

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

medill.northwestern.edu/imc

The Integrated Marketing Communications Certificate Program focuses on effective marketing communications strategies and tactics for an increasingly digital media environment. It prepares students for entry-level marketing communications positions in such fields as digital communications, advertising, public relations, corporate communications, and database and social media marketing.

Students develop skills for understanding and analyzing consumers in traditional markets and newly forming digital communities and social networks. They learn how to conduct research and analyze data on consumer behavior, media usage, and marketing communications outcomes. Students also learn about message creation and delivery through a wide variety of traditional and digital media channels.

The IMC Certificate Program invites applications from students in any undergraduate school at Northwestern. The application period will run from April 1-15 each year, and students may only apply during their sophomore year. The program will accept 100 students each year. As described on the Medill website, to be eligible to apply for admission, students must complete three prerequisite courses and earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.2 in them. Students must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in the five IMC courses to achieve the certificate.

Program of Study

- Integrated Marketing Communications Certificate (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/journalism-media-integrated-marketing-communications/integrated-marketing-communications/integrated-marketing-communications-certificate/>)

IMC 300-0 Introduction to Integrated Marketing Communications (1 Unit) Basic introduction to the strategic marketing communications process, including consumer insight and research, market segmentation, brand positioning, communications messages, and media decisions. Overview of tactical areas, such as branding, advertising, digital media, and corporate communications. Course is for non-IMC certificate students only and does not count toward the certificate. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

IMC 301-0 Consumer Insight (1 Unit) Psychological, economic, communication, anthropological, and sociological perspectives on why and how individuals, families, and groups acquire, consume, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, brands, and experiences. Goals and experiences as means to understanding people as consumers. Prerequisite: Admission to IMC Certificate Program.

IMC 302-0 Research and Data Analytics (1 Unit) Covers analytic methods and metrics to develop, execute and evaluate marketing communications. Students learn how to design questionnaires and analyze survey results, and evaluate customer behavior by analyzing customer databases. Covers methods to evaluate media use including web analytics and social media metrics. Develops hands-on analytic skills with Qualtrics survey software and SPSS statistics software. Prerequisites: ECON 202, approved Statistics course.

IMC 303-0 Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy (1 Unit) Consumer insight and research, market segmentation, brand positioning, communication messages, and media decisions. Brand communications

integrated with other aspects of marketing, including product strategy, pricing, and retailing. Case studies and writing-intensive assignments. Prerequisites: IMC 301-0 and IMC 302-0.

IMC 304-0 Digital Media Strategies (1 Unit) Explores the contemporary media landscape and how brand communications adapt to media technology and usage. Uses current case studies to understand the transition from passive consumption of traditional media to active participation in digital and social media. Focuses on engaging consumers and other audiences and communicating effectively with them through media. Prerequisites: IMC 303, and admission to IMC Certificate Program.

IMC 305-0 Analytics to Activation (1 Unit) Analytics to Activation is a case study course taught by active industry leaders that will build upon the learning you gained in 301, 302 and 303. Instructors will further develop data collection techniques and analytic tools that will help you best define your target audience, evaluate your product or service offering, and optimize your brand activations to maximize return on investment. You will work individually and in teams on a variety of cases that require you to collect and interpret qualitative and quantitative data. Cases, podcasts, articles, and occasional guest speakers will introduce you to emerging technology platforms that can strengthen returns. Cases have been selected that demonstrate the technologies that drive marketing and communications in today's complex business environment. You will use the presentations and tools to create a data-driven brief to develop content that will minimize risk and maximize revenue and EBITDA growth of your efforts. You will present your work in every class and receive live feedback from your instructors just as if you are working at a client, an agency, or a consulting practice. Prerequisite: IMC 303-0.

IMC 306-0 Strategic Communications (1 Unit) Development and execution of communications strategies and relationship building with employees, the news media, government, investors, and the public. Outlets include traditional print and broadcast media and contemporary channels including blogs, social media platforms, and emerging technologies. Exercises in written communications. Prerequisite: Non-Medill students, IMC 303-0; Medill students, JOUR 301-0.

IMC 307-0 Digital, Social and Mobile Marketing (1 Unit) Focus on the tools, methodologies, and programs used by companies to develop, justify, deploy, and measure their social and mobile marketing programs. Development of complete social marketing programs for actual companies using best-of-breed social monitoring, web analysis, social marketing systems, blogs, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, and other tools. Prerequisite: IMC 303-0.

IMC 308-0 Content Strategy (1 Unit) Creating content that matters is mission critical for every brand. It's the pathway to deeper customer relationships. And from producing podcasts and full-length films, to building virtual worlds and AR experiences, to introducing AI influencers, brands have an endless, ever-evolving arsenal of tools at their disposal. But in a world where content is everywhere, breaking through is more challenging than ever. In this course, we'll get to the heart of how to create content that connects. It takes clear brand purpose, insightful audience understanding, brilliant strategy, and irresistible creative. And we'll dive into each through real-world examples, useful frameworks, and hands-on exercises. It's an energetic, highly collaborative environment that's ideal for all future marketers — especially those interested in brand strategy and storytelling.

IMC 309-0 Social Networks (1 Unit) Social networks have come to play an increasingly important role in the business world. This course will introduce social network theory and analysis with an emphasis on applications to IMC processes. The goal of the course is to provide students with fundamental knowledge and skills to design and evaluate

network-based IMC strategies. Students will apply social network theory and analysis through individual assignments and a final project.

IMC 310-0 IMC Law, Ethics and Technology (1 Unit) Provides students with the foundation to make better decisions and improve marketing communications by understanding legal and ethical issues and the policy side of communications, media and marketing. Covers media law, First Amendment protection of commercial speech, contracts, intellectual property, privacy and ethics. Prerequisites: IMC 303 and admission into the IMC certificate program .

IMC 311-0 Digital Governance (1 Unit) Digital Governance will explore the legal and ethical uses of the emerging technologies that now drive marketing and marketing communications. But to do that, we must be familiar with and understand these technologies. So first, we'll dive into algorithms, machine learning and AI, and then build our own AI models. Once we've gained a command of the technology, we'll focus on the areas of marketing where AI will have the greatest impact, but which also are the areas of greatest legal and ethical risk. These areas include content creation and moderation, fakes and false information, intellectual property, data privacy and security, and biometrics. Once we've analyzed and evaluated these high-risk categories, we'll build a digital governance framework for a hypothetical company that the instructors will create.

IMC 312-0 Finance for Integrated Marketing Communications (1 Unit) "This course provides an overview of the foundations of accounting as it relates to the use of costs from definitions, behaviors, contribution margin statements, and cost systems. Scenarios will be discussed and used in modeling for break-even, target profits, markup pricing and return on investment decision making. Using the ongoing debate of expenses versus investment, marketing costs will be expanded in the areas of budgeting, lifetime value and acquisition costs with the intention of building learning and action-based skills for each student to make impactful outcomes-based decisions that can be communicated with contextual story tell precision."

IMC 313-0 Visual Communication (1 Unit) Visual Communication equips students with the skills to create compelling, audience-focused visual content in an increasingly digital world. Through a human-centered design framework, students will learn how to develop effective communication materials for a variety of contexts, including marketing, presentations, data visualization, websites, and branding. This course emphasizes a modern, practical approach to visual storytelling—helping students refine their ability to simplify complex ideas, engage audiences, and deliver impactful messages in both small and large settings. Students will participate in hands-on creative projects, experiential learning opportunities, and thought-provoking exercises designed to strengthen their ability to communicate visually with confidence and clarity. No prior design or technical skills are required—just a curiosity for creative problem-solving and effective communication.

IMC 314-0 Branding in the Digital World (1 Unit) Branding in the Digital World will help students integrate traditional marketing frameworks with new technologies and go-to-market strategies to create cohesive consumer experiences across physical and digital channels.

IMC 390-0 Special Topics (1 Unit) Specialized courses include Finance for Integrated Marketing Communications -Finance for IMC will focus on the familiarity and use of financial tools important to marketing executives in budget development and spending allocation; Technology and Innovation for Media-This course addresses the profound impact that evolving media strategies have on news, marketing communications and audience experiences. Prerequisite: Medill students JOUR 301-0; non-Medill IMC Certificate students IMC 303-0.

IMC 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit) Prerequisite: IMC 303-0.