (3) Brand Design Studio 2
Builds on and extends concepts and executions covered in Brand Design 1. While BD Studio 1 grounds the students in core branding concepts and applications, BDS 2 expands both executional skillsets and conceptual frameworks through the development of a unified theory of branding that transforms objects into meaning bearers. Through research, strategic definition, identity, expression, communications and behavior study, students will learn how to create opportunities for complex, meaning centered relationships between people and things.

APRD 5004 (3) Experiential Design Studio 2
Builds on and extends concepts and applications introduced in Experiential Design Studio 1 with a concerted focus on prototyping quickly and often the best way to both communicate and improve one’s design. Integrates prototyping activities, along with research and testing techniques, into every stage of the design process. Students will learn how to choose the appropriate method to suit different dimensions of a design problem at different stages in the process and the pitfalls of each approach.

APRD 5005 (3) Critical Making Studio 1
Introduces students to the communication design possibilities of critical making by exploring the conceptual process, research and key questions framed through an iterative approach to problem solving. The learning experience includes hands-on, embodied approaches to problems that generate innovative solutions by crossing the divide between thinking and making and between the screen and physical environments.

APRD 5006 (3) RE: Studio 1
Brings students’ attention to design as a form of social innovation and develops awareness of the social, political and economic contexts of design. They become literate in the often implicit narratives embedded in design products and services, then use scenarios and storytelling to generate new strategies, build and test prototypes and write a case study detailing what was learned.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5007 (3) Critical Making Studio 2
Turns from software to a focus on hardware and physical computing by literally and figuratively disassembling objects: using prototyping, reverse engineering, hardware hacking and circuit bending, design fiction and electronics fabrication (i.e., Arduino, raspberry pi and more). All of this takes place in a shared, open learning environment where students and faculty critically engage with a range of digital production tools and integrates them into ordinary life.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5008 (3) RE: Studio 2
Develops awareness of and access to necessary tools, smart objects for example, that can enable complex dynamics among people, objects and information via a combination of physical and digital design methods, all with an eye to design driven innovation for social change. This course shifts the usual strategic communication design point of view from the typical perspective of “trend noise” and market driven models to identifying actual problems and providing possible design solutions to those problems.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5010 (1-3) Design Sprint
Executes a five-day, immersive process for answering critical business questions through design, prototyping and testing ideas with sponsoring industry partners. The outcome is a fully functional prototype that is demoed and evaluated on the final day of the sprint. This project based studio is team taught and process based. The tangible outcomes from the project, along with documentation of the process, will go into the students’ professional portfolios.

Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 3.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

APRD 5011 (1-6) Book Lab
Dedicated to building out an industry ready professional portfolio, this immersive studio consists of four client facing project sponsored by and developed in collaboration with the program’s industry partners. In a series of three-week intensives, students will work from design briefs to concept, design and solve a variety of design problems for real world clients. Ranging from finished supercomps to functional prototypes - physical, video, projections mapping, etc. - students to market portfolios will demonstrate their command of strategic communication design across a range of media platforms.

Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5013 (3) Brand Design Studio 3: Sensational Branding
Explores both the theory and the practices of identity and branding through the creation of a series of projects related to the senses. Most of our visual world is made up of one or more identity components—from the basic form and structure of something to the specific experience which a brand provides.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5014 (3) Experience Design Studio 3
Introduces students to advanced practices and tools of the experience design profession. Topics vary to reflect current and emerging trends in the profession, but the core focus of the course consists of three broad themes: information design principles, understanding and defining user behaviors, and designing for emerging cross-channel experiences.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5015 (3) Brand Design Studio 4: Sustainability
Takes an in-depth look into engagement with challenges of designing for sustainability. Moves beyond the cradle to grave approach to designing for cradle to cradle with immersion into design ethics and the power of visual communication. Students are taken beyond the project brief to investigate why a brand or service should exist and the consequences of its existence.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5016 (3) Experience Design Studio 4
Organizes our annual inquiry and execution of a real-world project around an essential question in design, such as "Can design make us empathetic problem solvers?" Curated by our faculty and executed in collaboration with our industry partners, Experience Design Studio 4 pairs students with teams from design-driven companies to develop advanced projects over the course of a full semester.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade
APRD 5017 (3) Critical Making Studio 3
Employs advanced hands-on hardware practice for reflection, analysis, and comprehension of the physicality of computation and communications infrastructures. Through deconstruction of objects students will learn to interpret and intervene through formalized practices and techniques in the material layer of digital technologies, including: the use of prototyping, hardware hacking and circuit bending, the use of design fictions, reverse engineering, and electronics fabrication.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5019 (3) Critical Making Studio 4
Functions as a studio intensive to enable designers to conceive of objects as "interventions" and how artifact design can mediate interactions--between multiple audiences--making interaction a primary influence and component of the design. Students design an intervention of a public space that is unequivocally physical or elaborate through technologies with a goal of encouraging interaction, socialization, and sustainable change.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 5841 (1-3) Graduate Independent Study
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

APRD 5851 (1-6) Graduate Professional Project
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

APRD 5931 (1-3) Internship
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 3.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

APRD 6342 (3) Digital Advertising
Covers both traditional and emerging digital advertising methods, the popular platforms used to execute ads, and the leading analytic tools that can be used to assess advertising performance. Core advertising platforms covered include search, display, social media, native advertising, sponsored content and mobile. This class focuses on best practices and Key Performance Indicators that go with each advertising platform. Department consent required.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 6871 (1-3) Special Topics
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

APRD 6940 (1) Master's Degree Candidate
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

APRD 6951 (1-6) Master's Thesis
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

APRD 7001 (3) Pro Seminar in Strategic Communication
Introduces the scholarly discipline of strategic communication, theories of advertising and PR including theories relating to info processing, psychological responses to messages and creativity; covers pathways to a successful career, developing an academic plan for completing graduate school, conducting research and publishing, awareness of funding possibilities and the art of teaching and academic service. Required for strategic communication track PhD students. Covers the scholarly discipline of strategic communication, theories, pedagogy and the pathways to a successful career among other things.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

APRD 7871 (3) Special Topics
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.

MDRP 7871 (3) Special Topics
Special topics.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.