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## Measuring Strategic Communications

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# **MEASURING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my wife and family who have been both inspiration and encouragement over these past five years.

I appreciate the many times you have allowed me to work on this effort, sacrificing family time, enduring inconvenience and tolerating my absence as I completed it. This document would not exist were it not for your patience, love, and quiet endurance.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my mom, who wanted to be a doctor, and always wanted at least one in the family...

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

It is my sincere hope that this dissertation offers something of value to the academy and to my fellow practitioners and teachers. It has at times been a true joy to complete and other times has felt like a Sisyphean labor with endless rewrites and associated frustrations. But as Tom Hanks' character Jimmy Dugan says to his star player in *A League of Their Own*: "It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard, everyone would do it. The hard... is what makes it great."

In that spirit, there are many people whom I should acknowledge who have helped make this dissertation possible by alternately challenging me and encouraging me. Let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation to my committee, especially my chair Dr. Augie Grant whose patience and willingness to work with me on this endeavor cannot be properly acknowledged in words. I also would like to thank Dr. Glenda Alvarado, Dr. Ran Wei, and Lisa Sisk for their helpful editing suggestions, Dr. Shirley Carter for her encouragement, and Dr. Dickey for his valuable additions.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The convergence and integration of communication disciplines is a daunting challenge for educators. Traditional distinctions of advertising, public relations, and integrated communication are becoming blurred by the growth of social media and other new media channels. The advent of strategic communications is a newer iteration of this coalescence of technology, analytics, and practice.

Silos of branding, issues management, media relations, image management, research, and many other communications (applied and specialty) as well as skills and traits are being combined in favor of a more comprehensive, strategic communications approach. The multi-platform, multi-disciplinary communicator is becoming the expected product of undergraduate programs in mass communications.

However, this rapid transition of the media education landscape is also causing confusion among communications faculty. Distinctions of what is strategic, what is integrated, what is public relations and what is advertising are becoming blurred. This change foments the question, “What is strategic communications?”

As a solution, this research seeks to better define strategic communications for the purpose of impacting methods of instruction.

In many academic and professional circles, strategic communications is considered a highly attractive solution for the future. Its popularity is strong in both instruction and ultimately in the practice. More importantly, from an education perspective, the results here will help educators discern what preparations are needed to train students for understanding and ultimately practicing the discipline.

This definition of strategic communications is established through analysis of academic opinion. As a matrix for this definition, strategic communications is defined across three dimensions: applied communications, specialty communications, and communication skills and traits. Further insight is also obtained via a research instrument that allows comparison and contrast of strategic communications with three other contemporary communications disciplines: integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. Measurement is accomplished via a Mean Value of Importance: (MVOI). Original research conducted includes a faculty focus group and a quantitative survey of faculty via an online measure. The inquiry yielded 212 faculty respondents, out of a purposive sample pool of 580, teaching in one or more of the aforementioned four disciplines: strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations and advertising. Findings indicate unique differentiators and surprising similarities between the four disciplines across three dimensions of communication: applied, specialty, and skills and traits.

While a comprehensive definition of strategic communications among the communications disciplines remains elusive, results of this study indicate the



discipline represents a hybrid of all three other disciplines. In addition, there are varying concentrations of applied communications, strategic communications and communications skills and traits rounding out the terminology.

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## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **Strategic Communications**

A fairly recent innovation in the teaching of undergraduate mass communications, strategic communications combines the teaching of business principles alongside campaign theory and the older, more established discipline of integrated marketing communications (IMC) skills, to achieve a prepared student (Hallahan, K., Holtzhausen, D., van Ruler, B., Vercic, D., & Sriramesh, K., 2007). The comprehensive approach brings, among other advantages, knowledge, credibility and self-efficacy to the communications classroom (Ragas & Culp, 2014). The teaching of strategic communications also draws from other traditional mass communications disciplines including public relations and advertising.

One of the areas where the advantages of adopting a strategic communications outlook is most prevalent is in the student-run agency. This research investigates the definition of strategic communications with the hope that it will assist educators in providing an undergraduate curriculum that embraces strategic communications as a part of the student-run agency experience.

As a way to begin this exploration of defining strategic communications, Table 1.1 offers a series of definitions used throughout the rest of the research.

*Table 1.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Research*

<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Academic Service Learning (Service Learning)	A teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. (Kearns, Puglisi, & Shelton, 2014)
Active/Experiential Learning	Students work outside the classroom on real projects or activities requiring higher-order thinking like analysis, synthesis and evaluation as well as reflection. (Bonwell & Ellison, 1991)
Advertising	Advertising is a paid form of persuasive communication that uses mass and interactive media to reach broad audiences in order to connect and identify sponsor with buyers (a target audience) and provide information about products (goods, services, and ideas). (Moriarity, Mitchell, & Wells, 2009)
Convergence	A multi-dimensional phenomenon that stretches from the ways news is reported in contemporary society, to aspects of behavior in a widely diverse selection of audiences and operators. (Grant, 2009)
Information/Social Marketing Campaigns	To risk the incidence of risky behaviors or to promote social causes important to the betterment of the community. (Hallahan et al., 2007)

## Integrated Communication

The combining of communications efforts to maximize communication dollars, speak with one voice and communicate with one sight, one sound. (Schultz, 1993)

## Integrated Marketing Communication

A subset of integrated communications, “IMC is a communications process that entails the planning, creation, integration and implementation of diverse forms of marcom (advertisements, sales promotions, publicity releases, events, etc.) that are delivered over time to a brand’s targeted customers and prospects.” (Shimp, 2010)

## Integrative Learning

Connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences. Applying theory to practice in various settings utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view. Understanding issues and positions contextually. Integrative experiences occur as learners address real-world problems, requiring multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, ultimately offering multiple solutions. (Huber & Hutchings, 2004)

## Marketing Communication

Create awareness and promote sales of products and services. Also, attract and retain users and customers, including intermediaries in distribution channels. Among nongovernmental organizations and other not-for-profit organizations, marketing communications incorporates fundraising and development communications. (Hallahan et al., 2007)

## New Media

“New media” most commonly refers to content available on-demand on the Internet, accessible on any digital device, usually containing interactive user feedback and creative participation. Common

examples of new media include websites such as online newspapers, blogs, or wikis, video games, and social media. A defining characteristic of new media is dialogue. (Vogt, 2011)

Political Communication	Build political consensus or consent on important issues involving the exercise of political power and the allocation of resources in society. This includes efforts to influence voting in elections as well as public policy decisions by lawmakers or administrators. On the international level, this includes communications in support of public diplomacy and military stabilization. (Hallahan et al., 2007)
Public Relations	Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with key constituencies. This includes consumers and customers, as well as investors and donors, employees and volunteers, community leaders, and government officials. (Hallahan et al., 2007)
Student-run Firms	Student-run agencies are modeled after professional firms, giving students opportunities to work on real campaigns for real clients in a professional environment (Bush, 2009)
Strategic Communications	To facilitate the orderly operations of the organization. Also, to promote understanding of an organization's mission, vision, and goals: and to supply information needed in day-to-day operations including customer and vendor transactions and customer and staff training. (Hallahan et al., 2007)
Technical Communication	Educate employees, customers and others to improve their efficiency. It involves

reducing errors and promoting the effective and satisfying use of technology when performing tasks important to organization. (Hallahan et al., 2007)

Because strategic communications incorporates so many other disciplines in its definition, this study addresses the need for a more pragmatic description of strategic communications. The research strives to identify a measure for evaluating a move to a strategic communications orientation in terms of instruction and training (Hallahan et al., 2007; Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2013, 2015; Tindal & Holtzhausen, 2011) through original inquiry of existing faculty members currently teaching in the strategic communications discipline and/or three other related disciplines: integrated communication, public relations and advertising. Ultimately this new strategic communications measure (definition) would be applied to the teaching/advising of student-run agencies and other integrative learning applications and situations.

This chapter contains two parts. Part 1 explores definitions related to this study that help frame the research. Part 2 discusses social cognitive theory and applied service or integrative learning. It includes discussion of the relative benefits of student-run agencies and internships, and suggests them as candidates for incorporation of the teaching of strategic communications.

### **Part 1 A Pragmatic Definition of Strategic Communications**

A combination of business acumen and multi-tiered communications skills, the study of strategic communications at an undergraduate level provides opportunities for professional education, which encourages students to become

more business savvy, and better equipped to answer business questions and thoroughly prepared to provide cogent counsel in communication. In addition, strategic communications instruction fosters the ability for practitioners to articulate and explain their value as part of the bottom line. Students trained in strategic communications can provide additional value for business and for their own contributions to it (Public Relations Society of America, 2011).

Similarly, Hallahan et al., (2007) define strategic communications as deliberate and purposeful communications:

“Six relevant disciplines are involved in the development, implementation and assessment of communications by organizations: management, marketing, public relations, technical communication, political communication and information/social marketing campaigns. ...A growing number of organizations have recognized that various communications disciplines share common purposes and that their objectives and strategies for achieving these objectives are similar. They differ primarily by their tactics and are being pressed to adapt to changing environment by their organizations desire to coordinate communications, by the convergence of media, and by the blurring of communications genres. Organizations are seeking integration as well as enhanced effectiveness through synergy, enhanced efficiencies, and reduced redundancies.” (Hallahan et al., pp. 1, 5)

### **What is Strategic Communications? It's Complicated...**

There are many types of communications used in the pedagogy, teaching, and practice of strategic communications. Some are applied knowledge, some are specialty fields of communication within a larger discipline, and some involve the development and cultivation of skill and traits. This study mines those various areas of communications and determines what specific factors should be included for a successful strategic communications program. More specifically, this research seeks to define a strategic communications outlook by including



answers to the following areas: What applied communications should be taught to attain a strategic communications orientation? What specialty communications aptitudes are necessary to practice strategic communications? Finally, what individual skills and traits are necessary for practitioners to obtain in order to succeed in strategic communications?

### **Why is This Study Important?**

This inquiry is important because it addresses a path of instruction for strategic communications at the undergraduate level. It attempts to identify a distinguishing differentiator of strategic communications from other mass communications disciplines (integrated communications, public relations, and advertising) currently practiced, and provides recommendations as to how other programs can adopt a strategic communications outlook.

Moreover, distinctions of strategic communications may be moot if they are not taught in an environment where they can be applied and their value(s) reinforced. The student-run agency offers an excellent laboratory for building strategic communications practitioners. More pragmatically, in terms of employment and future opportunity for college students in many fields of study, experience has become as important, and in some cases more important, than academic performance (Thompson, 2014). In other words: “Experience has become the new GPA.” From teaching hospital models, to externships, internships, and practicums, a contemporary onus of higher education is to provide immersive opportunities to students as part of their courses of study. A

popular delivery system to meet this need is based in academic service learning, which has its roots in social cognitive theory.

## **Part 2 Social Cognitive Theory, Applied Service Learning and Integrative Learning with Student-run Agencies**

In the field of mass communications (to include public relations, advertising, and integrated communications) hands-on instructional opportunities often consist of internships, campaigns classes, or student-run agencies. From a global perspective, these experiences mimic real world conditions when the students are provided opportunities for “real work with real clients.” The arrangement delivers students an experience complete with the challenges, responsibilities, and successes associated with working in the field.

Described in the literature by various derivatives of academic service learning, experiential learning or integrative learning (Bush 2009; Bush-Bacellis, 1998; Maben, 2010; Maben & Whitson, 2014; Ranta, 2014a), the student-run agency concept permits aspiring communicators the opportunity to run their own firms within the confines of a university setting and under the supervision of one or more faculty members.

Student-run advertising and public relations agencies represent a unique, immersive opportunity for soon-to-be practitioners to gain real-world experience in a controlled environment doing real work for real clients. As noted in table 1.1, Student-run agencies are modeled after professional firms, giving students opportunities to work on real campaigns for real clients in a professional environment. To further define student-run firms for the purposes of this research, a student-run firm provides “...undergraduate students the opportunity to work as

if they were employed at a professional public relations agency,” (Maben & Whitson, 2014, pg. 2). While Maben and Whitson only looked at PR, this study incorporates a broader view and includes advertising and marketing as part of the definition. As Bush (2009) states, student-run agencies allow journalism students to apply learning to practical situations “...in which students implement public relations, advertising and integrated marketing communications programs for professional clients,” (p. 27).

Student-run agencies develop professionalism, hone tactical skills, and cultivate strategic thinking and planning while providing strong networking outlets and portfolio materials. Clients served by student-run agencies may include not-for-profits, start-ups, NGOs, corporations and even publics within the university setting (Maben & Whitson, 2014). More importantly, many student-run agencies have diversified into an integrated or even a strategic communications agency approach, enfolding public relations, advertising, and marketing communications functions under one umbrella while adding training and education on business principles.

Leadership models for student-run agencies are varied, depending upon the institution. Bush (2009) categorized them into four groups with distinct characteristics: Accountability, Faculty Involvement, Levels of Learning and Risk of Dissolution. In a presentation to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Educators’ Academy, Ranta (2014a) explored best practices for student-run agencies. Among those highlighted were strong student-run agency branding, peer-to-peer training using real world knowledge and experiences, dedicated

work space, as well as teambuilding and client interaction. A clear organizational structure and providing students leadership opportunities to serve as both account executives and team members for varied accounts were also identified as benefits.

Regarding leadership selection, some student-run agencies elect their leadership, others appoint or assign leadership, and still others offer competitive, paid slots for those students most interested in taking on the mantle of leadership (Bush, 2009; Bush & Miller, 2011; Maben, 2010; Maben & Whitson, 2014; Swanson, 2007 and 2011).

### **Internships**

Related to the student-run agency experience is the student internship experience. Internships are seen as a way for students to obtain immersive experience in performing various tasks for companies on either a full- or a part-time basis. In the literature, internships are considered a “valuable learning experience by members of the public relations academy” (Daugherty, 2011, p. 470). Furthermore, “...perhaps no one aspect of public relations education has generated more discussion and diversity of implementation than the recommended ‘supervised work experience,’” (The Commission on Public Relations Education, 2006 p. 57). Some internships are paid, and others are not (Beebe, Blaylock, & Sweetser, 2009). Expected development in internships includes skills acquisition, professional experience, real world exposure, and gaining a better understanding of the field (Daugherty, 2011).

Both student-run agencies and internships are considered by industry, faculty, and mass communications professional organizations as exceptional opportunities for gaining experience and equipping students for future work. Both experiences can also be considered an outward application of academic service learning theory, which is an evolution, in part, of social cognitive theory.

### **Agencies, Internships, Academic Service Learning and Social Cognitive Theory**

In 1986, Albert Bandura put forth the idea of social cognitive theory as a way to provide insight into the processes underlying learning and instruction. Using various terms including imitative learning, modeling, and self-efficacy, the researcher held the opinion that learning is accomplished via a complex collection of behaviors that stimulate recognition, rehearsal and, imitation.

Bandura's theory lends itself well to the immersive study of strategic communications competency and the student-run agency. Accepting that some excellent ways of imparting knowledge (training) are through imitative learning and accepting that the goal of a successful student agency/internship experience is to prepare students for real world experience, the student-run agency provides prime opportunities to impart knowledge via informed instruction and imitation.

Social cognitive theory emphasizes four conditions which must be present for learning to take place: an environment where the learner has some control over decisions; a psychology or collection of personal traits that allow for a sense of well being (with innate knowledge); an overall cognitive ability to effect change; and finally, a mastery of skills necessary to effect change, (O'Rourke, 2006).

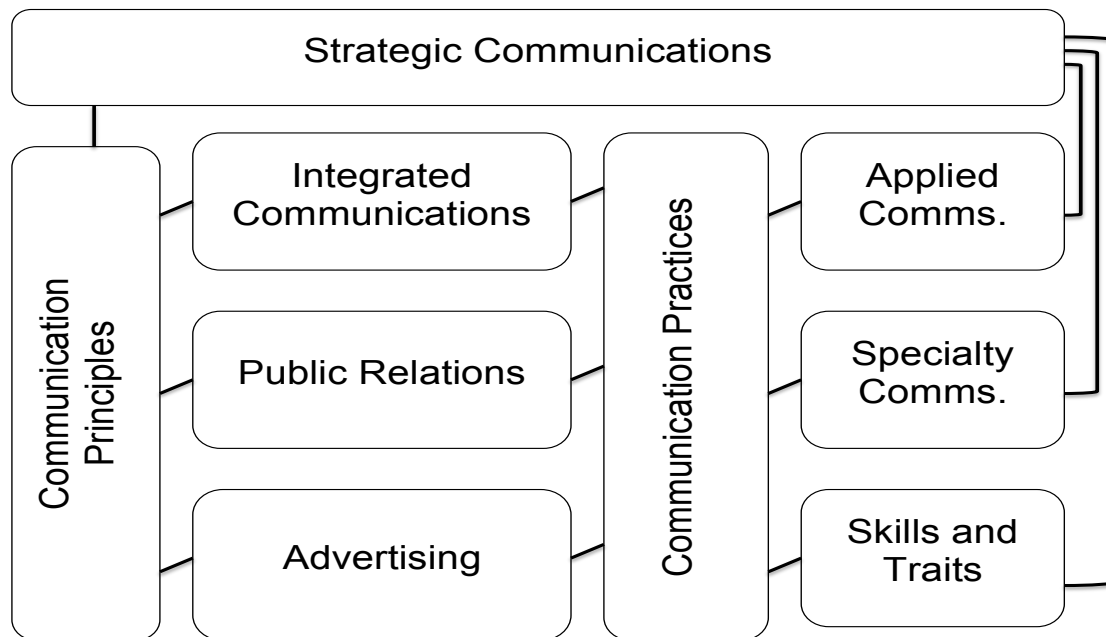
When compared to the classroom actions of student-run agencies, the work accomplished within delivers upon these conditions. Students are allowed to have control over decisions. Specific skills and traits are taught and cultivated as part of the agency, and there is a consistent expectation for beneficial change on behalf of a client via an exclusive, focused skill set. Moreover, student-run agency participants are encouraged to take responsibility and work directly with the client to help determine needs and deliverables. These exercises require time, planning, communication, self-evaluation, instructor evaluation, and client evaluation. And, as part of accomplishing beneficial change on behalf of the client, students are encouraged to provide new ideas, new data and new executions of those ideas.

Finally, a key purpose of the student-run agency experience is to practice and implement new and previously acquired skills congruently. When all of these conditions are met, learning takes place and self-efficacy is developed. Based on original study and extensive experience as a student-run agency adviser, the following table addresses how student-run agencies fulfill some of the tenets of social cognitive/social learning theory (Ranta, 2014a).

*Table 1.2 Student-run Agencies/Internships as a Route to Student Social Cognition*

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Fulfillment conditions present at student-run agencies</b>
A positive environment with learner control	Student-run agency participants are encouraged to manage a client relationship, make decisions, plan and execute deliverables.

Sense of self that permits cognitive ability to effect change	Expectations from the client, the adviser, and the student are to effect positive change for the benefit of the client and the education of the student through innovation, creative energy, and best practices.
Mastery of skills to effect change	Key purpose is to coalesce skills and knowledge into meaningful efforts for the client and an education for the student which is retained post-classroom.



*Non-referenced original content*

Figure 1.1 Strategic Communications in Relation to Communications Disciplines and Practices

## Moving Forward

Strategic communications represents a paradigm shift for mass communications education. It consists of combining the disciplines of integrated communications, public relations, and advertising under a single umbrella. It also requires mastery of various elements of applied communications, specialty

communications, and specific skills and traits. Figure 1.1 illustrates how these factors are related for purposes of this research.

## **Summary**

The convergence of mass communication disciplines has demanded the tearing down of silos and the blurring of lines between traditional disciplines of integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. Recently developed as an umbrella discipline, strategic communications offers unique solutions for the challenge of preparing the next communicator for this changing landscape.

One of the best applications for strategic communications is the student-run agency. Hands-on, integrative education offers substantial opportunities to foster self-efficacy, deliver real-world experience and produce capable, skilled communicators. However, the exact definition of strategic communications is still an open issue. A solid measure of what strategic communications is would be beneficial in terms of how it should be taught to the next generation of communicators and assist educators in efforts to prepare students to meet the rising tide of demand for multi-platform communications professionals.

## **Navigation for this Document**

Chapter 2 continues the discussion of student-run agencies, academic service learning, and strategic communications with a literature review. It concludes with a set of hypotheses and research questions addressed in this study. Chapter 3 discusses methodology used to gather data on the studied subject. Chapter 4 reports analysis of results. Chapter 5 provides conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for further study.



## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This literature review addresses four areas pursuant to incorporation of strategic communications into education. Part 1 details existing research on student-run agencies and internships and what roles they fill in preparing students for work in strategic communications in the outside world. It highlights the benefits students, faculty and hiring publics receive from the student agency approach in communications-related fields. Part 2 discusses the appeal of academic service learning and explores the imitative modeling that takes place as students are immersed in a capstone experience as well as addresses pragmatic values of student-run agency and student internship experiences. Part 3 of this literature review addresses the rise of strategic communications within the communications profession and the perceived need of communications faculty to continue their efforts to prepare students to compete in the global marketplace. Part 4 discusses the operationalization of a strategic communications definition in terms of original research for this study.

### **Part 1 Student-run Agencies as a Strategic Communications Training Pathway**

Similar to internships, student-run agencies offer a great deal of autonomy and empowerment to the participating students. Both offer a pathway to Strategic Communications Training. And, although there are significant differences

between them, for the purposes of this study the shared benefits and challenges of student run agencies and internships will be addressed.

The number of studies of student-run agencies is limited but growing (Bush, 2009; Bush & Miller, 2011; Gibson & Rowden, 1994-95; Maben, 2010; Maben & Whitson, 2014; Ranta, 2014a, and Swanson, 2011). These studies provide typology of agency structure, best practices of operations, and discussions of student and adviser experiences.

The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) is a strong supporter of student-run agencies and offers opportunities for them to affiliate nationally with PRSSA leadership. As a way to train students for the agency environment and to standardize the efforts put forth by student-run agencies, PRSSA publishes a student agency guidebook, which provides step-by-step instructions for student-run agencies to receive national affiliate designation (Public Relations Student Society of America, 2015). This designation check-list addresses successful completion of the requirements, along with a self-study of compliance issues, and includes various management functions including client contracts, a formalized structure, adherence to the PRSA code of ethics, and accountability for hours used and clients served. Once completed, a student-run agency's affiliation package is sent to PRSSA for evaluation. In 2016, there were 36 PRSSA nationally affiliated student-run public relations agencies in the U.S. Appendix B part 2 of this document lists those agencies and their associated universities (Public Relations Student Society of America, 2016).

True to Bandura's 1986 tenets of modeling, the student-run agency guidebook is specifically designed to be imitative of practices currently in use at professional agencies. According to the 2015 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (AEJMC) directory, there are 134 universities reporting a student-run advertising agency, a student-run public relations agency or both (Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2015). Appendix B part 1 of this document lists those universities.

### **Student-run Agencies from a Student Perspective**

From a student's perspective, the advantages of participating in a student-run agency over general classroom instruction include generating feelings of leadership/ownership, self-empowerment, providing opportunities to make significant decisions, and experiencing professional and personal growth by managing the client/vendor relationship (Aldoory & Wrigley, 2000). In addition, the student agency experience, much like an internship, provides many positive benefits to the students enrolled including positive effects on GPA, better job prospecting and faster post-graduate job placement (Astin, 1993; Callanan & Benzing, 2004; English & Koeppen, 1993; Fang & Lee, 2005; Gault, Reddington & Schalger, 2000; Knouse, Tanner & Harris, 1999; Neidorf, 2008).

Researchers Kearns, Puglisi and Shelton (2014) offered some interesting quotes from their research subjects in a study conducted of students' experiences and perspectives working with student-run agencies:

“Working with a real client has really improved my expectations for myself. In other classes I do not put nearly the same amount of effort as I do with Agency. ...I feel that joining Agency has given me a glimpse on what to expect in an agency for my internship or potential career...” “I can honestly say that the class emphasized critical thinking and personal reflection while encouraging me to gain a sense of community...I’ve learned that working with real clients presents unique challenges...I learned, along with my group, to take often desperate wishes from the client and come up with solutions which satisfied them...” (Kearns et al., 2014). (Excerpted from Slides 17-20)

As can be seen from these statements, in the minds of the respondents, student agency participation contributes significantly to a level of professional self-efficacy, and student-run agency membership also inspires decision-making, client expectation management and problem solving.

### **Student-run Agency/Service Learning Benefits from the Faculty Perspective**

From a faculty perspective, a study of advantages of academic service learning in public relations courses, and as manifested in student-run agencies, included comments stating the single most rewarding outcome of the experience is skill development for students. In addition, planned categories of outcomes in academic service learning courses are real-world application/practical skills; an increase in teamliness/interpersonal skills; client interactions and civic responsibility/citizenship (service) (Werder & Strand, 2011; Witmer, Silverman, & Gaschen, 2009). In addition, Witmer et al. (2009) mentions a general consensus among faculty respondents that all public relations professors should be involved in some form of academic service learning in their classroom approach.

In terms of benefits to the communication profession, Bush (2009) states, “Student-run firms fill a void in the curriculum by exposing students to disciplined business practices that may be missing in campaigns or service learning courses.” (p. 35). Similarly, according to Swanson (2011), “While there is no one answer for maintaining excellence in teaching and learning with fewer resources, one strategy that has proven successful for public relations programs is the implementation of a student-run public relations firm,” (p. 499). In addition, Gibson and Rowden (1995) advocate the student agency model to “...overcome the limitations of classroom instruction and provided structured responsibilities and tasks not always associated with internships,” (p. 30). Hazdovac (2012) also states student participation in a student-run agency yields an integrative learning experience with immediate exposure to real-world clients, something “...that cannot be replicated through hypothetical classroom discussions or case studies,” (p. 19).

Bush and Miller (2011) point out that student-run agencies also have the benefit of introducing students to the “convergence and integration” common in the contemporary public relations professional environment. Bush (2009) also suggests a larger benefit from student-run agencies is the development of students’ professional identities. These identities include leadership and management, team motivation, client negotiation, and professional confidence. This conclusion mirrors nicely the tenets of Bandura’s perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1998). In a quick snapshot of still more benefits provided to students, Hazdovac (2012) and others offered the following information in Table 2.1.

*Table 2.1 Faculty Opinions of Positive Effects of Student-run Agency Participation on Students*

Positive Effect	Citation
Mutual accountability (client, each other, and instructor)	Hazdovac, 2012
Gain more confidence through acquiring new skills and refining old ones	Gibson & Rowden, 1995 Swanson, 2014
Portfolio development	Gibson & Rowden, 1995 Bush & Miller, 2011 Swanson 2011

### **Student-run Agencies—the In-House Internship**

While they are the preferred vehicles for this research, student-run agencies are only one of several forms of hands-on training used in contemporary curricula that may be suitable for teaching strategic communications. Many universities and institutions of higher learning provide a variety of hands-on instructional opportunities with an academic service learning component. Some of these include internships, capstone classes, campaigns classes, and other electives. This multi-dimensional approach provides myriad opportunities for interactive service learning and is recommended by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007); the Public Relations Student Society of America, (2015) and Beard and Morton (1999).

PRSA felt so strongly about the value of internships and the value of student-run agencies, it released a “Port of Entry” study, which encouraged their student organization, PRSSA, to provide a national affiliation program

(Commission on Public Relations Education Report, 1999). In addition to the opportunity for national affiliation, the program also includes best practices in ethics, client contracts, management of expectations, and even billing and job sheets (documentation) as points of self-reflection.

The Port of Entry Study also encourages practitioners to embrace the internship process and improve the overall utility of the internship experience. Some additional research findings contributing to the successful internship experience include ensuring a mentorship relationship with leadership; participation by internship sponsors in the assessment process; a dedicated location for internship work; a clear idea of the work requirements for internships; a reflection opportunity for the students; a clear point of contact; coordination facilitator at the sponsoring university; whenever possible, some sort of compensation for student work; a periodic review of student work during the course of the internship; a final reporting opportunity in the form of a portfolio; and a written report or oral presentation at the conclusion of the internship (Alpert, Heaney, & Kuhn, 2009; Basow & Byrne, 1993; Beebe, Blaylock, & Sweetser, 2009; Brown & Fall, 2005; and Todd, 2009). Based on these findings, it seems clear that student-run agencies and internships offer many benefits for students and faculty in terms of skills development, employability, self-efficacy, and other variables not obtainable elsewhere.

## **Part 2 The Appeal of Academic Service Learning in Strategic Communications Instruction**

Service learning roots stretch as early as Campbell (1995) and Dewey (1938). Relevant learning theories that have developed from service learning and are attached to student agency creation, management and educational benefits include experiential learning, applied learning, integrative learning, work integrated learning, problem-based learning, and academic service learning. Among those praising academic service learning are the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007); Blakeman (2015); Bush-Bacellis (1998); Cohen and Kinsey (1994); Drake (2000); Jacoby (1999); Strage (2004); and Witmer, et al., (1998).

In particular, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) praised service learning as a promising, high impact activity, which engages students and promotes learning. In communications instruction particularly, the concept of the internship and/or the student agency are well established (Panici & Laske, 2002). Bush-Bacelis (1998) states: "The use of Academic Service Learning has enabled students to feel they are spending time wisely. They are not simply meeting the assignment for the class; they are genuinely accomplishing needed tasks while meeting class requirements," (p. 28). Aldoory and Wrigley (2000), citing Schine (1997), summed up the Academic Service Learning appeal: "...service learning has attracted support from practitioners, policymakers, researchers, governments at all levels, and from the broader community (p. vii)."



## **From the Real World Perspective, Academic Service Learning = Jobs**

Looking at education programs from a pragmatic prism of “real-world” strategic communications skills, those competencies practiced and perfected in student-run agencies and in other experiential class offerings were found to be extremely beneficial by researchers investigating expectations and employability (Neff, Walker, Smith, & Creedon 1999; Todd, 2014). Benigni, Cheng and Cameron (2004) found that “...students with considerable ‘real-world’ application are more competitive in today’s job market” (p. 206). Practical experience was also seen as critical in the post-graduation job hunt where students who have student-run agency and/or internship experience generally found jobs faster than their non-interning colleagues (Benigni et al., 2004). Student-run agencies have also been historically seen as a solution to the need for students to have more on-the-job training before they get to actual jobs.

## **Academic Service Learning: “Hands-on Meets Need, Head-on”**

When reviewing studies of public relations pedagogy, it is apparent that both students and future employers feel new graduates need more training in the tactical skills than in leadership (Paskin, 2013; Swanson, 2014; and Todd, 2014). There is also strong evidence, and faculty agreement from the literature, stating theory is best reinforced with hands-on experience as found in service learning and in student-run agencies (Brooks, Cornelius, Greenfield, & Joseph, 1995; Hazdovac, 2012; Paskin, 2013; Swanson, 2007; and Todd, 2014).

Consider the following quotation from faculty on the need to keep students current with trends in the industry:

“Those of us who teach public relations within higher education are always under pressure to provide the most relevant knowledge and skills to our students. We aim to provide students with an appropriate balance of theoretical/conceptual skills and ‘hands on’ training. We want new college graduates going out into the public relations workplace knowing not only what to do, but why they’re doing it.” Hazdovac (2012) (p.15).

Creedon, Neff, Smith, and Walker (1999) state the most desired skills for hiring new communicators includes critical thinking, problem solving, writing skills, practical experience, communications skills, and effective characteristics of a good attitude and being a self-starter. Further, from a faculty perspective, the use of real clients in classroom instruction generates many positive benefits as Table 2.2 details.

*Table 2.2. Benefits of Using Real Clients in Classroom Instruction*

<b>Student Benefit</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Context	Students learn context and understand relevance
Theory	Students see theories in practice—enhance student buy-in.
Motivation	Students seem to find working with clients interesting, creative and frustrating which all positively impact motivation.
Management Skills	Teaches strategic planning with real constraints, budgeting with real money, research before planning and time management due to client schedules.
Flexibility	Client plans change and students need to learn flexibility, adaptability and patience.

Empathy	Students express understanding for client needs, concerns, problems, “ups and downs.”
Professionalism	Students are taught how to speak with clients, meet with the client, dress, ask questions, and present solutions.
Value	Students value their own work and take campaign planning very seriously.
Economics	Deciding client service based in part on economics.
Psychological Issues	Deal with loss of autonomy, teamliness, timelines, and multiple reporting responsibilities.
Client constraints	Manage expectations positively, deal with client availability, goal articulations, etc.
Negotiation	Teachers and clients have to balance priorities of coursework and client needs. Students have to budget time to dedicate to work.
Time	More time is spent preparing for classes and for client meetings.

Excerpted from Aldoory & Wrigley (2000)

When considering a service learning approach, student-run agencies resemble a hybrid of capstone campaigns classes and internships in terms of curricula, benefits, and results. Maben (2010) states, based on the similarity of internships to student agency work, it is valid to address student-run agencies in the broader context of internships. “The campus newspaper and public relations firm are essentially in-house internship programs...” (p. 30).

Similarly, a 2000 study by Dickson, interviewing the CEOs of the top 50 public relations firms, indicated 89 percent felt internships and work experience were very important to future employment. Fitch (2011) and Schön (1982) point this out, with Fitch stating as future professionals, students need to learn how to work in situations with “complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts” (p. 14). In short, real-client projects are essential for future practitioners.

Internships—and by default, agencies—are also seen as valuable tools for employers as they deliver practical experience, one of the key differentiators in hiring entry-level practitioners (the Commission on Public Relations Education 2006 and Todd, 2009 and 2014). When regarding public relations training specifically, van Ruler (2005) commented that university learning and teaching “should not focus on knowledge reproduction but, on the development of learning capability and creativity in finding acceptable solutions for clients” (p. 164).

In contrast, Royal (2005) added that “...teaching without focus on integration, judgment, and perspective in the new media environment will ultimately fail students who suddenly find their skills outdated, outmoded or out of sync with the real world” (p. 412). Based on these two differing opinions it seems the best solutions is to find a way to teach both.

When considering the influences specific internships (and student-run agencies) have on students, Maben (2010) found multiple positives including positive relationships with GPA, greater choice of employability and more. Table 2.3 synthesizes Maben’s findings.

*Table 2.3 Positive Effects of Student Internship Service Learning*

<b>Service Learning Internship Effects on Students</b>	<b>Citation</b>
Positive effect on career choice	Fall, 2006
Offers new perspectives for students	Getz, 2002
Correlates positively with students' GPA	Astin, 1993; English & Koeppen, 1993; Knouse, et al., 1999
Assists in finding and securing jobs	Neidorf, 2008; Callanan & Benzing, 2004; Fang & Lee 2005
Assists in finding jobs sooner	Gault, et al., 2000

Excerpted from Maben 2010

Similarly, Hazdovac (2012) reminds us that researchers Aldoory and Wrigley (2000) found students working with real clients present several positive psychological developments including gained confidence, and improved/increased self-esteem. Cohen and Kinsey (1994) found students were much more motivated to complete real work for real clients than hypothetical ones and Sallot (1992,1996) found student tolerance for ambiguity increased, as did self-esteem and confidence, when working with actual people.

Looking more globally, service learning in communications is defined by Muturi, Soontae, and Mwangi (2013) as a form of teaching that incorporates community service with the acquisition and/or exercise of skills and knowledge that tie directly back to the classroom's learning objectives. It is associated with

boosting critical thinking, improving theory and practice integration, and assisting in career planning.

### **Convergence (Integration) and Strategic Communications**

Sometimes called new media, the phenomenon of convergence refers to the merging of technology, content and tasks needed to take maximum advantage of technological growth and change (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, & Ranly, 2010). As Grant (2009) points out, convergence is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that stretches from the ways news is reported in contemporary society, to aspects of behavior in a widely diverse selection of audiences and operators. Integration, in contrast to convergence, is not as technology driven but does require significant work in assuring messages are prepared and disseminated through as many message platforms as possible. Consequently, the rise of communication integration of various types of media, thanks to widely available new communication technologies and the explosion of social media usage, has demanded that communications agencies and organizations make changes to accommodate this rising demand, leverage the ability to influence over various news platforms, and train those who will meet the converged communications needs for their organization(s) (ESPN, 2009 and 2013, Ranta, 2014b). The fundamental need for strategic communications education is rooted in several phenomena. One example is public relations. Historically, public relations, as a discipline, has attracted practitioners who are more used to the qualitative or output related practices than the hard analytics used by most business practitioners. In fact, many public relations practitioners are famously

math averse and do not easily conceptualize nor embrace quantitative analytics as part of their job description (Fleet, 2006; Hanson, 2010; & Williams, 2014). Public relations' emphasis in the past has often been about the soft skills areas of relationship building, issues management and other items including event planning. While there is merit in all of these areas, there is also a very real, and developing, need for analytical processes which include things like crisis planning, reputation management, social media positioning and corporate social responsibility. As the approach to customer relations, shareholder relations and stakeholder relations is changing, the demands from the industry have translated to requiring many public relations practitioners to become more business savvy and analytically informed.

### **Public Relations, Advertising and Integrated Communications, What is the Difference?**

In an update to their 2007 publication, Holtzhausen and Zerfass (2015) stated that their earlier article defining strategic communications “brought about an identity crisis” (p. 3) in the public relations scholarly community. The conflict being, that historically, strategic communications was perceived as the “express mission” of the public relations field. Holtzhausen and Zerfass continue, stating “the intent of developing the study of strategic communications was meant to explore what different communities of practice can learn from each other,” with the overall goal to “break down the silos we have erected around ourselves.” (p. 3). As a way to further explain the need for strategic communications, Holtzhausen and Zerfass cite the blending of communications missions between traditional activities (advertising, marketing, and public relations); changes in

technology (convergence/integration); increased numbers of channels that organizations can use to communicate directly to stakeholders; and the increased attention toward purposeful communications.

Adding to this change in mission is the rise of a subset of integrated communications (integrated marketing communications or IMC). This blending of two disciplines (advertising and public relations), for the purposes of marketing to customers, has resulted in IMC being identified as a stand-alone discipline studied in business curricula across the country (Shimp, 2010). For the purposes of this research, IMC is considered as a subset of integrated communications as integrated communications is much more versatile in its ability to support communications efforts than IMC alone. In support of this outlook, Wang and Nelson (2006) found a combined approach of both public relations and advertising together was more effective than either approach on its own. Similarly, in his study on integrating public relations with advertising, Moody (2012) makes the distinction that while advertising and public relations are distinct and separate disciplines, each has a fundamental function that benefits the communications process. He argues that public relations' greatest strengths involve building relationships, influencing attitude/behavior, and fostering greater understanding and trust. Furthermore, as a brand builder, public relations is stronger in building understanding of a product, less expensive than advertising, and allows for greater depth of message. Continuing the comparison of advertising and public relations, Moody (2012) states advertising provides more message creativity, is more established to attract attention, offers better control of the message, and is



perhaps even more persuasive than public relations. So in an integrated communications world, while public relations and advertising offer greater strength when combined, the two disciplines maintain separate identities and skill traits that are not duplicated. This raises some interesting questions when considering the growth of strategic communications.

### **The Barcelona Principles: Quantifying PR Then and Now**

Another key differentiator between advertising and public relations is the discussion of quantifying results. Prior to the release of the Barcelona Principles in 2010, a common method for quantifying public relations was a dependence upon older, less accurate measurements like the advertising equivalency metric (Manning & Rockland, 2011; Stacks & Michaelson, 2010). In an area of increasingly competitive actors seeking larger shares of shrinking communications dollars, and an increasing demand from management to justify dollars spent, the advertising equivalency valuation (AEV) measurement was seen as a way to favorably compete against advertising on a dollar-for-dollar placement. Most public relations campaigns were seen as a way to deliver impressions equivalent to a more expensive advertising campaign for as little as 10 percent of the cost of a comparable advertising campaign. This practice was confounded by a common PR agency approach to this methodology with the addition of the quality (credibility) multiplier, which implied and assumed because content was viewed in editorial rather than advertising space, or seen as part of a “news” story rather than an advertisement, it was regarded as more credible by the audience receiving the information (Bagnall, 2012).

Subsequently, recent research has widely debunked the AVE metric and the associated multiplier (Manning & Rockland 2011; Stacks & Michaelson, 2010). As pointed out by the PR Measurement conference proceedings known as the Barcelona Principles of 2010, the concept of advertising equivalencies has been ruled an unacceptable practice, which should be replaced by other analytics better tailored to perform more accurate analysis. Some of these include key performance indicators (KPIs) of attitude and behavioral change (Ryan, 2014). Other elements of the Barcelona Principles were designed to help enhance the credibility of public relations. They include the need for transparency and replication in public relations efforts, the need to measure both quantity and quality of results, the need to measure business results whenever possible, the need to measure outcomes versus output, and one of the most important in the paradigm shift of public relations metrics, the need to measure social media activity, (Manning & Rockland, 2011).

The need to improve measurement has become a constant drumbeat among all business sectors, not just communications. The rise of improved analytics in logistics, manufacturing, cost projection and even human resources has created downward pressure on all aspects of business including communications. The need for public relations, and for that matter all communications efforts, is to become more strategic. This impetus is driven both by improvements in process and analytics and a need for survival (Ragas & Culp, 2014). These innovations need to be understood and taught to future communicators.

Google's presentation of analytics, for example, has created a renewed demand for tracking communications outputs and results. Statistics like the number of unique visitors to a web site, the number of conversions, the time spent on certain pages, the sites where visitors came from, the place where they left, the number of return visitors, etc. have all created a pressure to "move the meter" in these areas with an integrated communications approach that can be justified to a C-suite executive. And while Google is a recognized leader in delivering web site analytics, they are by no means the only player in the space (Ryan, 2014).

Related to web site visitor metrics is the art and science of searcher metrics or search engine optimization (SEO). Practitioners are being asked to make their websites more appealing, more "sticky," more interactive, and overall more attractive to search engines. A skilled SEO approach will yield wider audiences with additional reach and more interaction (Parikh & Deshmukh, 2013, and Ryan, 2014). Obviously, in these instances, a skilled communicator with mastery of these skills would be in high demand and, conversely, anyone without these skill sets will be at a deficit for future job prospects.

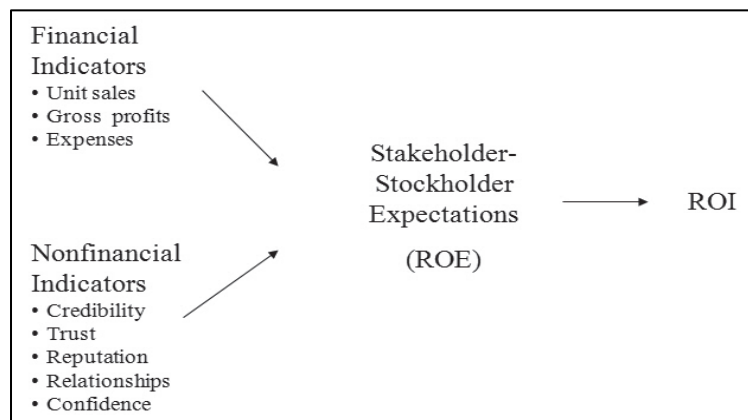
The obverse of better SEO also requires a renewed diligence in the field of online brand reputation. In the age of rapid connectivity, the ability for anyone with a blog or a smart phone to do damage to the reputation, and ultimately the sales, image, or reputation of a corporation is apparent. Viral campaigns attacking the service and reputation of organizations are a serious matter, which need to be addressed decisively, speedily, and completely. Responses to these

threats to reputation also need to be conducted with respect for the adverse impacts of the responses (Blakeman, 2015). Not limited only to the outright hacking of data with the aim of stealing or disrupting commerce, the war on a business' reputation is also something to be mindful of. In public relations, there are anecdotes galore across the Internet of bad behavior causing unwanted national attention. From the senior executive who was fired after a leaked security camera video showed him abusing a friend's dog in an elevator (Izadi, 2014), to Domino's pizza workers who were seen doing inappropriate things to sandwich ingredients while on the job (Clifford, 2009), misconduct, even the most trivial, can result in lasting damage.

A more abstract but no-less-real factor in the need for more business education among public relations students and the need for business students to have an enhanced understanding of communications is the place of public relations in the business cycle. Researchers Michaelson and Stacks (2014) have discussed a theory of public relations efforts (and perhaps those of strategic communications), being a mediating variable in the process of business management. Called PR ROI/ROE, or Return on Investment/Return on Expectation, the idea is that good public relations contributes to a company's intangible values of reputation, trust, responsible behavior, etc. which in turn creates a level of confidence that is translated to both stakeholders and shareholders, thereby increasing the overall reputation/confidence in the organization and enhancing the bottom line. Elements that contribute to positive ROI/ROE include positive financial indicators (unit sales, gross profits, and

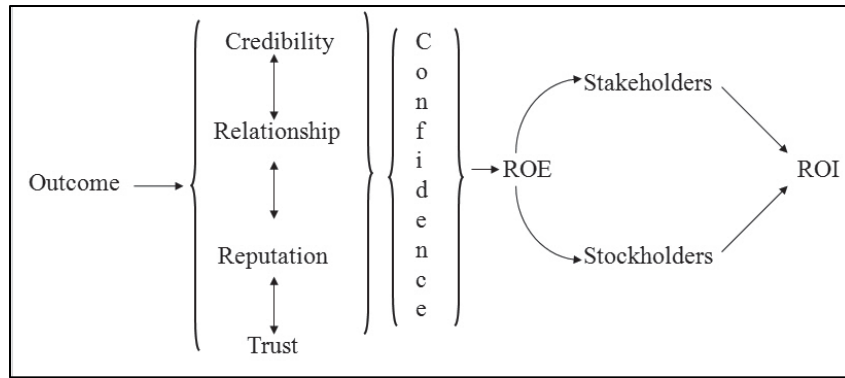
expenses) as well as nonfinancial indicators (credibility, trust, reputation, relationships, and confidence).

People want to do business or buy the shares of companies that are trustworthy and sustainable. In addition, a company with a solid reputation is seen as one that will attract follow-on business, better employees, more investors, etc. While this ROI/ROE model can contribute to the bottom line strictly in terms of public relations, as the lines are becoming more blurred between disciplines, it can be said that this theory would also hold up in a broader strategic communications model.



*Figure 2.1 PR ROI/ROE Mediates Overall ROI*  
Michaelson, D. & Stacks, D., (2014) *A Professional and Practitioner's Guide to Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). NY, NY: Business Expert Press. Used with permission.

Furthermore, Michaelson and Stacks (2014) say good public relations' credibility has a positive impact on ROI by impacting shareholder and stakeholder confidence as illustrated in Figure 2.2.



*Figure 2.2 Confidence Effect of Good PR on Overall ROI*  
 Michaelson, D. & Stacks, D., (2014) *A Professional and Practitioner's Guide to Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). NY, NY: Business Expert Press. Used with permission.

Finally, there is the concept of convergence and communication integration. The rise of new media (social media, streaming video, blogs, online news sites, mobile-specific content) and the blurring of lines defining news versus entertainment as well as the co-mingling of advertising, marketing, and public relations practices contributes to the need for a more structured, multi-level approach, which enhances understanding rather than confusing recipients of the messages. This trend is compounded by the rise of social media and the ready availability of instant communications across a worldwide network. Web-based promotions, for example, should be supported by traditional advertising and underpinned with solid media relations efforts (Shimp, 2010). In addition, solid efforts at corporate social responsibility or issues management or even crisis management should be supported by image advertising and incorporated into marketing efforts as part of any market analysis or informational effort. The rise of the Internet has created a dramatic shift in transparency metrics and anyone with an Internet connection can now become an analyst, a voice of

opposition or, hopefully, a raving fan and advocate of a company's position. In Tindall and Holtzhausen (2011), "The challenge (to the field) is coordinating and integrating the communication activities of organizations and in creating a multidisciplinary but unified body of knowledge that better serves communicative entities in a society consisting of fragmented audiences and message delivery platforms" (p. 75).

### **The Case for Strategic Communications**

In their 2005 study of strategic communications, Argenti, Howell, and Beck provide a compelling summary of the need for integration not only within the specific disciplines but also across an organization. Featuring Dell, Inc., FedEx, Textron, Cendant, and other leading companies, the authors state, "...those senior executives who think that communications can be delegated to the head of the corporate communications function are mistaken," (p. 88). In fact, in many companies, the CEO acts, in effect, as the senior communications officer of the company. When asked how much time he spends communicating, Dell's Kevin Rollins said, 'Can you go above 100%?' (p. 88).

This paradigm shift in the practice has created a corresponding demand for trained practitioners to execute these functions in coordination — a ready-made opportunity for new graduates who are trained appropriately. Consequently, this progress in a growing, changing field has created a movement toward instructional changes at the undergraduate level. More specifically, communications executives like those at ESPN are seeking people with different, younger perspectives and outlooks, established "digital native"

social media acumen, multi-platform aptitude, and comfort with wireless-driven developments in public relations, advertising, and marketing (ESPN, 2009 and 2013; Ranta, 2014b, 2015).

### **Message to Education from the Professions—Integrate or Die**

A study by Rose and Miller (1994) of public relations and advertising professionals concluded an integrated education curriculum should be created to reflect the needs of the professional marketplace and include additional training in a wide spectrum of communications techniques. Argenti, Howell, and Beck (2005) offered the statement:

“Companies that continue to take a *laissez-faire* approach to communications will find it increasingly difficult to compete. Although there will be a continuing need for tactical execution, the addition of an **integrated, strategic focus** (emphasis added) will be critical to success. For communications professionals, this imperative will not be a threat but an opportunity to not only get a seat at the table, but to stay there” (p. 89).

In what might be seen as a minor indictment to education, Griffin and Pasadeos (1998) uncovered disconnects between education and professional expectations. Reflecting that sentiment in academia, Larsen and Len-Rios (2006) defined an integrated curriculum as combining advertising, public relations, and marketing concepts in undergraduate programs. Hallahan et al. (2007) go further, distinguishing strategic communications as different from integrated communications, “...because its focus is how an organization communicates across organizational endeavors” (p. 7). In the same citation, strategic communications is seen as more purposeful and focused on how an organization presents (brands) itself across “...the intentional activities of its leaders,



employees, and communication practitioners” (p. 7). In a slightly different take on the same subject, Grunig (2006) used the term “strategic management role of public relations” to explain the importance of public relations being more than a tactical exercise.

The embrace of strategic communications has also expanded to a global level. Corporations in Europe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and North America are using “strategic communications” to describe their communications activities (Tindall & Holtzhausen, 2011). Similarly, multiple consulting groups; the National Investor Relations Institute (National Investor Relations Institute, 2006); many not-for-profits; the American Bar Association (American Bar Association, 2006); various health communications organizations (Health Communication Partnerships, 2006; Piotrow & Kincaid, 2001); the U.S. government (McCaffrey, 1999; Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, 2004); the United Nations (United Nations, 1997); and the Public Relations Society of America (Public Relations Society of America, 2005) embrace a strategic communications approach.

From a comprehensive perspective, strategic communications is an effective solution to four phenomena as outlined in table 2.4.

*Table 2.4 Justification for the Adoption of Strategic Communications*

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Traditional distinctions becoming blurred	The distinctions between disciplines are becoming blurred and many traditional functions are being recombined, leveraged for strategic purposes.
Technology and media economics are driving change	Internet and social media are making it increasingly difficult to differentiate between

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	advertising vs. publicity, sales promotion, or e-commerce.
Organizations using an expanding variety of methods to influence behavior	Audience experiences are increasingly becoming a sum of the people's experiences and it is becoming much harder to isolate any specific method as an influencer.
Strategic communications is a way for organizations to recognize that communications is a fundamental goal of an entire organization.	Historical distinctions of different communications methods are considered insufficient to achieve strategically important goals.

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Hallahan, et al., 2007

Todd (2009) recorded the perceptions of PRSSA faculty and professional advisers when reviewing assessment of students' learning and faculty performance. Todd concluded faculty are not teaching the skills students needed in industry, stating that the emphasis in curriculum is to provide "...practical experience in new media, internships, preparing students for their first job and 'hands-on experience'" (p. 71). Todd's assessment echoes one from much further back in history where Lee (1947) states "Courses should be regarded as what they are — a means of conditioning and preparing likely students to enter upon a series of experiences which may bring them to usefulness in the public relations field" (p. 91).

Making the specific case for strategic communications, Todd's 2009 and 2014 studies further stated that employers found students in general lacking in writing skills, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills as well as

comprehension of business practices. To correct this shortfall, Todd offers the following curriculum recommendations in Table 2.5.

*Table 2.5 PR Curriculum Recommendations*

Principles of public relations	Research and Evaluation
An internship	Writing and Production
Planning	Campaigns
Management	Case Studies
Law and Ethics	

Excerpted from Todd 2009

Todd (2009) also asked future employers what knowledge they expected new graduates to have and those results are included in table 2.6.

*Table 2.6 Skills Expectations for New Graduates*

Knowledge of global publics	Comprehension of PR theories
Relationship building	Transparency
Research skills	Problem solving
Strategic thinking	Planning
Management	Counseling

Excerpted from Todd, 2009

Looking to technology as being an impetus to integration, Wang (2004) concluded that new technology is changing the way public relations professionals communicate with particular attention to video conferencing, and multiple location projects. For the Institute for Public Relations Researchers, Pavlik (2007) concluded new media are affecting traditional communication models and theories. Moreover, this challenge of new technology expands across all communications disciplines with increasing demands being placed on marketers, advertisers, and other corporate communicators to know how the entire integrated system works and how to produce content that serves that system.

### **Are Student-run Agencies Taking Up the Strategic Communications Banner?**

Bush and Miller stated in their 2011 study, "The importance of understanding student-run agencies lies in the need to determine if and how communications curricula are falling short of preparing students for the profession and to examine how agencies might fill potential voids" (p. 485). They further went on to cite several other researchers, reporting the trend for student-run agencies to move more toward an integrated communications approach (Johnson & Ross, 2001; Kitchen, Kim, & Shulz 2008; AEJMC Report on Integrated Communication, as cited in Larsen & Len-Rios, 2006, p 35). This conclusion of the need to integrate can also be reached through observations. Some examples include integrated courses taught, client work completed, dedication of resources, faculty and staff to accomplish integration, etc. Larsen and Len-Rios (2006) found both advertising and public relations educators agreed that the two most important skills for undergraduates to possess are

writing and critical thinking skills. This commonly felt need might serve as a springboard for integration of the disciplines within the student-run agency model and elsewhere. Factors affecting integration are thought to include the physical age of the instructor, years spent in academia, years spent in professional practice, and resources available for curriculum integration into a strategic communications approach.

In addition, as Hallahan et al. (2007) point out in their study, strategic planning is being taught currently in undergraduate programs using a management by objective approach (Argenti, Howell, & Beck, 2005; Austin & Pinkleton, 2001; Caywood, 1997; Dozier & Ehling, 1992; Ferguson, 1999; Moffitt, 1999; Smith, 2005; Wilson & Ogden, 2004). Consequently pressures may well be felt by organizations to integrate, and a likely place for this to happen is in the student-run agency/client-agency relationship.

### **Integration Resistance**

But not all academia is in agreement with the communications integration concept. Larsen and Len-Rios (2006) found that established communications programs were less integrated than younger programs. They also discovered student-agency advisers with strong interest in strategic communications gravitated more toward communications curriculum integration. Similarly, those in an integrated curriculum expected more integration and those in a less integrated program expected the level of integration to stay the same. One other concern against integrating communications was pointed out by Lauzen (1991). When

public relations is integrated into a cross-disciplinary program, there is a perceived loss of power to public relations.

Similarly, studies by Laurie and Mortimer (2011) and Kitchen, Schultz, Kim, Han, and Li (2004) suggest integration is driven by the client as much as by the firm delivering the service. Moreover, there are distinctive differences between the agency concepts in the U.S. and Europe. American-based agencies seem more eager to embrace an integrated model as a way to design agencies — embracing the concept that integration is the roadmap moving forward, whereas European agencies saw IMC as a tactical breakdown with the emphasis on message transmission and creation rather than organizational structure. So, what are the pressures for integration progress? Are influences and pressures to integrate driven more by clients, by practitioners, or by academics?

Another way to phrase this question is, are agencies meeting the industry's desire for more strategic communications capability or are a majority of agencies still siloed as advertising firms or public relations firms exclusively? In a study of Strategic Communications in South Africa, Tindall and Holtzhausen (2011) challenged the siloed approach of communication practices stating, "...there is more common ground between communication practice in different settings than previously thought," (p. 74).

### **The Need for a Strategic Communications Measure**

Despite its detractors, there seems to be a need for convergence and strategic communications in most programs. These include student-run agencies (Benigni, Cheng, & Cameron, 2004, and Ranta, 2014a) and other programs

where members are expected to understand and execute strategic communications upon graduation if not before. This finding leaves open for discussion how one accurately measures the transition from traditional communications planning to strategic communications.

Based on these questions and observations, following are the research questions associated with this inquiry. While correlations for the various communication types by discipline were conducted, these research questions were also useful for breaking out various specific DVs as a subset for all variables within the survey instrument.

### **Research Questions**

R1. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an integrated communication curriculum in terms of applied communications?

R2. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an integrated communication curriculum in terms of specialty communications?

R3. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an integrated communication curriculum in terms of communications skills and traits?

R4. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. a public relations curriculum in terms of applied communications?

R5. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. a public relations curriculum in terms of specialty communications?

R6. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. a public relations curriculum in terms of skills and traits?

R7. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an advertising curriculum in terms of applied communications?

R8. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an advertising curriculum in terms of specialty communications?

R9. Is there a significant difference in teaching a strategic communications curriculum vs. an advertising curriculum in terms of skills and traits?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The hypotheses were informed via nine research questions. While correlations for the various communication types by discipline were conducted, the research questions were also useful for breaking out various specific DVs as a subset for all variables within the survey instrument.

For example hypothesis H2b, based on Hallahan et al. (2007), measures a mean value of importance for political communication (a specialty communication) between strategic communications and integrated communications. More specifically, the hypotheses were designed to investigate how pervasive strategic communications was and how strong the differentiation was between strategic communications and other communications disciplines. While there were 136 total variables (34 variables divided among applied communications, specialty communications, and skills and traits x 4 communication disciplines), the hypotheses were intended to be a representative sample of the relationships, which currently exist between different types of communication across the other three communications disciplines and strategic communications. Detailed analyses of the results are included in Chapter 4.

H1 Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS than INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: business management.

H2a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC



COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property.

H2b Respondents will report a higher importance mean value for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: political communication. H3a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: understands and can perform qualitative research.

H3b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: understands and can perform quantitative research.

H3c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: acceptance of criticism.

H3d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: persistence.

H4a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: business management.

H4b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC

COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: strategic planning.

H4c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: branding communication.

H5a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: political communication.

H5b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property communications.

H5c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance communications.

H5d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: search engine optimization.

H6a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: the ability to understand and perform qualitative research.

H6b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the

communications skills and traits dependent variable: the ability to perform quantitative research.

H6c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: advertising principles.

H7a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: business management.

H7b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: strategic planning.

H7c Respondents will report a higher importance mean value for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: stakeholder communication.

H7d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: shareholder communication.

H7e Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in applied communications dependent variable: crisis communications.

H8a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the specialty communications dependent variable: technical communications.

H8b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: public speaking.

H8c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property communications.

H8d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance.

H8e Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: corporate social responsibility.

H8f Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: not-for-profit communication.

H9 Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in communication skills and traits dependent variable: public relations principles.

## **CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY**

This chapter consists of six parts. Part 1 discusses the operationalization of a Strategic Communications Measure. Part 2 discusses the development of the study to include focus group approaches. Part 3 discusses the development of the research instrument. Part 4 discusses formation of research questions and hypotheses. Part 5 breaks down the instrument by variable. Part 6 discusses the purposive research sample. Part 7 addresses data analysis.

### **Part 1 Solving the Puzzle: Operationalization of Strategic Communications**

To take up the challenge of defining strategic communications, this researcher designed a measure for determining what faculty currently teaching in mass communications areas considered strategic communications. This measure was developed through analysis of current studies as well as original focus group work. The process involved the creation of a Mean Value of Importance (MVOI). Educators, ranking on a four-point scale, determined this value. MVOI was used to discern how important the dependent variables (loosely arranged into the categories of applied communications, specialty communications and communication skills and traits) were to the practice of the strategic communications discipline. In addition to defining strategic communications, these variables were also used to ask respondents how they

described three other specific communications disciplines: integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. Dependent variables were initially adapted from a measure composed by Todd (2009) determining how effectively practitioners and educators felt current public relations education was preparing students to compete in the marketplace. However, upon further investigation informed by work from Hallahan et al. (2007) and preliminary focus group research, additional items were added. More specifically, the three communication category variables break out to the following:

Applied Communications Variables (11): business management, strategic planning, marketing principles, branding communication, media relations, stakeholder relations, shareholder relations, campaign planning, event management, crisis communications and media buying.

Specialty Communications Variables (15): technical communications, patent/IP communications, political communications, regulatory compliance, interpersonal communications, corporate social responsibility, not-for-profit communications, new media digital communications, video production, website development, social media campaigns, public speaking, written communications, digital analytics, and SEO maximization.

Skills and Traits Variables (8): Skilled in qualitative research, skilled in quantitative research, values constructive criticism/feedback, demonstrates familiarity with advertising principles, demonstrates familiarity with public relations principles, displays collaborative leadership, demonstrates endurance/persistence, and demonstrates proactive determination.

## **Part 2 Focus Group Development**

The focus group used to inform creation of this survey was composed of faculty attending an IMC seminar at a southeastern college. Members were recruited by the conference organizer. A total of five faculty participated. Included in the group were participating faculty who teach business communications, media production, marketing, integrated marketing communications, professional communications, journalism, and corporate communications. The focus group was moderated by an impartial, sixth faculty member to eliminate researcher bias.

The focus group script and organization was designed in accordance with information from Krueger and Casey (2015) and in further consultation with the focus group moderator. All responses were recorded. Ultimately, significant additions to the quantitative survey were incorporated into many of the questions related to soft skills like: the ability to accept criticism; practice collaborative leadership; and adopt a proactive orientation. No incentives were provided for focus group participation. The focus group lasted approximately 70 minutes during a lunch break within the conference.

A complete outline of the focus group questions is included in Appendix A Part 1 and findings of the focus group are included in Appendix A Part 2. Participants were encouraged to discuss their feelings about strategic communications and integrated communications and where both disciplines were going in the future. They were also asked to distinguish and define strategic communications from integrated communications and finally, they were asked to provide skills and traits that should be identified and cultivated in order for a

student to become more attractive to employers. The qualitative focus group input figured in the overall design of the quantitative instrument.

### **Survey Design**

Survey design, data collection, and analysis were completed in accordance with the procedures as outlined in the researcher's university Institutional Review Board. (See documentation of IRB proceedings in Appendix F). All results were kept confidential. The survey instrument was tested via a brief pilot study prior to release. The goal for an estimated completion time of the quantitative survey was 15-20 minutes (University of South Carolina, 2015).

To ensure maximum completion rates of the survey, a \$100 gift card was initially offered as an incentive. As it became clear that more respondents were required, six additional \$50 gift cards were added (Goritz, 2004, 2006). All seven cards were distributed as part of a random drawing among those who completed the survey and opted-in by providing a valid email address at the end of the survey (Ragas & Culp, 2014; Todd 2009,).

### **Part 3 Developing the Research Instrument**

This section discusses the development of the survey itself and includes assumptions. The survey was developed in accordance with best practices and based on a variety of sources.

This survey measured a series of variables categorized under the headings of applied communications, specialized communications, and skills and traits found among practitioners. The variables were further refined to investigate within four recognized communications disciplines: strategic communications,



integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. A complete survey is included in Appendix A, Part 3.

Initially the questionnaire was taken from Todd 2009 and modified from information obtained via the literature review and consultation with various faculty members. The instrument was also tested using two pilot flights of research colleagues at my institution and research cohorts elsewhere.

Of particular interest was the question of whether radio buttons or sliding scales were more appropriate for the forced response questions. It was also tested for elapsed time. The goal was to develop a survey that could be completed in less than 15 minutes.

### **Assumptions**

The first part of the survey was designed to confirm some assumptions about the state of strategic communications in education and in practice. Four statements about strategic communications were provided, using a 3-point scale with the values disagree (1) neither agree nor disagree (2) and agree (3). Specific questions are included in Table 3.1.

*Table 3.1 Variables and Explanations—Initial Assumptions*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Clear differences between integrated and strategic communications	This question was prepared largely based on data gathered during the initial focus group.
Increasing demands for students to be trained in strategic communications	This question was added to the instrument based on Laurie & Mortimer (2011) and Moody (2012).

Increasing demands for communications professionals to embrace strategic communications	This question was added based on Laurie & Mortimer (2011), Moody (2012) and Kitchen et al. (2004).
Integrated strategic communications is the next evolution of professional communications.*	This question is based on Holtzhausen, & Zerfass (2015)

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All questions use a three-point scale (1 = disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = agree)  
 \*Question 4 was a test question to determine respondents' agreement with the potential for combining the two disciplines.

Subsequent parts of the survey were developed using a forced 4-point Likert-type scale.

#### **Part 4 Operationalization and Mean Values of Importance (MVOIs)**

As mentioned previously, while there were a total of 136 dependent variables explored in this portion of the survey, only 29 hypotheses were selected for this study. These specific variables were selected based on Hallahan et al. (2007), organic knowledge from the researcher, and focus group input.

The hypotheses were chosen as a representative sample of all potential 102 comparisons with strategic communications from the 34 types of communications variables and the three other communications disciplines.

Operationalization was accomplished using a Mean Value of Importance (MVOI) and a metric was designed to help query educators, particularly those in capstone courses and student-run agencies to develop a benchmark for weighing each variable in designing a curriculum. The instrument asked respondents to decide/rank how important each item was to the practice of strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising.

1. The instrument asked respondents to decide, out of 11 applied communications variables, how important each item was to the practice of strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising.
2. The instrument asked respondents to decide, out of 15 specialized communications variables, how important was each item to the practice of strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising.
3. The instrument asked respondents to decide, out of eight skills and traits variables, how important was each item to the practice of strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising.
4. Finally the instrument asked the respondents, via open responses, to name any missing, essential applied communication, type of communication, skill or trait they thought were important for the practice of strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising.

For example, if business management scored highly on the MVOI scale, advisers and/or curriculum committees would know to ensure some part of the strategic communications area of instruction included lessons and applications in business management.

### **More About (MVOIs)**

The MVOI was designed to confirm the strength of agreement of respondents to the variables listed under Applied Communications, Specialty Communications, and Communications Skills and Traits. The scale associated

with the measurement used a four-point “forced choice ” Likert-type scale of perceived importance (Bertram 2007 and Vogt 1999). The scale was anchored using the following terms: 1 = Not Important at All; 2 = Of Little Importance; 3 = Average Importance and 4 = Essential. The higher the value of the mean per question, the more important that variable was to its respective discipline.

The Mean Values of Importance, (MVOI), could then be compared to determine how important each variable was to its respective discipline and whether there was a significant difference between the mean values of each discipline. Specific variables were drawn from literature, focus group information, and personal experience. A complete copy of the survey is in Appendix A, Part 3.

### **Commitment of Resources**

Following the Mean Value of Importance questions, the next portion of the survey was based on a 100-point sliding scale and discussed Strategic Communications Investment of Resources. Questions for this section were derived from Bush (2009) and Ranta (2014a) as well as the PRSSA Student-run Agency handbook. In this series of questions, respondents were asked to comment on investments in Equipment, Travel, Hiring Faculty, Hiring Staff, Dedicated Space and Dedicated Classes as a way to record investments in teaching strategic communications. Anchors for the scale were: No investment (0-33), Some investment (34-67) and Significant investment (68-100).

### **Student-run Agency Adviser Questions**

The next part of the survey was addressing Student-run Agency Advisers. This portion consisted of eight questions and was accessed via skip logic to those who indicated they had past experience as a Student-run Agency Adviser.

Analyses of these questions will be the topic of future research and incorporate the findings of this dissertation as part of future publication.

### **Descriptive Statistics and Incentives**

The final portion of the survey was a brief, seven-question demographic profile. The respondent's age, experience (teaching and practicing), location of their program, and current rank were asked. The last question of the survey provided an opportunity to opt-in for a drawing of a Visa gift card as an incentive (one \$100 and six \$50) (Sanchez-Fernandez, Muñoz-Levia, Montore-Rios, & Ibáñez-Zapata, 2010; Goritz, 2004, 2006).

### **About Forced Response and Progress Bars**

The questionnaire was distributed via Qualtrics survey software using its email function. The desired 15-20 minute completion time and the comprehensive nature of the research (including the student-run agency portion of the survey) created two concerns when preparing to reach the sample. The first three parts of the survey used a forced response format. While the forced responses settings were necessary to secure the proper data, it was a concern that some respondents would abandon the survey without completion based on the survey lengths (Tukibayeva & Sarraf, 2012). Based on the 86 percent survey completion rate, this finding was realized.

As a way to encourage more completions, the progress bar was removed from the survey, prior to distribution. The justification for removing the bar was because half of the length of the complete survey was dedicated to student-run agency advisers. A high percentage of the respondents were not expected to have experience as student-run agency advisers, and would therefore not be asked to complete a significant portion of the survey. If the progress bar were left on the survey, respondents may have erroneously concluded the survey was too long, the progress rate unsatisfactory, and would abandon the survey prematurely (Mersdorf, 2009). Indeed emails were received from a respondent asking the survey's actual length and expressed irritation that no progress bar was included. However, when the lack of a progress bar was explained, the respondent understood and completed the survey that day.

## **Part 5 Breakdown of the Instrument by Variable**

Following are a series of tables categorizing the variables, their source, and their communications types (applied, specialty, skills and traits) measured across the four communication disciplines (strategic, integrated, public relations, and advertising).

*Table 3.2 Mean Value of Importance (MVOI) for Applied Communications (11)*

<b>Measured Variables*</b>	
Business Management	Shareholder Relations
Strategic Planning	Campaign Planning
Marketing Principles	Event Management

Branding Communication

Crisis Communication

Media Relations

Media Buying

Stakeholder Relations

Selections based on ESPN (2013); Dissertation Focus Group Information (2015); Hallahan et al. (2007); Paskin (2013); Ryan (2014) and Todd (2009)

*\*All responses in a 4-point Likert-type Scale: (Not Important At All, Of Little Importance, Average Importance or Essential) (Vogt 1999)*

*Table 3.3 Mean Value of Importance (MVOI) for Specialty Communications (15)*

Measured Variables*	
Technical Communication	Video production
Patent/IP Communication	Website development
Political Communication	Social media campaigns
Regulatory Compliance	Public speaking
Interpersonal Communication	Written communication
Corporate Social Responsibility	Digital analytics
Not for profit communication	SEO maximization

New media digital communication

Selections based on ESPN (2009, 2013); Dissertation Focus Group Information (2015); Hallahan et al. (2007); and Rose & Miller (1994)

*\*All responses in a 4 point Likert Scale: (Not Important At All, Of Little Importance, Average Importance or Essential). (Vogt 1999)*

*Table 3.4 Mean Value of Importance (MVOI) for Communications Skills and Traits (8)*

<b>Measured Variables*</b>	
Skills in Qualitative Research	Demonstrates familiarity with public relations principles
Skills in Quantitative Research	Displays collaborative leadership
Values Constructive Criticism/Feedback	Demonstrates endurance/persistence
Demonstrates familiarity with advertising principles	Demonstrates proactive determination

Selections based on ESPN (2009, 2013); Dissertation Focus Group Information (2015); Hallahan et al. (2007); and Rose & Miller (1994)

*\*All responses in a 4-point Likert Scale: (Not Important At All, Of Little Importance, Average Importance or Essential). (Vogt 1999)*

### **Descriptive Information**

The next set of variables (descriptives) had high face validity and include: year born, years of professional integrated communications experience, years of professional strategic communications experience, years teaching, location of current teaching (public, private, or other), and current academic rank. These descriptives would be used in the final analysis to determine if there was any variance in responses between age, years of experience, years teaching, etc.

### **Part 6 Purposive Research Sample**

Following testing of the survey for coherence, time and flow among six colleagues/research cohorts, the survey was distributed via email to the target database. The first purposive sample developed for this research included 726



faculty members located throughout the United States. The database was assembled using the AEJMC directory of universities reporting a student-run public relations agency, a student-run advertising agency, or an unspecified (perhaps IMC or strategic communications) agency. An additional source was a list of conference attendees to an American Advertising Federation conference. All sample members email addresses were verified via an Internet search, prior to the first survey distribution.

A note about final sample size: The first distribution of the survey was deemed unsuccessful. Of the initial flight of 726 emails in July 2015, only 30 usable surveys were returned. Failure of response was attributed to a poor subject line of the initial e-mail, inopportune timing and lack of personalized text in the email greeting and the body of the survey. Post hoc analysis concluded most faculty were likely on sabbatical, vacation, or otherwise engaged and away from their university email. These oversights were corrected in subsequent polling.

### **What's in a Name? The Second Distribution**

As a solution to boost responses and to see if personalization via piped text would enhance our response rate, an additional email survey was sent two weeks later to the first 50 names on the original database. To avoid duplication of answers, email addresses of the 30 who responded to the first distribution were removed from the list prior to mailing. Piped text allows personal salutations or other information to be included in each email.

For example, a solicitation email may read Dear Mr. Jones or Dear Dr. Harris as part of the salutation. To successfully accomplish this on a large scale, piped text automatically enters information from the survey database. Piped text can be used in the body of the email greeting, in the email subject line, and in the body of the survey.

As a way to ensure accuracy of the piped text personalization, an additional validation via an Internet search was conducted of the 50 targeted names. This verification yielded the first name, last name, title, place of employment, and email address of the group. When this search was complete, and using Qualtrics' piped text feature, the survey was sent.

Out of this second flight to the aforementioned group of 50, using piped text, three responses were obtained. While statistically a much higher percentage of responses in the second flight, than in the initial emailing, the overall n was still suboptimal for the desired inferential statistical analysis.

However, as the personalized results proved promising and as timing was still considered inopportune for a mass emailing to the entire database, a final audit was conducted (after removing the first 50 names from the piped text flight). Methodology for the final audit was identical to that of the second flight of 50 names. Internet searches were conducted confirming first name, last name, title, email address and area of instruction. This deeper audit led to a removal of 146 individuals (including the initial 50 from the personalization test) from the purposive sample.

Many of those names culled belonged to individuals who worked in other areas of academic instruction not directly related to the four dimensions investigated in this survey (strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, and advertising). During this final validation, when multiple points of contact (POCs) were identified at the same institution and were determined to be qualified, (teaching integrated communications, public relations, advertising, or strategic communications), a limit of four individuals from each university were selected. In the case of more than four potential POCs, preference was shown to senior leadership (dean, director, professor, associate professor).

Finally, in an effort to instill more responses, an additional incentive of six \$50 gift cards were included in the offering text for completing the survey. These six cards were in addition to a \$100 gift card used as incentive for the first survey wave. Funds to purchase the gift cards were provided by a small research fund at the author's university.

### **Round 3**

On September 9, 2015, the survey was distributed for a third time. Title and last name were used for piped text in both the email solicitation and opening text block of the survey. The timing was planned to correspond to the second full week of work for most faculty. Research indicated the added incentives, personal appeal, and better timing would deliver a greater overall response rate than previous attempts (Goritz, 2004, 2006; Van Dessel, 2015).

In an effort to ensure this flight would complete the survey, the sample was contacted two more times, once on September 14, 2015 and again on

September 22, 2015 with continuing appeals to complete the survey. In each case, respondents who had completed the survey were removed from the follow-on solicitations prior to an additional appeal being released.

Ultimately, combining all three of the September appeals in Round 3, a total of 179 acceptable responses were obtained. Added to the 33 usable responses from the two, initial, underperforming attempts, an overall final total of  $n = 212$  responses were obtained. This group of 212 was used to analyze the research. This number equates to an overall response rate of  $212/580$  or a 37 percent return rate.

### **Culling Responses**

While 212 cases was the final total used, there were 247 total responses received in the third round. Unfortunately not all of them were kept. Thirty-five responses from the third round were discarded prior to analysis. Criteria for discarding a response included all surveys completed in less than four minutes. Given the scope and number of variables provided in the survey, as well as the time required to complete the survey in our initial tests with the cohort, anyone completing the survey in less than four minutes was considered not have spent sufficient time reviewing potential answers. When the survey was completed, the gift cards were awarded via the U.S. postal service. Winners were selected from the respondent pool who opted in during the survey. Specific respondent names were selected using a random number generator linked to white noise from a randomized table of the names of the respondents. When contacted, winners were asked to provide or verify a mailing address for delivery of their incentive.

Ultimately the gift cards purchased and awarded were not Visa gift cards but MasterCard gift cards as the Visa gift cards were not sold in many stores in the researcher's area.

## **Part 7 Data Analysis**

Data analysis for the survey was accomplished using inferential statistics (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). Specifically, calculations were made to include means testing, paired sample, single tailed t-tests and Cronbach's Alpha. Testing was conducted using SPSS software (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2011).

### **Cronbach's Alpha**

Before detailed analysis, the survey instrument was subjected to reliability testing for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. As all variables presented were in acceptable ranges, the mean values of each MVOI were then subjected to paired t-tests (single-tailed) to determine how the variable scored in all communications dimensions (strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, and advertising).

Specific testing was performed against the hypotheses initially and then subsequent testing was performed against all variables in comparison with strategic communications.

## **CHAPTER 4 RESULTS**

This chapter is divided into seven parts. Part 1 details the descriptive statistics of the sample. Part 2 analyzes the assumptions made of the demand for strategic communications education. Part 3 details the results of the exploratory focus group. Part 4 details the Cronbach's Alpha values for internal consistency (reliability). Part 5 details the results of testing the hypotheses in this research. Part 6 includes an overall list of variable means by area of concentration. It includes the post-hoc analysis, and an overall correlation of strategic communications variables against corresponding dimensions of public relations, advertising, and integrated communications. Part 6 also includes a series of correlations of dependent variable means between strategic communications and all other communications dimensions broken down by category: applied communications, specialty communications, and communications skills and traits. Part 7 includes findings related to age, number of years working in strategic communications and years working in teaching,

In addition, Appendix C offers a matrix of the hypotheses means and Appendix D offers results of t-tests for significance for each dependent variable.

### **Part 1 Descriptive Statistics**

The total number of respondents to this survey was  $N = 247$  faculty members. The total number of usable responses was  $N = 212$ .

Each case represented an individual who taught strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, or advertising. No specific number per discipline was recorded as many faculty taught in multiple areas. The mean age of respondents was 53 years. Overall age range of respondents was ages 23-83 with 16 cases not reporting. The mean number of total years teaching was 15. The range of years teaching among the respondents was 0 to 39 years with seven cases not reporting. The mean number of years of teaching and/or practicing integrated communications was 17 with total values ranging from 0 to 50 with nine cases not reporting. The mean number of total years teaching and or practicing strategic communications was 15 with total values ranging from 0 to 50 with 12 cases not reporting.

## Part 2 Assumptions

This research included introductory questions addressing assumptions of the growth of strategic communications in the professional field and in the educational field. These assumptions were important to inform further research. Questions for the assumption section were posed using a 3-point scale (1= Disagree, 2= Neutral and 3 = Agree) Table 4.1 details the specific means and responses.

*Table 4.1 Assumptions Testing–Defining Perceived Demands About Strategic Communications*

Question	Mean	SD
There are increasing demands for students to be trained in strategic communications.	2.84	.44

There are increasing demands for communications professionals to embrace strategic communications.	2.83	.44
Integrated strategic communications is the next evolution of professional communications.	2.49	.59
There are clear differences between integrated communications and strategic communications.	2.05	.80

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*Value 1-3, (1 = Disagree, 2 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 3 = Agree)*

While the continuous variables all showed a mean that indicated some level of agreement with the growth of strategic communications, one of the most telling of the findings was the ambivalence present in the statement “There are clear differences between integrated communications and strategic communications.” This finding was of particular importance in the post hoc analysis as detailed in Chapter 5. A similar finding is also discussed from the perspectives obtained in part two of the survey targeting student-agency advisers. Approximately 127 of the 212 respondents indicated some past or present relationship with advising student-run agencies. While these insights were mined to measure pressures to teach strategic communications, further study of that data may yield more insights to better inform how to tailor a curriculum to incorporate strategic communications into an undergraduate program. An example of one of the findings is listed below in Table 4.2. This set of questions addressed pressures and efforts student-run agency advisers report in the need to incorporate strategic communications into their curricula to make their students more attractive to future employers.



*Table 4.2 Perceived Pressures and Efforts to Become More Strategic Communications Oriented. (N = 127)*

Question	Mean Value
My student-run agency is actively trying to make my students more attractive to employers by building strategic communications skills.	86.38
Relative to client pressures, my student-run agency has been encouraged to become more strategic.	65.05

*(Values 0-100 (Strongly disagree 0-19, Disagree 20-39, Neither Disagree nor Agree 40-59, Agree 60-79 and Strongly Agree 80-100))*

### **Part 3 Exploratory Focus Group Results**

As a way to inform the research and shape the questionnaire provided to our quantitative sample, a focus group was conducted. A complete copy of the Focus Group Guide (questions and directions) can be found in Appendix A Part 1. A representative sample of excerpts from the focus group is included in Appendix A Part 2. Some respondents' information appears to contradict other responses, but as the contradictions from the focus group were unclear, many of the findings were incorporated into the research instrument as described in the earlier chapter. In addition, free response questions were added to the survey to help dissuade the confusion. The mixed method approach used for this research was appropriate to allow for individual insights from each focus group member.

Also notable from the focus group data was contradictory information differentiating between strategic communications and integrated communications. This contradictory focus group information foreshadowed similar findings in the quantitative surveys. Consider the following two statements made by focus

group participants, trying to establish the difference between strategic communications and integrated communications:

Respondent 1: "Integration (integrated communications) has to do with brand building, elite form brand building. Strategic is different. Strategic falls under the umbrella of brand building. Not the same. Strategic communications contains multiple contexts."

Respondent 2: "Strategic communications ties to outcome, which ties to elements, which ties to objectives and tactics that ties to goal. Brand leads to a strategy that leads to tactics. But before all of that, your outcome ties to your goal. (You) don't start strategically. (You) need a big picture that informs the entire process. What are their goals, what do they want to accomplish and then what are the tactics?"

These competing explanations of what is strategic communications and how it fits under integrated communications are contrary to literature descriptions that strategic communications is the umbrella, which all other communications (including integrated communications), fit under. These contradictory definitions between strategic and integrated communications are important distinctions and should provide some caution moving forward in validating the hypotheses addressing them.

#### **Part 4 Cronbach's Alpha—Internal Validity (Reliability)**

In combining means in the survey analysis, it was important to maintain internal consistency of the measures. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. The following table reports the Cronbach's Alpha tests. Range of correlations for each group of variables and the corresponding dimensions was .65 -.85. A total Cronbach's Alpha score for all of the MVOIs was .96.

Table 4.3 Cronbach's Alpha Scores

Cronbach's Alpha/(N = 212)	Strategic Comms.	Integrated Comms.	Public Relations	Advertising
Applied Comms. (11 items)	.74	.74	.65	.75
Specialty Comms. (15 items)	.84	.85	.81	.83
Skills and traits (8 items)	.76	.77	.83	.82
All MVOI			.96	

Range from .65 to .85.

### Part 5 Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses were tested using single-tail paired t-tests for differences between the mean response ratings for different variables using the formula  $t = \frac{x_1 - x_2}{s/\sqrt{N}}$  where  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are the respective paired variable means, S is the paired standard deviation and N is the number of survey responses.

Twenty-nine hypotheses were selected as a purposive sample of MVOI and are provided later in this chapter. Implications of these findings and recommended follow-on research are discussed in Chapter 5.

The t-test methodology was selected as a way to interpret differences in the Mean Value of Importance (MVOI). All MVOI values were scored by respondents using a 4-point, forced, Likert-type scale with 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of little importance, 3 = Average importance or 4 = Essential. Alternative explanations of calculating the hypotheses were not explored as part of this initial

research. Table 4.4 provides a general summary finding of all hypotheses. Figure 4.1 provides detailed explanations by hypotheses.

**H1 Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS than INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the applied communication dependent variable: business management.**

There were no differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and integrated communications in the applied communications category dependent variable business management. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H2a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the specialty communication dependent variable: intellectual property.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property between strategic communications (M= 2.59) and integrated communications (M= 2.52) with a paired standard deviation of .58 for 212 cases. Conditions,  $t = 1.66$   $p = .05$ . The hypothesis was supported

**H2b Respondents will report a higher importance mean value for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the specialty communication dependent variable: political communications.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: political communication between strategic communications (M= 3.18) and integrated communications (M= 2.89) with a paired standard deviation of .65

for 212 cases. Conditions,  $t = 6.62$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H3a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: understands and can perform qualitative research.**

There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and integrated communications in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: Understands and can perform qualitative research. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H3b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: understands and can perform quantitative research.** A paired t-test

indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: understands and can perform quantitative research, between strategic communications ( $M = 3.65$ ) and integrated communications ( $M = 3.57$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .54 for 212 cases. Conditions,  $t = 2.27$   $p = .012$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H3c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: acceptance of criticism.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications

dependent variable: accepts criticism, between strategic communications (M= 3.73) and integrated communications (M= 3.60) with a paired standard deviation of .49 for 212 cases. Conditions,  $t = 3.83$   $p = .000$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H3d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: persistence.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: persistence, between strategic communications (M= 3.67) and integrated communications (M= 3.61) with a paired standard deviation of .42 for 212 cases. Conditions,  $t = 1.82$   $p = .04$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H4a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: business management.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: business management, between strategic communications (M= 3.40) and public relations (M= 3.49) with a paired standard deviation of .62 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = -2.10$   $p = .02$ . However, because  $t$  is a negative value, the hypothesis was not supported.

**H4b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: strategic planning.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: strategic planning, between strategic communications ( $M = 3.88$ ) and public relations ( $M = 3.83$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .45 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 1.86$   $p = .03$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H4c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the applied communications dependent variable: branding communication.**

There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and public relations in the applied communications skills dependent variable branding communication. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H5a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: political communication.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: political communications between strategic communications ( $M = 3.18$ ) and public relations political communications ( $M = 3.35$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .75 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = -3.31$   $p = .000$ . However, because  $t$  is a negative value, the hypothesis was not supported.

**H5b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property between strategic communications (M= 2.59) and public relations (M= 2.78) with a paired standard deviation of .75 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = -3.67$   $p = .00$ . However, because  $t$  is a negative value, the hypothesis was not supported.

**H5c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance communication.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean

values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance between strategic communications (M= 3.02) and public relations communications (M= 3.25) with a paired standard deviation of .75 for 210 cases. Conditions  $t = -.4.43$   $p = .000$ . However, because it was a negative value, the hypothesis was not supported.

**H5d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the specialty communications dependent variable: search engine optimization.** There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and public relations in the specialty communications



dependent variable search engine optimization. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H6a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: the ability to understand and perform qualitative research.** There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and public relations in the communications skills and traits dependent variable the ability to understand and perform qualitative research. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H6b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: the ability to perform quantitative research.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: the ability to perform quantitative research between strategic communications ( $M = 3.65$ ) and public relations ( $M = 3.53$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .55 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 3.17$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H6c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to PUBLIC RELATIONS in the communications skills and traits dependent variable: advertising principles.** A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable:

advertising principles between strategic communications (M= 3.55) and public relations (M= 3.39) with a paired standard deviation of .64 for 210 cases.

Conditions,  $t = 3.65$   $p = .000$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H7a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: business management.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: business management between strategic communications (M= 3.40) and advertising (M= 3.31) with a paired standard deviation of .75 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 1.65$   $p = .05$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H7b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: strategic planning.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: strategic planning between strategic communications (M= 3.89) and advertising (M= 3.76) with a paired standard deviation of .54 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 3.60$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H7c Respondents will report a higher importance mean value for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: stakeholder communications.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: stakeholder communication between strategic communications ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = .55$ ) and advertising ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .85 for 210 cases. Conditions  $t = 10$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H7d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the applied communications dependent variable: shareholder communications.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: shareholder communication between strategic communications ( $M = 3.48$ ,) and advertising ( $M = 2.90$ ,) with a paired standard deviation of .87 for 210 cases. Conditions  $t = 9.57$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H7e Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in applied communications dependent variable: crisis communications.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: crisis communication between strategic communications ( $M = 3.70$ ) and advertising ( $M = 2.89$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .84 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 13.91$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H8a Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in the specialty communications dependent variable: technical communications.**

There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and advertising in the specialty communications dependent variable: technical communication. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H8b Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: public speaking.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: public speaking between strategic communications ( $M = 3.49$ ,) and advertising ( $M = 3.27$ ) with a paired standard deviation of .84 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 3.85$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H8c Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property communication.** There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and advertising in the specialty communications dependent variable: intellectual property communication. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H8d Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in**

**specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance.**

There were no significant differences in a paired t-test between strategic communications and advertising in the specialty communications dependent variable: regulatory compliance communication. The hypothesis was not supported.

**H8e Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: corporate social responsibility.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: corporate social responsibility between strategic communications (M= 3.63) and advertising (M= 3.25,) with a paired standard deviation of .87 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 6.36$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H8f Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in specialty communications dependent variable: not-for-profit communications.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: not-for-profit communication between strategic communications scores (M= 3.38) and advertising (M= 3.13) with a paired standard deviation of .87 for 210 cases. Conditions,  $t = 4.07$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

**H9 Respondents will report a higher mean value of importance for STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS when compared to ADVERTISING in communication skills and traits dependent variable: public relations principles.**

A paired t-test indicated a significant difference between mean values of importance for the specialty communications dependent variable: public relations principles between strategic communications (M= 3.75) and advertising (M= 3.37) with a paired standard deviation of .71 for 210 cases. Conditions  $t = 8.11$   $p = .00$ . The hypothesis was supported.

*Figure 4.1 Detailed Reporting of Hypotheses*

#### **Abbreviated Reporting of Hypotheses**

Seventeen hypotheses were supported and 12 hypotheses were not supported. Below is a table of all hypotheses results.

*Table 4.4 Table of Hypotheses Results*

Abbreviated Hypotheses Results
<b>Hypothesis: H1</b> Variable: Business Management Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Not Supported
<b>Hypothesis: H2a</b> Variable: Intellectual Property Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Supported
<b>Hypothesis: H2b</b> Variable: Political Communication Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Supported
<b>Hypothesis: H3a</b> Variable: Qualitative Research

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Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Not Supported

**Hypothesis H3b**

Variable: Quantitative Research:

Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Supported

**Hypothesis H3c**

Variable: Acceptance of Criticism

Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communication: Supported

**Hypothesis H3d**

Variable: Persistence

Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications: Supported

**Hypothesis H4a**

Variable: Business Management

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H4b**

Variable: Strategic planning

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Supported

**Hypothesis: H4c**

Variable: Branding Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H5a**

Variable: Political Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H5b**

Variable: Intellectual Property Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H5c**

Variable: Regulatory Compliance

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H5d**

Variable: Search Engine Optimization

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

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**Hypothesis: H6a**

Variable: Qualitative Research

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H6b**

Variable: Quantitative Research

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Supported

**Hypothesis: H6c**

Variable: Advertising Principles

Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations: Supported

**Hypothesis: H7a**

Variable: Business Management

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H7b**

Variable: Strategic Planning

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H7c**

Variable: Stakeholder Communications

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H7d**

Variable: Shareholder Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H7e**

Variable: Crisis Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H8a**

Variable: Technical Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H8b**

Variable: Public Speaking

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H8c**

Variable: Intellectual Property Communication

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Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H8d**

Variable: Regulatory Compliance

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Not Supported

**Hypothesis: H8e**

Variable: Corporate Social Responsibility

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H8f**

Variable: Not-for-Profit Communication

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

**Hypothesis: H9**

Variable: Public Relations Principles

Strategic Communications vs. Advertising: Supported

## Overall MVOI Tables

The tables below include the Mean Value of Importance (MVOI) for each dependent variable when compared against strategic communications in the research instrument. The table also includes t-statistics used to compare all dependent variable means against the MVOI for strategic communications. These values include scores for those MVOIs included in the research hypotheses and those that are not.

All four communications disciplines are represented (strategic communications, integrated communication, public relations, and advertising) and are divided by communication types (applied communications, specialty communications, and communication skills and traits). Note that bold scores show a significant differentiation from strategic communications MVOI values. For specific MVOI values and t-test comparisons, consult Appendices C and D.

*Table 4.5 Matrix of All Dependent Variable Means (MVOIs) in Applied Communications*

<b>Paired t-test Results Comparison Applied Communications MVOI by Communications Discipline</b>				
<b>MVOI</b>	<b>Strategic Comms. (N = 212)</b>	<b>Integrated Comms. (N = 212)</b>	<b>Public Relations (N = 210)</b>	<b>Advertising (N = 210)</b>
Business Management	3.40	3.40 t = .00 p = .50	<b>3.49*</b> t = -2.10 p = .02	<b>3.31*</b> t = 1.65 p = .05
Strategic Planning	3.88	<b>3.76*</b> t = 3.44 p = .00	<b>3.83*</b> t = 1.86 p = .03	<b>3.76*</b> t = 3.60 p = .00
Marketing Planning	3.55	<b>3.76*</b> t = -5.19 p = .00	<b>3.48*</b> t = 1.67 p = .05	<b>3.80*</b> t = -5.76 p = .00
Branding	3.69	<b>3.78*</b> t = -2.17 p = .02	3.65 t = 1.05 p = .29	<b>3.89*</b> t = -2.34 p = .01
Media Relations	3.60	<b>3.41*</b> t = 4.42 p = .00	<b>3.86*</b> t = -6.33 p = .00	<b>3.23*</b> t = 6.37 p = .00
Stakeholder Comms.	3.62	<b>3.35*</b> t = 5.88 p = .00	<b>3.85*</b> t = -5.59 p = .00	<b>3.04*</b> t = 9.99 p = .00
Shareholder Comms.	3.47	<b>3.19*</b> t = 5.68 p = .00	<b>3.70*</b> t = -4.93 p = .00	<b>2.90*</b> t = 9.57 p = .00
Campaign planning	3.80	3.79 t = .37 p = .36	3.85 t = -1.17 p = .15	3.80 t = .11 p = .46
Event Management	3.23	3.19 t = .83 p = .20	<b>3.67*</b> t = -9.01 p = .00	<b>3.09*</b> t = 2.34 p = .01

Crisis Communications	3.69	<b>3.36*</b> <b>t = 6.78</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.90*</b> <b>t = -5.62</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>2.89*</b> <b>t = 13.91</b> <b>p = .00</b>
Media Buying	3.05	<b>3.38*</b> <b>t = -6.01</b> <b>p = .00</b>	2.96 <b>t = 1.28</b> <b>p = .10</b>	<b>3.75*</b> <b>t = -11.16</b> <b>= .000</b>

(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential).

\* = Significance in 1-tailed t-test  $p < .05$  t-value and p-value listed below each mean when compared to strategic communications. **BOLD type** = significance.

Table 4.6 Matrix of All Dependent Variable Means (MVOIs) in Specialty Communications

Paired t-test Results Comparison Specialty Communications MVOI by Communications Discipline				
MVOI	Strategic Comms. (N = 212)	Integrated Comms. (N = 212)	Public Relations (N = 210)	Advertising (N = 210)
Technical Communication	3.00	2.95 <b>t = 1.12</b> <b>p = .11</b>	<b>3.18*</b> <b>t = -3.42</b> <b>p = .00</b>	2.98 <b>t = .49</b> <b>p = .31</b>
Intellectual Property	2.59	<b>2.52*</b> <b>t = 1.66</b> <b>p = .05</b>	<b>2.78*</b> <b>t = -3.70</b> <b>p = .00</b>	2.54 <b>t = .85</b> <b>p = .20</b>
Political Communications	3.18	<b>2.89*</b> <b>t = 6.62</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.35*</b> <b>t = -3.31</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>2.83*</b> <b>t = 5.99</b> <b>p = .00</b>
Regulatory Compliance Communications	3.01	<b>2.92*</b> <b>t = 6.62</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.25*</b> <b>t = -4.43</b> <b>p = .00</b>	3.02 <b>t = .00</b> <b>p = .50</b>
Interpersonal Communications	3.43	<b>3.29*</b> <b>t = 3.23</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.66*</b> <b>t = -4.64</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.23*</b> <b>t = 3.47</b> <b>p = .00</b>
Corporate Social Responsibility	3.63	<b>3.39*</b> <b>t = 6.15</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.76*</b> <b>t = -3.06</b> <b>p = .00</b>	<b>3.25*</b> <b>t = 6.36</b> <b>p = .00</b>

New Media Communications	3.74	3.76 t = -.74 p = .23	<b>3.87*</b> t = <b>-3.43</b> p = <b>.00</b>	3.76 t = -.48 p = .32
Video Production	3.14	<b>3.30*</b> t = <b>-3.55</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.29*</b> t = <b>-3.09</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.60*</b> t = <b>-9.14</b> p = <b>.00</b>
Website Production	3.42	<b>3.49*</b> t = <b>-1.76</b> p = <b>.04</b>	3.38 t = .77 p = .22	<b>3.51*</b> t = <b>-1.75</b> p = <b>.04</b>
Social Media Production	3.75	3.72 t = .67 p = .24	3.80 t = -1.54 p = .06	3.79 t = -1.04 p = .15
Public Speaking	3.49	<b>3.30*</b> t = <b>4.56</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.72*</b> t = <b>-5.60</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.27*</b> t = <b>3.89</b> p = <b>.00</b>
Written Communications	3.83	<b>3.75*</b> t = <b>2.63</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.89*</b> t = <b>-2.02</b> p = <b>.02</b>	<b>3.67*</b> t = <b>3.78</b> p = <b>.00</b>
Digital Analytics	3.54	3.56 t = -.49 p = .31	3.52 t = .32 p = .38	<b>3.69*</b> t = <b>-3.12</b> p = <b>.00</b>
Not-for-profit Communications	3.38	<b>3.17*</b> t = <b>5.21</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.57*</b> t = <b>-4.24</b> p = <b>.00</b>	<b>3.13*</b> t = <b>4.07</b> p = <b>.00</b>
Search Engine Optimization	3.39	<b>3.47*</b> t = <b>-1.98</b> p = <b>.03</b>	3.35 t = 1.00 p = .16	<b>3.52*</b> t = <b>-2.69</b> p = <b>.00</b>

(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential)

\* = Significance in 1-tailed t-test  $p < .05$  t-value and p-value listed below each mean when compared to Strategic Communications. **BOLD type** = significance

Table 4.7 Matrix of All Dependent Variable Means (MVOIs) in Communications Skills and Traits

Paired t-test Results Comparison Communications Skills and Traits MVOI by Communications Discipline				
MVOI	Strategic Comms. (N = 212)	Integrated Comms. (N = 212)	Public Relations (N = 210)	Advertising (N = 210)
Qualitative Research	3.57	3.55 t = .35 p = .36	3.59 t = -.51 p = .31	3.62 t = -1.11 p = .14
Quantitative Research	3.65	<b>3.57*</b> t = 2.27 p = .01	<b>3.53*</b> t = 3.17 p = .00	3.65 t = .00 p = .50
Receive Criticism	3.73	<b>3.60*</b> t = 3.83 p = .00	<b>3.79*</b> t = -1.82 p = .02	3.76 t = -.87 p = .19
Collaborative Leadership	3.67	<b>3.58*</b> t = 2.82 p = .00	<b>3.76*</b> t = -2.53 p = .00	3.68 t = -.13 p = .49
Persistence	3.67	<b>3.61*</b> t = 1.82 p = .04	3.71 t = -1.16 p = .13	3.71 t = -1.03 p = .15
Proactive Determination	3.67	<b>3.58*</b> t = 3.42 p = .00	3.69 t = -.43 p = .34	3.64 t = .88 p = .19
Advertising Principles	3.55	<b>3.69*</b> t = -3.44 p = .00	<b>3.39*</b> t = 3.65 p = .00	<b>3.93*</b> t = -7.99 p = .00
PR Principles	3.75	<b>3.66*</b> t = 2.42 p = .01	<b>3.90*</b> t = -4.36 p = .00	<b>3.36*</b> t = 8.11 p = .00

(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential)

\* = Significance in 1-tailed t-test  $p < .05$  t-value and p-value listed below each mean when compared to Strategic Communications.

**BOLD type** = significant p value.

## Part 6 Correlations of all Variables by Discipline

As a part of a post-hoc analysis, the total numbers of variables (N = 34) Applied Communications (11), Specialty Communications (15) and Communication Skills and Traits (8) were combined to examine the larger relationships among the variables.

Tables 4.8 – 4.10 demonstrate how the total number of variables compares when exploring the other three individual disciplines with strategic communications.

*Table 4.8 Pearson Correlations of Applied Communications Dependent Variables*

<b>Applied Communications MVOIs, all Disciplines vs. Strategic Communications</b>			
	Integrated Communications	Public Relations	Advertising
	.62*	.79*	.17
Sig.	.02	.00	.31
N	11	11	11

\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

*Table 4.9 Pearson Correlations of Specialty Communications Dependent Variables*

<b>Specialty Communications MVOIs vs. Strategic Communications</b>			
	Integrated Communications	Public Relations	Advertising
	.93**	.96**	.81**
Sig.	.00	.00	.00
N	15	15	15

\*\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 4.10 Pearson Correlations of Skills and Traits Dependent Variables

<b>Communication Skills and Traits MVOIs Strategic Communications vs. Other Disciplines</b>			
	Integrated	Public Relations	Advertising
	.004	.90**	-.59
Sig.	.496	.00	.06
N	8	8	8

\*\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 4.11 Pearson Correlations of All Dependent Variable MVOIs vs Strategic Communications

<b>All MVOIs vs. Strategic Communications</b>			
	Integrated	Public Relations	Advertising
	.87**	.89**	.60
Sig.	.00	.00	.00
N	34	34	34

\*\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

## Part 7 Analysis by Age, Years Teaching and Years Working in Strategic Communications

In an attempt to determine if age or experience play in the assignment of importance, correlations of all MVOIs were performed against the variables: year born, number of years in strategic communications and number of years teaching.

Tables 4.12 – 4.14 list the 136 variables with significant differences.

Implications of these correlations are discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 4.12 Significant Pearson Correlations of Year Born vs. MVOIs

<b>MVOI/Discipline</b>	<b>P-value/Significance</b>
Shareholder Communications/Strategic Communications	.20/.00**
Strategic Planning/Integrated Communications	.20/.00**
Event Management/Public Relations	.19/.01**

**\*\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Table 4.13 Significant Pearson Correlations of Number of Years Practicing Strategic Communications vs. MVOIs

<b>MVOI/Discipline</b>	<b>P-value/Significance</b>
Business Management/Strategic Communications	.23/.00**
Qualitative Analysis/Strategic Communications	.19/.01**
Proactive Determination/Strategic Communications	.17/.01**
Proactive Determination/IMC	.18/.01**
Media Relations/Advertising	.21/.00**
Technical Comms./Advertising	.21/.00**
Website Comms./Advertising	.18/.01**

**\*\* = Corr. significant at the 0.01 level.**



Table 4.14 Significant Pearson Correlations of Number of Years Teaching vs. MVOIs

MVOI/Discipline	P-value/Significance
Receive Criticism/Integrated communications	-.19/.01**
Advertising Principles/Integrated Communications	-.18/.01**
Media Buying/Public Relations	.21/.00**
Crisis Communications/Advertising	.20/.00**
PR Principles/Advertising	.19/.01**

**\*\* = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

## **CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Summary of Findings**

This chapter is divided into 11 parts, discussing the implications of the various findings in this research. Part 1 discusses overall challenges in defining strategic communications. Part 2 discusses the pressures for adopting strategic communications. Part 3 discusses overall observations. Part 4 discusses similarities and differences between strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. Part 5 discusses implications for the research hypotheses. Part 6 discusses a total matrix of means. Part 7 discusses single tail t-tests and skills and traits. Part 8 discusses limitations of this research. Part 9 discusses the need for professional practitioner input. Part 10 discusses the distillation of variables. Part 11 discusses the future of the research.

### **Part 1 Strategic Communications Challenges and Confusion**

For many faculty surveyed, attempting to define the strategic communications discipline offered deep challenges. While there is strong acknowledgement for the need to understand and define strategic communications in this survey, there is clearly confusion, resistance and doubt as to what it is and what it is not. Opportunities for further and better definitions

are very strong findings. Consider these quotes from the survey's open-ended free response questions:

"I'm having trouble separating strategic communications from integrated communications - strategic communications integrates across platforms and media types to reach publics or target audiences. IMC is really a version of strategic comm. in my mind, with advertising and public relations being more (but not completely) separate disciplines."—*Survey respondent free response comments, 2015.*

"I do not agree with those PR professionals who are trying to co-opt the term "strategic communications" for their purposes. I view Strategic Communications at a higher level, at a C level to be utilized by persons with both a business (MBA) and communications background, i.e. Someone who understands more than the communications aspects of an organization, but also business, financial, production, marketing, functions as well. I use Integrated Communications to include all communications functions including PR, advertising, WOM, (Word of Mouth, definition added) digital, personal, social, etc. in a more marketing-oriented manner."—*Survey respondent free response comments, 2015.*

"One of my least favorite things about social science is the seemingly constant need for researchers and practitioners to create new labels for existing practices. With the label Strategic Communications, are we suggesting that there was no strategy involved in Integrated Communications? That's what I glean from various blogs/papers I have read on the subject. Marketing Communications covers both Strategic Communications and Integrated Communications. If an organization's marketing communications are not both strategic and integrated, that organization is wasting time and money. While social media has forced companies to beef up public relations activities and corporate social programs, I don't think practices are any more strategic than in the past. What I have noticed is that many organizations are just now beginning to integrate social media efforts with the rest of their marketing plans and t (o) include social conversations as a part of the overall strategy. Do I think we need new terminology to encompass this? No, not really."—*Survey respondent free response comments, 2015.*

The various respondents' comments summed up much of this research. As further evidence, consider the implications of the hypotheses used at the beginning of this research. Seventeen of the 29 hypotheses were supported by the research findings; 12 were not.

Conclusions about unsupported hypotheses include differences with no significance between the strategic communications discipline and the other discipline or, a conclusion that while there was a significant difference, it was in the negative direction, implying that the variable was actually more important in one of the other disciplines than strategic communications. Similarly, the data obtained in this study provide some observations that may be helpful. In many instances, the MVOI was as high or higher in strategic communications than in other related communication disciplines. In addition, all but one of the 34 variables tested in this survey registered an MVOI value of 3 or better (indicating average to essential importance) in the area of strategic communications. Therefore there are meaningful findings to assist in better defining strategic communications and informing future curriculum instruction.

In summary, this study reveals a pragmatic measurement of strategic communications, which encompasses variables from applied communications, specialty communications and communication skills and traits. It measures contributions to the discipline of strategic communications from three other mass communication disciplines (integrated communications, public relations and advertising). It also reveals where best practices for each variable can be found in terms of each communications discipline.

Finally, the results suggest areas of concentration for educators to include when contemplating the adoption of a strategic communications orientation or designing a strategic communications curriculum. In particular, this measurement lends itself to informing the organization of curricula for student run

agencies. Finally, the study also suggests a pragmatic definition of strategic communications measureable by topic and suggests areas for future study in quantifying the practice of strategic communications.

## **Part 2 Overall Observations—Measurement Scale**

Based on the results of the tests conducted for this study, strategic communications is a blend of applied communications, specialty communications, and skills and traits. All but one of the variables used in this research, (intellectual property), registered with a mean value score of above 3 on the four-point MVOI scale, indicating the developed scale is a legitimate measurement of strategic communications. Cronbach's Alpha testing of all of the variables indicated internal consistency across all values ranging from .650 to .848 with an overall total Cronbach's Alpha value of .964 for all variables combined.

For purposes of future research, the scale for measuring strategic communications within the realm of applied communications variables should include business management, strategic planning, marketing planning, branding, media relations, stakeholder relations, shareholder relations, campaign planning, event management, crisis communications, and media buying.

Similarly, as it pertains to types of specialty communications, the scale for measuring strategic communications should include technical communication, political communication, regulatory compliance communications, interpersonal communications, corporate social responsibility communications, new media communications, video production, website design/production, social media

communications, public speaking skills, written communications skills, command of digital analytics, not-for-profit communications, and search engine optimization.

Finally, in terms of communications skills and traits, the scale for measuring strategic communications should include the abilities to conduct and understand both qualitative and quantitative research, the ability to receive criticism, the ability to perform collaborative leadership, the ability to demonstrate persistence in the face of adversity, possessing proactive determination, familiarity with advertising principles, and familiarity with public relations principles. In descending MVOI order, Table 5.1 shows a summary detailing how respondents ranked each of the aforementioned variables as to the concept of importance to strategic communications:

*Table 5.1 Strategic Communications MVOI values*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>MVOI</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>MVOI</b>
Strategic Planning	3.88	Written Communication	3.83
Campaign Planning	3.80	Social Media Production	3.75
PR Principles	3.75	New Media Communication	3.74
Receive Criticism	3.73	Branding	3.69
Crisis Communications	3.69	Collaborative Leadership	3.67
Persistence	3.67	Proactive Determination	3.67

Quantitative Research	3.65	Corp. Social Responsibility	3.63
Stakeholder Communications	3.62	Media Relations	3.60
Qualitative Research	3.57	Marketing Planning	3.55
Advertising Principles	3.55	Digital Analytics	3.54
Public Speaking	3.49	Shareholder Communications	3.47
Interpersonal Communications	3.47	Website Production	3.42
Business Management	3.40	Search Engine Optimization	3.39
Not-for-Profit Communications	3.38	Event management	3.23
Political Communication	3.18	Video Production	3.14
Media Buying	3.05	Regulatory Compliance Communications	3.01
Technical Communications	3.00	Intellectual Property	2.59

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When defining the importance of particular MVOIs against age, years of experience in strategic communications and years of teaching, there are weak correlations across a diverse set of variables but no strong indicator that any set of variables influenced respondents' assessments of what was important in adopting strategic communications.

For example, as it pertains to age, the younger the faculty member, the more important shareholder communications is to strategic communications. In addition the younger the faculty member, the more important practicing integrated communications is to the study of integrated communications. Finally the younger the faculty member, the more important event management is to public relations.

Similarly, when addressing years of practicing strategic communications, those with the most experience saw the important skills of business management, qualitative analysis and a proactive demeanor as significant attributes for practicing strategic communications. In addition, the faculty with the greatest amount of strategic communications experience also valued a proactive demeanor for the practice of integrated communications. Finally, the more experienced the strategic communications practitioner, the more important media relations, technical communications and website design skills are to the discipline of advertising.

Finally, as it pertains to number of years teaching, there were significant differences among all of the MOVIs in the ability to receive criticism and strong knowledge of advertising principles for the practice of integrated communications. Also, the more experienced teachers valued knowledge of media buying for public relations practice and an understanding of crisis communications and public relations principles was also critical for the practice of advertising.

In summary, there are significant differences among some variables but overall, the age, years of practicing strategic communications and years of



teaching have little effect on the assessment of the values of the measure's MVOIs and did not have a sufficient number of significant differences to indicate widespread relationships with any group of variables.

### **Part 3 Pressures for Adopting Strategic Communications**

Based on the results of the surveyed faculty, and the subset of faculty who have student-run agency experience, it seems clear most believe there are pressures and desires for undergraduate faculty to teach and practice strategic communications. However, due to the aforementioned difficulties in defining strategic communications, it is all the more important to set out to find a definition for the term, and, once established, how it should be measured. By adopting the MVOI scale and reviewing different variables under the three categories offered here — applied communications, specialty communications, and communications skills and traits — it becomes easier to envision what strategic communications is and how it can be taught. Furthermore, by assigning values of importance to each variable under the specific communications disciplines — strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, and advertising — it is also easier to refine where to look when seeking best practices for each variable. For example, if public relations principles scores the highest MVOI in the public relations discipline, then as scholars we should start looking there to find suitable best practices in public relations principles.

### **Part 4 Paired Sample t-test Values of Significance: Differences Outweigh Similarities**

In this study of mean values of importance, based on the survey of 212

faculty who teach in one or more of the four communications disciplines, (strategic communications, integrated communications, advertising, and public relations) there are both similarities and differences. When expressed in terms of the number of significant and insignificant variance of means when testing between the various communication principles and strategic communications, it seems clear very few modifications in curriculum would be needed to convert or upgrade public relations curricula to a strategic communications program. The conversion of an integrated communications program into a strategic communications program would similarly involve the adoption of a minimal number of concepts and areas of emphasis, although the teaching of skills and traits would require some additional attention to truly become strategic.

In contrast, according to the sample used in this study, the practice of the discipline of advertising varies more widely with that of strategic communications. Most of the difference is expressed largely in terms of varied and highly specific skills and traits. The study of advertising may be where the largest amount of modification or expansion is needed for a program to become truly strategic.

## **Part 5 Implications of Research Hypotheses**

When reviewing the hypotheses, results are mixed between supported and unsupported statements. Part 5.1 discusses supported hypotheses and Part 5.2 discusses unsupported hypotheses.

### **Part 5.1 Implications of Supported Hypotheses (17)**

In the following paragraphs, implications of the supported hypotheses are discussed. As expected in the focus group, some of the outcomes of parts 5.1

and 5.2 contradict with expected outcomes based on existing definitions of strategic communications:

“Six relevant disciplines are involved in the development, implementation and assessment of communications by organizations: management, marketing, public relations, technical communication, political communication and information/social marketing campaigns. ...A growing number of organizations have recognized that various communications disciplines share common purposes and that their objectives and strategies for achieving these objectives are similar. They differ primarily by their tactics and are being pressed to adapt to changing environment by their organizations desire to coordinate communications, by the convergence of media, and by the blurring of communications genres. Organizations are seeking integration as well as enhanced effectiveness through synergy, enhanced efficiencies, and reduced redundancies.” (Hallahan et al. pp. 1, 5)

More specifically, when reviewing the hypotheses via a paired t-test comparison, there is a variety of conclusions to be made based on earlier findings:

1. Intellectual property specialty communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than integrated communications.
2. Political communications specialty communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than integrated communications.
3. The ability to conduct quantitative research was more appropriately characterized as a strategic communications skill or trait than integrated communications.
4. Acceptance of criticism was a trait more necessary for strategic communications than integrated communications.
5. Persistence was more appropriately characterized as a strategic communications skill or trait than an integrated communications skill or trait.

6. Strategic planning was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than integrated communications.
7. Quantitative research capabilities were more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than public relations communications.
8. Advertising principles were more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than public relations communications.
9. Business management was more appropriately characterized as applied communications for strategic communications than Advertising.
10. Strategic planning was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
11. Stakeholder communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
12. Shareholder communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
13. Crisis communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
14. Public speaking was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
15. Corporate social responsibility was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.
16. Not-for-profit communications was more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.

17. Public relations principles were more appropriately characterized as strategic communications than Advertising.

### **Part 5.2 Implications of Unsupported Hypotheses (12)**

Like the previous discussions in Part 5.2, in the following instances, the unsupported hypotheses also tell us something. Most specifically, the following unsupported hypotheses help us conclude via earlier reported findings that there is insufficient variance to determine how these variables differ from one discipline to the other.

1. Business management is an equally applied communications skill set for both strategic communications and integrated communications.
2. Qualitative research is a skill or trait used by both strategic communications and integrated communications.
3. Business management is an applied communications skill equally practiced in public relations and strategic communications.
4. Branding communications is an equally applied communications skill for both strategic communications and public relations.
5. Political specialty communications more appropriately belonged in public relations than in strategic communications.
6. Intellectual property specialty communications is not seen as a significant specialty communication for public relations or strategic communications.
7. Regulatory compliance specialty communications demonstrated no significant difference between public relations and strategic communications.

8. Search engine optimization specialty communications belongs equally in both strategic communications and public relations communications.
9. Qualitative research is an equal communications skill or trait for both strategic communications and public relations communications.
10. Technical communications specialty communications is necessary for both strategic communications and advertising practice.
11. Intellectual property specialty communications is a communications skill needed for both strategic communications and advertising.
12. Regulatory compliance specialty communications is an applied communications skill equally necessary for both strategic communications and advertising.

#### **Part 6 Total Matrices of Means**

While selected means tested against hypotheses offered some insights, a comparison of all means is further instructive in helping to define what strategic communications is (and is not). Using the data set of faculty respondents in the sample, certain other observations were made and provided by variable.

Strategic communications has a diverse variety of elements contributing to its construction. Most of those variables also represent key components of the three other disciplines: integrated communications, public relations, and advertising. Looking at the mean values of importance, insights uncovered post hoc include:

1. When summarizing the combined MVOI values overall, the discipline with the most similarity to strategic communications is public relations. (SC 118.76, PR 121.97).
2. When summarizing the MVOI values overall, the discipline with the least similarity to strategic communications is integrated communications. (SC 118.76, IC 114.29).
3. In terms of mean value of importance for applied communications, the discipline with the most similarity to strategic communications is public relations. (SC 38.98, PR 40.24).
4. In terms of mean value of importance for applied communications, the discipline with the least similarity to strategic communications is integrated communications. (SC 38.98, IC 35.92).
5. In terms of mean value of importance for specialty communications, the discipline with the most similarity to strategic communications is public relations. (SC 50.52, PR 52.37).
6. In terms of mean value of importance for specialty communications, the discipline with the least similarity to strategic communications is integrated communications. (SC 50.52, IC 49.48).
7. In terms of mean value of importance for communications skills and traits, the disciplines with the most similarities to strategic communications are public relations and advertising. (SC 29.26, PR 29.36, Ad 29.35)

8. In terms of mean value of importance for communications skills and traits, the discipline with the least similarity to strategic communications is integrated communications. (SC 29.26, IC 28.89).

For a more illustrative view, consult tables 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.1.3. The strongest MVOI of each variable is listed with the discipline. As a comparison of means, please consult the figures below each table, which plots the value of each mean per variable by discipline. As one can see, there are some values that are very close together or even equal in value and there are some means that are more disparate.

#### **Matrix of Means, Applied Communications**

Following is a table of the largest MVOI and the associated discipline for each in the applied communications category.

*Table 5.2 Matrix of Means: Applied Communications Table of Dependent Variables*

<b>MVOI Values, Applied Communications Dependent Variables</b>	
<b><i>Variable Title</i></b>	<b><i>Largest Value/Discipline</i></b>
Strategic Planning	3.88/Strategic Communications
Crisis Communication	3.90/Public Relations
Media Relations	3.86/Public Relations
Campaign Planning	3.85/Public Relations
Stakeholder Communication	3.85/Public Relations
Shareholder Communications	3.70/Public Relations



Event Management

3.67/Public Relations

Business Management

3.49/Public Relations

Branding

3.89/Advertising

Marketing Planning

3.80/Advertising

Media Buying

3.75/Advertising



Figure 5.1 Applied Communications Chart of Means

### Matrix of Means, Specialty Communications

Like the previous table and figure of means for applied communications, the following is a table of the largest MVOIs and their associated discipline and a bar graph for the specialty communications category.

*Table 5.3 Matrix of Means: Specialty Communications Table of Dependent Variables*

<b>MVOI Values, Specialty Communications Dependent Variables</b>	
<b><i>Variable Title</i></b>	<b><i>Largest Value/Discipline</i></b>
Intellectual Property	2.59/Strategic Communications
Digital Analytics	3.56/Integrated Communications
Search Engine Optimization	3.47/Integrated Communications
Written Communications	3.89/Public Relations
New Media	3.87/Public Relations
Social Media	3.80/Public Relations
Corporate Social Responsibility	3.76/Public Relations
Public Speaking	3.72/Public Speaking
Interpersonal Communications	3.66/Public Relations
Not-for-profit Communications	3.57/Public Relations
Political Communication	3.35 Public Relations

Regulatory Compliance	3.25 Public Relations
Video Production	3.60/Advertising
Website Design	3.51/Advertising
Technical Communication	3.18/Public Relations

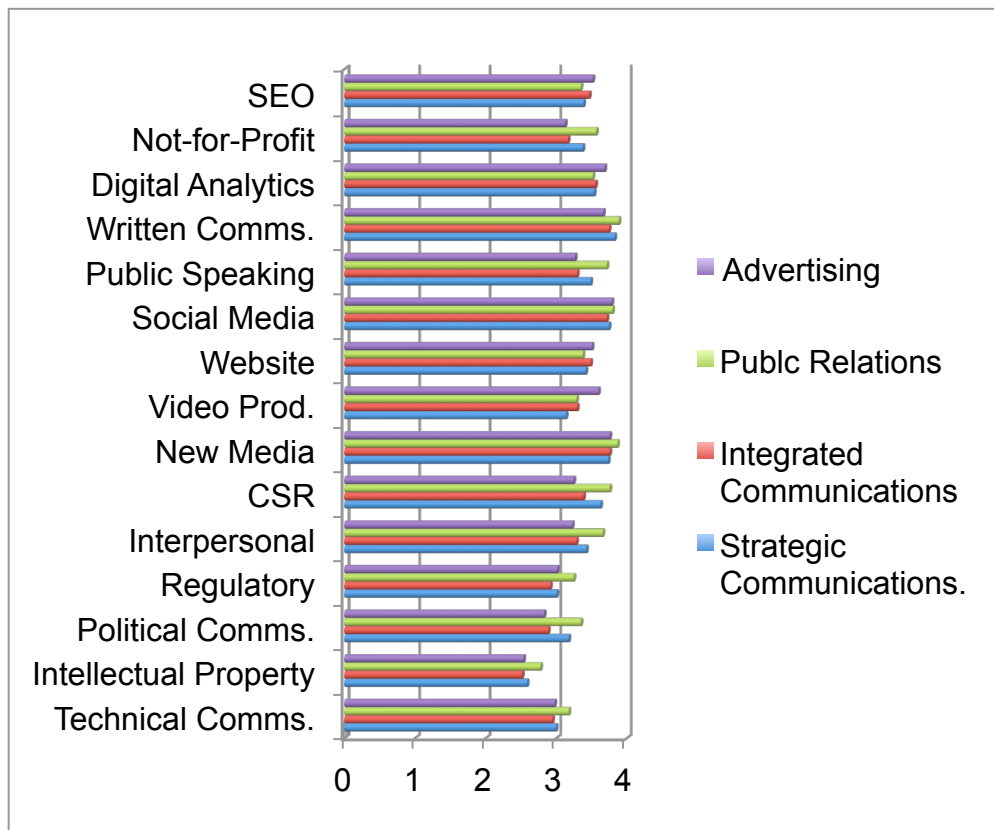


Figure 5.2 Specialty Communications Chart of Means

### Matrix of Means, Communication Skills and Traits

Like the previous tables and figures of means for applied communications and specialty communications variables, the following is a table of the largest MVOI

and its associated discipline and a bar graph of communications skills and traits variables.

*Table 5.4 Matrix of Means, Skills and Traits Table of Dependent Variables*

<b>MVOI Values, Communication Skills and Traits Dependent Variables</b>	
<b><i>Variable Title</i></b>	<b><i>Largest Value/Discipline</i></b>
Quantitative Research	3.65/Strategic Communications
Public Relations Principles	3.90/Public Relations
Positively Receive Criticism	3.79/Public Relations
Collaborative Leadership	3.76/Public Relations
Persistence	3.71/Public Relations
Proactive Determination	3.69/Public Relations
Advertising Principles	3.89/Advertising
Qualitative Research	3.62/Advertising



*Figure 5.3 Communications Skills and Traits Chart of Means*

### **Comparison of Significance Against Strategic Communications**

The table below compares significance in mean value of differences across all variables. In this illustration it is clear that there are some significant differences between strategic communications and the other three disciplines. However there are also many values that are not significant based on t-test comparisons. Those disciplines with no significant difference between their mean value and the strategic communications variable show clearly there is overlap between strategic communications and the other disciplines.

*Table 5.5 Comparison of Significance Against Strategic Communications*

Strategic Communications/Variable Title	Integrated Comms.	Public Relations	Advertising
<b>Applied Communications</b>			
Business Management		X	X

Strategic Planning	X	X	X
Marketing Planning	X	X	X
Branding	X		X
Media Relations	X	X	X
Stakeholder Communications	X	X	X
Shareholder Communications	X	X	X
Campaign planning			
Event Management		X	X
Crisis Communications	X	X	X
Media Buying	X		X
<b>Specialty Communications</b>			
Technical Communications		X	
Intellectual Property	X	X	
Political Communications	X	X	X
Regulatory Compliance	X	X	
Interpersonal Communications	X	X	X

Corporate Social Responsibility	X	X	X
New Media		X	
Video Production	X	X	X
Website Production	X		X
Social Media Production			
Public speaking	X	X	X
Written Communications	X	X	X
Digital Analytics			X
Not-for-Profit Communications	X	X	X
Search Engine Optimization	X		X

### Communication Skills and Traits

Qualitative Research		
Quantitative Research	X	X
Positively Receive Criticism	X	X
Collaborative Leadership	X	X
Persistence	X	

Proactive Determination	X		
Advertising Principles	X	X	X
Public Relations Principles	X	X	X

(Single tail t-test,  $p < .05$ )

X = significant difference in mean value, shaded blocks = no significant difference between strategic communications and the other associated disciplines by variable.

### Figures 5.4, 5.5 Charts of Mean Values of Importance

Following are two plots of the means in 3-D, which shows the overlap between the means of each variable. The area chart, Figure 5.4, shows there is little difference between the collective means among each communication discipline. Figure 5.5 is a bar graph, which shows all of the variable mean values. From both of these tables, it seems obvious that there are some differences in the variables but not all of them can be used to distinguish strategic communications from the other disciplines.



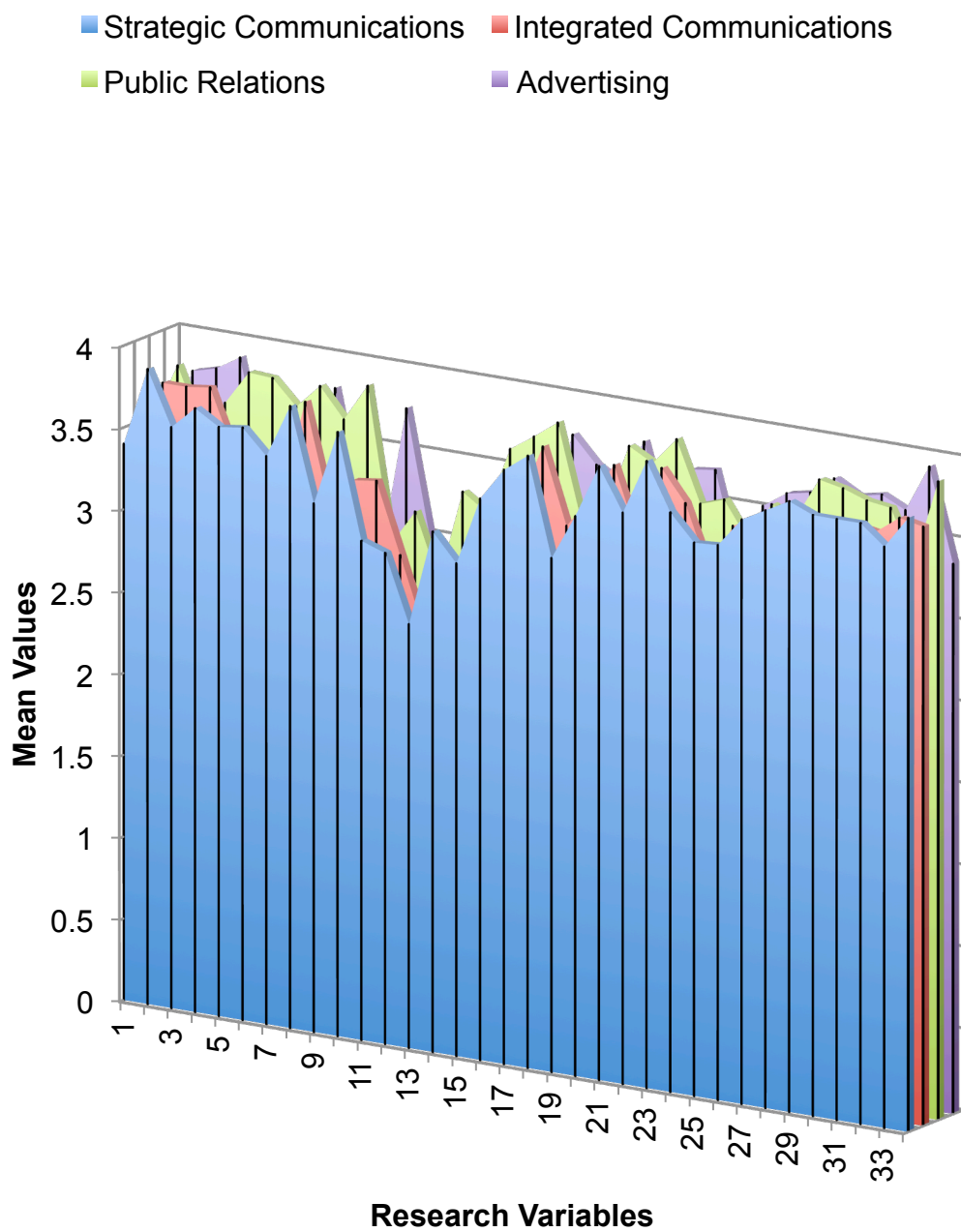
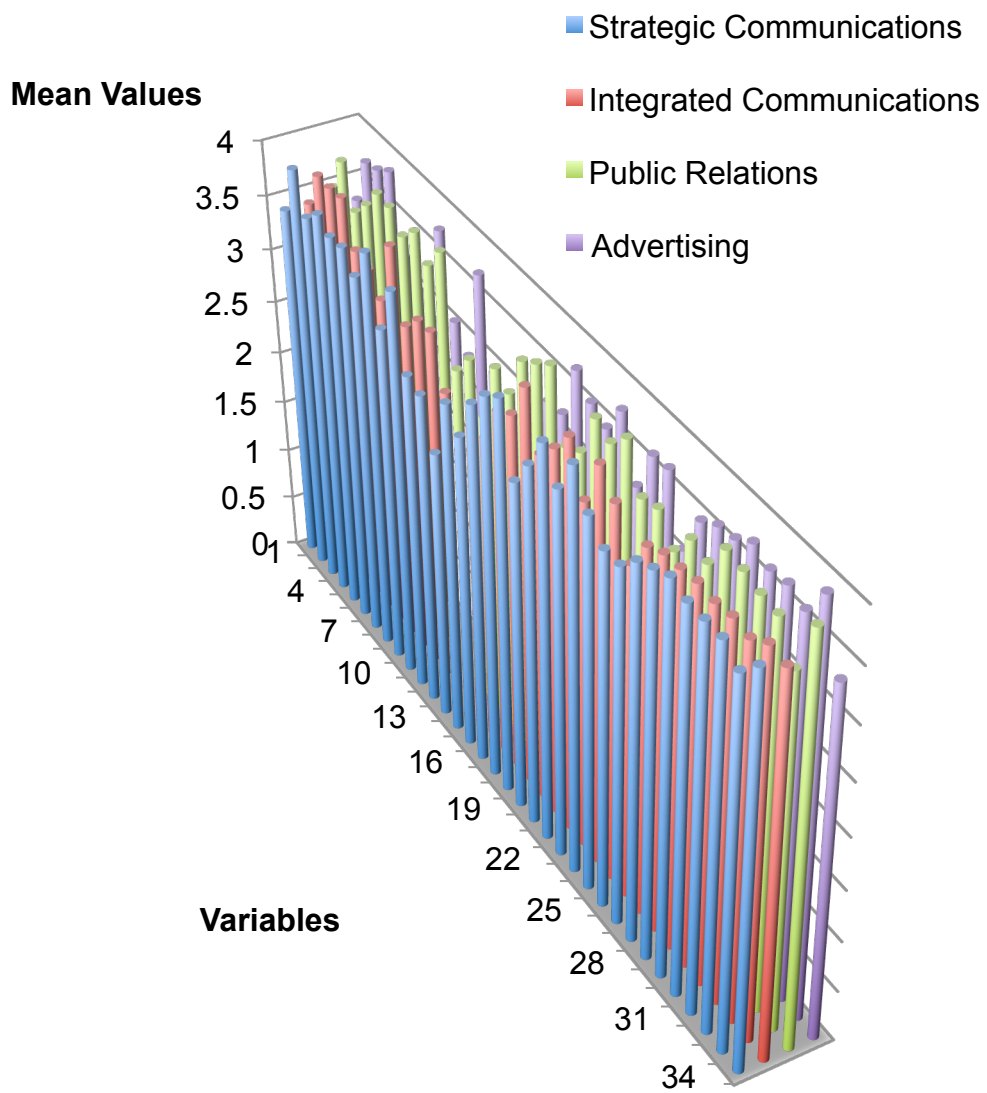


Figure 5.4 Charts of MVOI by Communication Discipline



*Figure 5.5 Comparison of MVOI Variables  
by Communication Discipline*

## **Part 7 Implications of Single-Tailed Paired t-tests.**

Comparing Mean Values of Importance (MVOI) for integrated communications, public relations, and advertising against strategic communications in single-tailed t-tests demonstrates some clear trends.

Significant differences in MVOI values between strategic communications and the other three disciplines are replete. However there are also some areas of differences with no significance, thereby demonstrating similarity across discipline. For example, campaign planning is a universal requirement for the successful practice of all communications disciplines, as is social media production and, with the exception of advertising, the need to understand digital analytics. The need to practice good qualitative research can also be implied by the lack of significant difference across all disciplines. Similarly, persistence and proactive determination are also described as universal MVOIs with the exception of the integrated communications discipline.

So where does this leave us? Strategic communications is an emerging, comprehensive discipline that requires cultivation of best practices from all disciplines. This metric is useful for identifying where those best practices reside. It stands to reason that if an applied communications practice or skill is valued most highly in a specific discipline, then that discipline is where the best practice resides. For example, looking at our MVOI valuations, if the highest MVOI value for qualitative research resides in advertising (value = 3.62), then strategic communications scholars and practitioners should look to the advertising

discipline as the source of best practices and incorporate those lessons into their programs.

## **Part 8 Limitations of Research**

### **The Instrument**

As with all research, this one has its limitations. One of the most important was caused by the variety of variables used. A total of 136 variables in a forced response format using a forced, 4-point Likert scale were included in the initial survey. It was felt this was the absolute maximum number of variables and response points that could be included in the survey without suffering respondent fatigue. This limitation left out many other variables that could have been asked but were not. Part 10 of this chapter discusses additional MVOIs in detail.

In addition, in this research, there may have been some unintentional bias against integrated communications because it was located next to strategic communications in the pages of the survey. Based on the questions, some respondents may have felt a need to distinguish strategic communications from integrated communications.

Respondent fatigue was also a concern in terms of time taken to complete the questionnaire. As mentioned, in post hoc analysis of results, some participants who started the survey abandoned it and some others raced through the survey. Data from those completing the survey in four minutes or less were deleted from the pool of respondents. If future study is contemplated, it is recommended that some of the MVOIs be removed to allow for less responder fatigue, less time required to complete the questionnaire, and hopefully a higher

completion rate. It may also be a good idea to randomize which discipline appears opposite of strategic communications in each survey to reduce bias against any one discipline.

### **Part 9 The Sample: Professional Practitioner Perceptions Wanted**

This database was thoroughly vetted and provides a clear representation of faculty across the United States who are currently involved in teaching one or more of the four disciplines of strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations, and advertising, (n = 580 with 212 cases reporting). It is, however, missing strong representation from professional practitioners currently active in the practice of strategic communications and the other disciplines. As the initial objective of this research was to develop a definition of strategic communications that could be used to inform academia in developing strategic communications curricula (both undergraduate and graduate), it made sense to focus primarily on faculty. Moreover, the mean level of years of teaching in this sample was 15, though specific questions of non-teaching years of professional practice were not asked.

However, accepting the assumption that most undergraduate programs in communications exist in whole or in part to equip students to enter the work force, further research in this area would benefit from an added data set of professional practitioners. This could be easily achieved in a follow-on study using a slightly modified instrument and a database of professionals who currently work in the industry as representative practitioners in all of the four disciplines.

## **How Old is Too Old?**

In a related observation of sample, it is important to recognize that age/experience was a factor in the sample selection. As stated previously, when email addresses were being generated and verified for this research, and there were multiple points of contact for a specific institution, preference was shown to those with titles like dean, director, or adviser. Those individuals were thought to be most familiar with strategic communications as part of a larger discussion and would have formed some opinions as to the differences between the four disciplines studied in this research. A route for future research could be to intentionally seek out those faculty with less institutional experience or those in newer programs to determine if there is a wide difference between the various discipline definitions and associated MVOIs.

## **Part 10 Addition/Purification of Variables**

As part of the research instrument, respondents were given an opportunity to discuss what other aspects of the four disciplines should be included in further efforts to define strategic communications. A complete list of the respondent comments are included in Appendix E. A review of the input provided some interesting variables that should be included in the next iteration of this research as shown in the following table. Variables that should definitely be investigated were selected based on the frequency of their appearance in the free response answers.

Table 5.6 Additional MVOIs to be Included in Future Research

Suggested MVOI/Frequency of Appearance	
Analytical/Critical Thinking Skills/11	Copyediting/Copywriting/5
Creativity/14	Design Literacy/8
Entrepreneurship/6	Ethics/7*
Graphic Arts/Visual Design/9	Marketing/5
Proactivity/9	Strategic Development/7
Teambuilding/Teamliness/6	

*\*In the initial survey attempts there was an MVOI: "Provides competent ethical counsel. However, in subsequent survey attempts, the word ethical was removed. Since this invalidated the overall results of that particular MVOI, that MVOI was removed from final calculations.*

While copyediting/copywriting was felt to be a variable that would be universal to all four disciplines and already touched upon in a broader question in the existing research, some of the other trends would make for interesting additions. However, several potential variables mentioned (like creativity, critical thinking or proactivity) are highly specialized, so refining them to a measureable mean value of importance will require refinement of the definition prior to inclusion in future research.

Finally, two items of interest as it pertains to the future MVOIs for this study: The discipline of business communications is touched upon in the original

set of MVOIs but it may be important to include established business communication professionals in future efforts to better define business communications and expand the MVOI range of variables.

It may also warrant some consideration that some additional advertising measures be added to the MVOI count, in addition to (or perhaps in lieu of), public relations variables. While not specifically identified by respondents as deficient in advertising-based variables, the MVOI topic distribution could be seen as more heavily weighted to public relations because of the researchers deeper background of experience in PR and the highly specialized nature of advertising.

One suggestion to address the deficiencies in business communication and advertising MVOIs in the survey efforts would be to accomplish a follow-on study using a Delphi panel to assist in fine-tuning these variables for incorporation in the measure and ultimately the practice. Composition of the Delphi panels should include a combination of practitioners and educators to offer a greater diversity of opinion and provide a more pragmatic solution to defining strategic communication measurement.

### **Part 11 In Search of More Variance**

Related to the question of which MVOI variables should be included in any follow-on research, it seems appropriate to also add some more variance in the scale. While a 4-point forced “Likert-type” scale was used initially for this research, it might be interesting to pilot a larger 5- or 7-point scale using the



identified collection of variables. Within limits, the more response opportunities respondents have, the greater the variance between principles is expected.

## Part 12 Student-run Agency Integrative Learning Inputs

An important post hoc component to this analysis is the perspectives obtained in part two of the survey targeting student-agency advisers.

Approximately 127 of the 212 respondents in this survey indicated some past or present relationship with advising student-run agencies. While these insights were mined to measure needs to teach strategic communications, further study of that data will hopefully yield more input to better inform how to tailor a student-run agency curriculum to incorporate strategic communications into an undergraduate program.

This set of questions addressed efforts student-run agency advisers reported in the need to incorporate strategic communications into their curriculum to make their students more attractive to future employers.

*Table 5.7 Perceived Pressures and Efforts to Become More Strategic Communications Oriented.*

Question	Mean Value (N= 127)
My student-run agency is actively trying to make my students more attractive to employers by building strategic communications skills	86.38
Relative to client pressures, my student-run agency has been encouraged to become more strategic	65.05
Relative to institutional pressures, my agency has been encouraged to become more strategic	61.70

*Values 0-100 (Strongly disagree 0-19, Disagree 20-39, Neither Disagree nor Agree 40-59, Agree 60-79 and Strongly Agree 80-100)*

## **Part 13 Future Research**

In addition to fine-tuning the variance with a broader Likert scale, exploring practitioner opinions, enlisting the help of Delphi panels, and mining the student-run agency data collected in this survey, there are several areas of future research. One option would be to expand this study internationally as there are some additional schools of thought in other countries as to what the term strategic communications means to their opinion leaders and educators (Tindall & Holtzhausen, 2011). A literature review of parallel thinking in the areas of convergence and digital migration indicate that the silos of public relations, advertising, marketing, and even integrated communications are being subsumed by the need for strategic communications capabilities and digital entrepreneurship in terms of storytelling. Collaborating with some of those scholars might also help inform the academy of not only what should be taught in terms of content but what should be taught in terms of organic capabilities for the next generation of communicators. Public relations, for example, has morphed from a media relations-heavy practice to a more strategic mission. Similarly, advertising has changed gears significantly from primarily a sales-driven function to a brand management tool that extends into the traditional realms of earned media.

Finally, the entire communications industry has been affected by the incorporation of social media as not only a tactical tool for energizing traditional word-of-mouth referrals, but also has become the solution for real time analytic data. And, when that data, along with other tracking applications, is combined

into what is known as “big data,” the entire paradigm of marketing and communications research shifts from inferential statistics to census data collection. In order to capitalize on these transitions, strategic communications needs to evolve into a comprehensive approach toward communications from the big picture strategic perspective all the way down to the granular tactical orientation.

As stated at the beginning of this research, more study of how to pilot strategic communications curricula within the realm of student-run agencies is strongly recommended. The number of student-run agencies is on the rise, the focus on the pragmatic aspects of an undergraduate education is becoming increasingly scrutinized, and the need for cross-platform competence will not go away. Therefore if mass communications instruction at the undergraduate level is to remain relevant, it is incumbent upon educators to learn how to incorporate the significant elements of strategic communications education into the highly successful integrative learning approach to better equip and add value to the next generation of communicators.

### **Last Words**

As mentioned in the first chapter, according to Hallahan et al. (2007) strategic communications is defined as six relevant disciplines in the development, implementation, and assessment of communications by organizations. Those six disciplines are management, marketing, public relations, technical communication, political communication, and information/social marketing campaigns. While this is a workable definition of strategic

communications, this research seems to bear out a slightly different result. In the insights put forward here, strategic communications is an amalgamation of three communications disciplines — integrated communications, public relations, and advertising — and it is expressed through various types of communications (applied communications specialty communications, and communication skills and traits. Looking more pragmatically, as Hallahan et al. (2007) and this research bears out,

“A growing number of organizations have recognized that various communications disciplines share common purposes and that their objectives and strategies for achieving these objectives are similar. They differ primarily by their tactics and are being pressed to adapt to changing environment by their organizations desire to coordinate communications, by the convergence of media, and by the blurring of communications genres,” (Hallahan et al., pp. 1, 5).

However, unlike Hallahan, this study seems to find a more overarching discipline of strategic communications that encompasses some public relations, integrated communications, and advertising, but also offers a compilation of all of the above traits into a larger umbrella discipline that stretches into other areas of applied communications including business management, strategic planning, marketing planning, branding, stakeholder and shareholder communication, and campaign planning.

The practice of strategic communications also includes specialty communication functions like event management, technical communications, regulatory compliance, interpersonal communication, new media, video production, website design, social media, public speaking, digital analytics, not for profit communications, and search engine optimization. Additionally, to

complete the strategic communications definition, there should be skills and traits included in the measurement like qualitative research, quantitative research, positively receive criticism and practice collaborative leadership. The ideal strategic communicator should also be able to demonstrate persistence and proactive determination as well as understand advertising principles and public relations principles. Moreover, if the free response question items test positively for reliability, other aspects of the strategic communications definition may eventually include graphic design, knowledge of law/ethics, the ability to persuade, the ability to practice critical thinking, the ability to manage expectations, the ability to positively manifest teamliness/personnel management, practice storytelling, support diversity, and understand and practice big data analysis and entrepreneurship.

Based on this study of faculty, strategic communications represents a growth area for instruction and provides direction and trends that communications professionals are embracing as a way to add value, quantify results, and expand the overall success of mass communications on all levels of professional organizations, corporations, and other entities. The challenge before the academy is to prepare students to meet this paradigm shift, thereby producing equipped and capable students with sufficient knowledge and self-efficacy to succeed in this new environment.

As with any other innovation, the road to change can be bumpy, filled with detours, and sometimes mired in confusion. There is also the occasional disruptive technology outbreak or startling finding to further complicate adoption

and evolution. Therefore it is incumbent upon the academy to continue to study the shift of the education and practice to a strategic communications orientation both as a way to train others and as a way to improve the overall effectiveness of communications.

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## **APPENDIX A. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND INFORMATION**

Following are research instruments used in this study.

### **Appendix A Part 1 Focus Group Script**

Following is the focus group script used to solicit results for the creation of the strategic communications research instrument. The focus group was moderated by a faculty member teaching at a different university. This researcher operated the camera that recorded the entire focus group. Relevant responses that informed creation of the instrument are listed in part 2 of this appendix. Focus group demographics are 2 women and 3 men. Ages ranged from 26 to 42. See Chapter 4, part 3 for results.

#### **RANTA Focus Group Guide—IMC Conference**

Moderator: Thank you for becoming part of our focus group today. We appreciate the time you are taking to help us in defining a new statistical measure for strategic communications. Hello my name is (Hal Vincent) and I am moderating this group for a doctoral student who is studying integrated Strategic Communications.

Please consult the informed consent form in front of you and sign it before we begin. As in all focus groups, the goal is quality and insight. Therefore every opinion is valid and the hope is everyone will contribute to the discussion. Similarly, if you feel uncomfortable answering a question, there is no requirement to answer. If you feel a need to stop your participation and/or leave our group, you may do so with no prejudice or bias.

We anticipate this conversation to last between 60 and 90 minutes. Please help yourself to refreshments, as you desire. They are (location).

Why don't we go around the room and introduce ourselves and tell us one thing you like about the field of communications and why?

Okay, great. We seem to have an interesting group here. (Or something equally polite and non-controversial)

### **Q1. DEFINITIONS**

5 MINUTES

Let's start with an open-ended question. On the sheet of paper in front of you, please write down your definition of Strategic Communication. You can write a dictionary-type definition, or make a short list of characteristics of Strategic Communications. (PAUSE TO LET THEM WRITE.) We're going to discuss your definitions in a few moments, but first, I would like you to write down one more definition. Draw a line on the paper, and under that line write YOUR definition of Integrated Communication. Again, you can give a dictionary-type definition or make a list of characteristics of Integrated Communication.

(PAUSE UNTIL THEY HAVE WRITTEN THEIR DEFINITIONS.)

### **Q2: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS—TOP OF MIND MINUTES**

15

So, let's talk about Strategic Communications first. (LEAD WIDE-OPEN DISCUSSION OF ALL OF THE FACTORS MENTIONED. MAKE LIST OF FACTORS ON EASEL POSTER.

### **Q3: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS—AIDED RECALL MINUTES**

10

BRING UP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS THAT WERE NOT DISCUSSED EARLIER:

Management (communication),  
Marketing (communication),  
Public Relations,  
Technical communication,  
Political communication,  
Information/Social marketing campaigns.

### **Q4: INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION—TOP OF MIND MINUTES**

15

(LEAD WIDE-OPEN DISCUSSION OF ALL OF THE FACTORS MENTIONED. MAKE LIST OF FACTORS ON EASEL POSTER.

### **Q5: INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION—AIDED RECALL MINUTES**

10

BRING UP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS THAT WERE NOT DISCUSSED EARLIER:

Advertising planning-campaign and creative  
Branding

- Marketing/Promotion
- Media Buying
- Business case analysis
- Public Relations
  - Client Relations
  - Financial Relations
  - Stakeholder Relations
  - Shareholder Relations
  - Media Relations
- Digital Technology—Photography, video, web
- Social Media Creation and Analysis
- Ethics
- Research
  - Qualitative
  - Quantitative
- Web site Analytics
  - SEO
- Web site design

#### **Q6. DEFINITION**

I have a definition I would like to share with you addressing what Strategic Communications is and I would like to hear if you agree or disagree with it.

It is from: Hallahan K., Holtzhausen, D., van Ruler B., Vercic, D., & Sriramesh, K. (2007) Defining strategic communication, *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 1:1, 3-35.

“The purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission. (There are) six relevant disciplines involved in the development, implementation and assessment of communications by organization: management (communication), marketing (communication), public relations, technical communication, political communication and information/social marketing campaigns.”

If you want to consult the handout I have provided, it defines each of those six disciplines.

(Responses)

Which disciplines do you think are most needed in terms of training students?

(Responses)

Which disciplines do you think are most needed in terms of training employees?

(Responses)

#### **Q7. COMBINING STRATEGY WITH INTEGRATION.**



Based on the skills list we developed earlier, do you think the skills needed for practicing Integrated Strategic Communications fit into the discipline categories we provided?

(Responses)

Which skills do you think is most needed in terms of training students?

(Responses)

Which do you think is most needed in terms of training employees?

(Responses)

#### **Q8. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT-Motivation.**

We have talked about adding Integrated Skills to a Strategic Communications outlook.

How many feel outside pressures to become more integrated in your communications?

(Responses)

What are some other reasons to create an Integrated Strategic Communications Capability?

(Responses)

#### **Q9. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT-Training**

Let's talk specifically about skills development training for a minute.

How many educators are actively trying to incorporate more integrated strategic communications skills into your classrooms/syllabus/curriculum?

(Responses)

For professionals, how many are actively trying to incorporate more integrated strategic communications into your employee training?

(Responses)

#### **Q10. RESOURCES**

Lets talk about resources for a minute. Change usually involves the expenditure of resources. If we accept the premise that support for change is manifest in expenditure of resources of time, talent and treasure, lets look at resources being used towards an adoption of integrated Strategic Communications.

How many can say their institutions have invested in equipment dedicated to the promotion/teaching/support of strategic communications?

(Responses)

Travel funds?

(Responses)

Training?

(Responses)

Hiring help?

(Responses)

Dedicated space?

Thank you for your support and answers today. Finally, could you fill out the attached demographic information sheet for our records? Your responses will be kept confidential.

## Appendix A Part 2 Focus Group Responses by Question

*FG Notes Table (N = 5) Q# = Question number, R# = Respondent number*

Question	Responses
Q1. Write down the definition of strategic communications.	<p>(R1) Persuasive.</p> <p>(R3) All communications impacting an organization that impacts and organization's brand, media kits, press kits, crisis communications.</p> <p>(R5) Planning or designing communications for specific outcomes: sales, social communication, awareness building.</p> <p>(R1) Attempts to enter a market, increase sales, brand awareness, awareness building campaigns.</p> <p>(R4) Strategic communications should NOT be persuasive. Should be reporting facts.</p>
Q2. Write down the definition of integrated communications.	<p>(R2) Coordination, consistent communications, alignment across channels.</p> <p>(R3) Same voice/same brand.</p> <p>(R5) Consistency. Cohesion rather than participation.</p>

<p>Q3. What is the difference between strategic communications and integrated communications?</p>	<p>(R2) Integration has to do with brand building, elite form brand building. Strategic is different.</p> <p>(R1) Strategic falls under the umbrella of brand building.</p> <p>(R5) Not the same. Strategic communication contains multiple contexts.</p>
<p>Q4. (Definition from Hallahan et al. distributed.) Is management of strategic communications an accurate definition?</p>	<p>(R5) Strategic communication ties to outcome, which ties to elements, which ties to objectives and tactics that ties to goal.</p> <p>(R1) But before all of that your outcome ties to your goal. Brand leads to a strategy that leads to tactics.</p> <p>(R3) Don't start strategically. Need a big picture that informs the entire process. What are their goals, what do they want to accomplish and then what are the tactics.</p>
<p>Q5. Integrated communications—what might be considered integrated communications as opposed to strategic communications? Elements, tactics, activities.</p>	<p>(R1) Advertising, PR, marketing is integrated. Paid media, earned media, shared media, owned media all are integrated communications.</p> <p>(R5) Integration does not mean acceptance of all things.</p>
<p>Q6. Fundamental skills for integrated communications</p>	<p>(R5) Integrated is a practice of understanding core relationships: messaging.</p>
<p>Q7. Does integrated communication include numerical or technical tactics?</p>	<p>(R5) Think about the mission.</p> <p>(R2) If you can carry out the mission and convey clearly through all of your communication then you are in an integrated position.</p>

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Q8. Necessary or practical knowledge in terms of training students for the future. What disciplines, types of knowledge or skills are most needed?

(R5) There is a difference between integrated and strategic communication. If I were wanting to teach a student integrated communication it need not have anything to do with marketing communication other than face to face communication. Strategic communication would have a much different skill set.

(R2) If I were to want to teach IMC from a marketing perspective. I would teach it among line extensions so they can show me something new without having to create something completely different.

Q9. Considering preparing students for the future, what is the most important? Are disciplines, skills or knowledge most important?

(R3) I work with the interns. I don't teach in this area but...the concept of research is foreign to them. They need to know research occurs outside of writing papers and handing them in. Just understanding how things are researched is important.

(R1) Writing and speaking competently and effectively.

(R5) Upper level sociology and psychology courses. Value feedback.

(R4) Not be offended by constructive criticism. Getting used to listening, processing and seeking that feedback to build a stronger message.

(R5) Identification of core value sets. (it is a) broad range (and a) look at different media systems.

Q10. What kinds of skills or disciplines should educators emphasize for students to find success after graduation? (Integrated)

(R1) Think about competencies rather than skill sets. (You) have to have competency in order to utilize the skill set. Skill sets are ever changing. Content marketing is huge right now, but if you look 5,6,7 years ago...

Q11. What are the basic competencies?

(R4) We just created competencies changed our curriculum to include) 9 hours of writing, 9 hours of information literacy, 9 hours of quantitative and logical.

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(R5) (Students should understand) commitment, endurance, continue to do something even when under duress.

Q12. What do you think practitioners say about some of the most critical aspects of integrated or strategic communicators coming out of college?

(R1) Focus more about tools.

(R4) They're into skill sets. Skill sets, I can do this, I can do this...that's what a resume is.

(R1) Analytics. If they don't know how to use those systems they are probably not going to get (the job, the interview, etc.)

(R2) Professors will stress the importance of theory. Practitioners will see a value of people who can think on their feet and adapt not realizing that ability comes from theories they have learned.

Q13. Are your courses or even in your personal opinion are you feeling external or your own pressure to try to teach courses in a more integrated or strategic nature?

(R1) We are already going into that IMC slot. I am in a business school so I have made a transition. That is one of the things that is really embraced now. There is an overlap moving from communication to business.

(R3) Our IMC-class one is the prerequisite for PR one and for Advertising one. It is inside rather than outside.

(R2) It is responsive to the changes. The marketplace and the trends in the marketplace are doing it. If you're not doing it you're really not keeping up.

Q14. What should a university do to empower integration support?

(R2) Top-down approach. Need supervisors who are encouraging this.

(R3) They need to improve communication internally. It is a common observation or recommendation from 90 percent of our interns' exit interviews.

(R5) Need to have some internal support to get it done.

## **Appendix A Part 3 StratComm 5.5.5 Survey of Strategic Communications**

Dear (Title, Last Name): Welcome to my study defining strategic communications. I am grateful for the time you are taking to participate in this study. Your answers are very important, and all responses will be kept confidential. You may stop at any time if the questions make you uncomfortable. You may also start the survey, stop and return to where you left off if time is an issue. As a way of expressing my gratitude for your participation, you may opt-in for a random drawing of a \$50 VISA gift card. Six of these will be given away. Odds of winning are ~ 1 in 97. To enter, please provide your e-mail address at the end of the survey in the block provided. All e-mail addresses will be discarded upon award of the gift cards. Total expected time for completing this survey is between 15 and 20 minutes. For questions about this study, please contact me, Jeffrey Ranta, at (803) 777-4614, e-mail: Ranta@mailboX.sc.edu. You may also contact Dr. Augie Grant, (803) 777-4464, and e-mail grantae2@mailboX.sc.edu. For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the USC IRB office at (803) 777-7095. Thank you again in advance for your responses.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Ranta

Following are some brief statements about the state of strategic communications. Please let us know what you think by responding to the statements below.

Statement	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree
There are clear differences between integrated communications and strategic communications.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are increasing demands for students to be trained in strategic communications.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are increasing demands for communications professionals to embrace strategic communications.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrated Strategic communications is the next evolution of professional communications.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3-point scale. 1 = Disagree, 2 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 3 = Agree



Next we would like to ask you a series of questions about areas of applied communications, specialized communications, and skills/traits within the practices of strategic communications, integrated communications, public relations and advertising. Starting with strategic communications and integrated communications, using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each applied communication to the practice of strategic communications and integrated communications. (Please provide a response for every type of applied communication listed in the columns below).

MVOI		Strategic Communications				Integrated Communications			
		Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential	Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential
Business Manageme nt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic Planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Branding Communic ation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media Relations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stakeholder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Relations

Shareholder  
Relations
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Campaign  
planning
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Event  
Management
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Crisis  
Communication
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Media Buying

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐


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Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

In this question we would like to ask you about types of communication used in the practice of strategic communications and integrated communications. Using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each type of communication used in the practice of strategic communications and integrated communications. (Please provide a response for each type of communication listed in the columns below).

[illegible]



Finally, we would like to discuss skills and traits in professional communications needed in the practice of strategic communications and integrated communications. Using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each skill or trait to the practice of strategic communications and integrated communications. (Please provide a response for each value or trait listed in the columns below).

MVOI	Strategic Communications				Integrated Communications			
	Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential	Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential
Skilled in Qualitative Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skilled in Quantitative Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Values constructive criticism/feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates familiarity with Advertising Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

Demonstrates familiarity with Public Relations Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Displays collaborative leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates endurance/persistence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates proactive determination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

Q6 Please list any other essential applied communication, type of communication, skill or trait you think are relevant to the practice of Strategic Communication and/or Integrated Communication that was not asked in the questions above. FREE RESPONSES

Q7 Next we would like to ask you a series of questions about applied communications and the practice of public relations and advertising. Using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each applied communication to the categories of public relations and advertising. (Please provide a response for every type of applied communication in the columns below).

[illegible]

Event Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crisis Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media Buying	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

Q8 In this question we would like to ask you about types of communication used in the practice of public relations and advertising. Using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each type of communication in the practice of public relations and advertising. (Please provide a response for each type of communication listed in the column below).



[illegible]

New Media Digital Communications (Skype, Google Docs, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media campaigns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Written communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital analytics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SEO maximization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

Q9 Finally, we would like to discuss skills and traits in professional communications needed in the practice of public relations and advertising. Using the scale below, please indicate the importance of each skill or trait in the practice of public relations and advertising. Please provide a response for each value or trait listed in the column below.

MVOI	Public Relations				Advertising			
	Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential	Not Important at all	Of Little Importance	Average Importance	Essential
Skilled in Qualitative Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skilled in Quantitative Research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Values constructive criticism/feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates familiarity with Advertising Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates familiarity with Public Relations Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Displays collaborative leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Demonstrates  
endurance/per  
sistence

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Demonstrates  
proactive  
determination

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

---

Four point "Forced Likert" scale. 1 = Not Important at all, 2 = Of Little importance, 3 = Average importance, 4 = Essential

Q10 Please list any other essential applied communication, type of communication skill or trait you think is relevant to the study of Public Relations and/or Advertising that was not asked in the questions above.

Q11 Strategic Communications Investment of Resources. Please select your assessment of investment of resources with the following statements using the following sliding scale (values from 0 -100):

No Investment = 0-33, Some Investment = 34-66, and Significant Investment = 67-100

Each statement begins with the sentence: My institution has invested in \_\_\_\_\_ dedicated to the promotion/support of teaching of strategic communication.

\_\_\_\_\_ Equipment \_\_\_\_\_ Travel funds \_\_\_\_\_ Hiring faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Hiring staff \_\_\_\_\_ Dedicated space \_\_\_\_\_ Dedicated class(es)

Q12 Do you have experience as a student agency adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

*SKIP LOGIC: If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Demographics Just a few more question...*

Q13 How many years of experience do you have as a student agency adviser?

Q14 Student-run Agency Adviser Questions--General Statements about Student-Run Agency Advisers Following are general statements about Student-Run Agency Advisers in managing/leading a student-run agency. Using the scale provided, please indicate your opinion of adviser qualifications and approach to teaching/advising student-run agencies. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers should have four years or more of industry experience.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers should teach skills students need to succeed in the industry.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers should teach critical thinking skills.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers should teach strategic communication skills.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers' curricula should emphasize theories and principles.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advisers should prepare students for their "first job" in communications rather than their "last job."  
\_\_\_\_\_ An adviser's industry experience/activities are more important than his/her faculty research.

Q15 Student-run agency Student Skill Sets. We are also interested in what Student-run Agency Skill Sets should be taught. Please indicate your opinion of the following statements. Student-run agency students should be taught the

following (skills): \_\_\_\_\_. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ New media technologies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video production
- \_\_\_\_\_ Digital photography
- \_\_\_\_\_ Campaign planning
- \_\_\_\_\_ Media buying
- \_\_\_\_\_ Web site analytics/SEO
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public relations management
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communications ethics

Q16 Student Attributes Briefly, we would also like to ask your opinion about student-run agency student attributes. Student-run agency students should have the following attributes \_\_\_\_\_. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Exceptional writing skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exceptional public speaking skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Value feedback and constructive criticism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Display soft skills of endurance and persistence
- \_\_\_\_\_ possess quantitative research skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate information literacy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Possess qualitative research skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate critical analysis skills

Q17 Student-run Agency student familiarity with applied communication. Please indicate your opinion of the following statements. Student-run agency students should be familiar with \_\_\_\_\_. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Business terminology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Management communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Marketing communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public relations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Technical communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Political communication
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social marketing campaign communication

Q18 Student-run Agency Current and Future Plans Please indicate your opinion of the following statements about student-run agencies as they pertain to your current student-run agency or one you were advising in the past. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ My student run agency currently practices integrated communications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My student run agency currently practices strategic communications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My student run agency plans to move toward practicing more strategic communications over the next one-five years.

Q19 Strategic Communications Transition Pressures. Using the following scale, please indicate your opinion of the following statements about pressures for student-run agencies to become more integrated or more strategic. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Our institution is a strong supporter of the “real work for real clients” agency experience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relative to local CLIENT pressures, my student-run agency has been encouraged to become more integrated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relative to local CLIENT pressures, my student run agency has been encouraged to become more strategic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relative to local INSTITUTIONAL pressures, my student run agency has been encouraged to become more integrated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relative to local INSTITUTIONAL pressures, my student run agency has been encouraged to become more strategic.

Q20 Student-run Agency Efforts to Make Students Attractive to Employers  
Please indicate your opinion of the following statement: My student-run agency is actively trying to make my students more attractive to employers by \_\_\_\_\_. Scale: 0-20 = Strongly Disagree, 21-40 = Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree 41-60, Agree 61-80, Strongly Agree 81-100.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Building social media acumen
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building web site communication skills, including SEO
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building blogging skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building strategic communication skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building integrated communication skills

Q21 May we contact you about your current position as an adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Demographics Please answer the question to the Best of your ability.

Q22 Thank you for agreeing to talk to us about your position as a student adviser, please provide us with your name and e-mail so we can contact you about your position as a student agency adviser.

Q23 Demographics Just a few more questions about demographics. Please answer the questions below: What year were you born?

Q24 How many years of professional integrated communications do you have?

Q25 How many years of professional strategic communications do you have?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q26 How many years of teaching experience do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

Q27 Do you teach at:

- ☐ Private University
- ☐ Public University
- ☐ N/A

Q28 Current Academic Rank

- ☐ Guest Lecturer
- ☐ Instructor
- ☐ Senior Instructor
- ☐ Assistant Professor
- ☐ Associate Professor
- ☐ Professor
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ N/A

Q29 Is there anyone else you suggest that we contact for this survey? (Please provide name and e-mail contact information for up to three people).

Q30 Thank you for taking my survey, if you would like to have your name included in the pool of respondents for a chance to win one of six \$50 gift cards or a \$100, gift card, please provide your e-mail address in the box below. The e-mail addresses submitted will only be used to select and inform a winner of the cash prize. Afterward, e-mail addresses for the give-away will be discarded.



## APPENDIX B STUDENT-RUN FIRMS

### Appendix B Part 1 AEJMC Listed Student-run Agencies

*AdA = Student-run ad agency, prA = Student-run Public Relations agency.  
SA = Unspecified student-run agency, StratComm = student-run strategic communications agency)*

1. Abilene Christian University (AdA, prA)
2. Adams State College (AdA, prA)
3. American University (prA)
4. Arkansas State University (prA, AdA)
5. Arizona State University (prA)
6. Auburn University (prA)
7. Ball State University (AdA, prA)
8. Baylor University (prA)
9. Bethany College (prA, AdA)
10. Berry College (prA)
11. Biola University (prA) (CA)
12. Bowling Green State University (prA)
13. Brigham Young University (AdA, prA)
14. Buffalo State College (AdA, prA)
15. Cabrini College (AdA, prA)
16. CA State University, Chico (AdA)
17. CA State University, Fresno (AdA, prA)
18. CA State University, Fullerton (AdA, prA)
19. CA State University, Long Beach (prA)
20. CA State University, Northridge (prA)
21. CA State University, Sacramento (AdA, prA)
22. Christian Brothers University (AdA)
23. Colorado State University (prA)
24. Creighton University (prA)
25. Drake University (AdA, prA)
26. Drexel University (prA)
27. East Tennessee University (AdA, prA)
28. Eastern Illinois University (prA)
29. Eastern Kentucky University (prA)
30. Eastern Michigan University
31. Elizabethtown College (AdA, prA)
32. Elon University (prA)
33. Emerson College (prA)
34. Flagler College (prA)
35. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (prA)

36. Florida International University (AdA, prA)
37. Franklin College (AdA, prA)
38. Howard University (AdA, prA)
39. Humboldt State University (prA)
40. Iowa State University of Science and Technology (AdA)
41. Kansas State University (prA)
42. Kent State (AdA, prA)
43. Long Island University (AdA, prA)
44. Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge (prA)
45. Loyola University – New Orleans (AdA, prA)
46. Marist College (AdA)
47. Marquette University (AdA)
48. Marshall University (prA)
49. Minnesota State University, Moorehead (AdA, prA)
50. Missouri State University (prA)
51. Murray State University (AdA, prA)
52. Nicholls State University (AdA, prA)
53. Norfolk State University (AdA, prA)
54. Northern Illinois University (prA)
55. Northern Kentucky University (prA)
56. Northeastern University (AdA, prA)
57. Ohio State University (prA)
58. Ohio University (AdA, prA)
59. Oklahoma State University (prA)
60. Pepperdine University (AdA, prA)
61. Point Park University (AdA, prA)
62. Purdue University (Strat. Com.) (Indiana)
63. Rowan University (AdA, prA)
64. Rutgers University (AdA)
65. Saint Louis University (AdA)
66. San Diego State University (AdA, prA)
67. San Jose State University (AdA, prA)
68. Shippensburg University (prA)
69. Southern Connecticut State University (AdA, prA)
70. Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
71. Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville (AdA)
72. Southern Utah University (AdA)
73. St. Cloud State University (AdA, prA)
74. St. Michael's College (prA, AdA)
75. Susquehanna University (AdA, prA)
76. Syracuse University (prA)
77. Temple University (prA)
78. Texas A & M University (prA)
79. Texas Christian University (AdA, prA)
80. Texas State University—San Marcos (AdA, prA)
81. Texas Tech University (AdA, prA)

82. Truman State University (prA)
83. University of Arkansas, Little Rock (prA)
84. University of Colorado (AdA, prA)
85. University of Connecticut (prA)
86. University of Denver (AdA, prA)
87. University of Florida (AdA, prA)
88. University of Georgia (prA)
89. University of Illinois (AdA)
90. University of Indianapolis (prA)
91. University of Kansas (AdA, prA)
92. University of Kentucky (AdA)
93. University of Louisiana at Monroe (prA)
94. University of Memphis (AdA, prA)
95. University of Miami (AdA, prA)
96. University of Minnesota (AdA, prA)
97. University of Missouri (AdA, prA)
98. University of Missouri-Kansas City (AdA, prA)
99. University of Nebraska, Omaha (AdA, prA)
100. University of Nevada, Las Vegas (AdA, prA)
101. University of Nevada, Reno (AdA, prA)
102. University of New Mexico (AdA)
103. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (prA)
104. University of North Florida (AdA, prA)
105. University of Northern Iowa (AdA, prA)
106. University of Oklahoma (prA)
107. University of Rhode Island (prA)
108. University of South Alabama (AdA, prA)
109. University of St. Thomas (prA)
110. University of South Carolina (AdA, prA)
111. University of South Dakota, (AdA, prA)
112. University of South Florida (AdA, prA)
113. University of Southern CA – Annenberg (prA)
114. University of Southern Indiana (AdA, prA)
115. University of Southern Mississippi (AdA, prA)
116. University of Tennessee (AdA, prA)
117. University of Tennessee Chattanooga (AdA, prA)
118. University of Texas at Arlington (AdA, prA)
119. University of Texas at Austin (AdA)
120. University of Texas at San Antonio (SA)
121. University of Washington, Eau Claire (SA)
122. University of South Florida Tampa (AdA, prA)
123. University of West Florida (AdA)
124. University of Wisconsin-Madison (AdA, prA)
125. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (AdA, prA)
126. University of Wisconsin, Whitewater (SA)
127. University of Wyoming (AdA, prA)

128. Utah State University (prA)
129. Virginia Polytechnic Institute (prA)
130. West Virginia University (AdA, prA)
131. Western Kentucky University (AdA, prA)
132. Western Washington University (prA)
133. Wichita State University (AdA, prA)
134. York College of Pennsylvania (prA)

## **Appendix B Part 2 PRSSA Nationally-affiliated, Student-run Agencies**

1. 6th Street PR at Biola University
2. Alpha Productions at University of Florida
3. Bucky PR at University of Wisconsin–Madison
4. Cardinal Communications at Ball State University
5. Central Communication Agency at Central Washington University
6. GrandPR at Grand Valley State University
7. Hill Communications at Syracuse University
8. Hubbell Connections at Michigan State University
9. ImPRessions at Ohio University
10. ImPRint Communications at Louisiana State University
11. Johnston Communications at Marquette University
12. Lindsey + Asp at University of Oklahoma
13. MaverickPR at University of Nebraska at Omaha
14. North Road Communications at Marist College
15. PR Central at Central Michigan University
16. PRaction at Rowan University
17. Red Brick Communications at Waynesburg University
18. Roxo at Texas Christian University
19. Texas Tower PR at University of Texas at Austin
20. The Carolina Agency at University of South Carolina
21. PR USMP at Universidad de San Martín de Porres
22. Top Dog Communication at University of Indianapolis
23. Tower Creative Consultants at Belmont University
24. UNI PRide at University of Northern Iowa
25. Unleashed PR at Boston University
26. Ut Prosim PR at Virginia Tech

## APPENDIX C TABLES OF MEANS, HYPOTHESES AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Following are tables of the research hypotheses means for each comparison of strategic communication.

*Table C1 Matrix of Hypotheses Means, Dependent Variables, Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications (N = 212)*

MVOI	Strategic Comms.	Integrated Comms.
<b>Applied Comms.</b>		
H1 BizMgt	3.40	3.40
<b>Specialty Comms.</b>		
H2a Intellect. Property	2.59*	2.52*
H2b Political Comm.	3.18*	2.89*
<b>Comms. Skills and Traits</b>		
H3a Qual. Research	3.57	3.55
H3b Quant. Research	3.65*	3.57*
H3c Receive Criticism	3.73*	3.60*
H3d Persistence	3.67	3.61

(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential) \* = Hypothesis supported

*Table C2 Matrix of Hypotheses Means, Dependent Variables, Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations (N = 212)*

<b>MVOI</b>	<b>Strategic Comms.</b>	<b>PR Comms.</b>
<b>Applied Comms.</b>		
H4a Biz. Mgt.	3.40	3.49
H4b Strat. Plan.	3.88*	3.83*
H4c Branding	3.69	3.65
<b>Specialty Comms.</b>		
H5a Political Comm.	3.18	3.35
H5b Intellect. Property	2.59*	2.78*
H5c Reg. Compliance	3.02	3.32
H5d S.E.O.	3.39*	3.35*
<b>Comms. Skills and Traits</b>		
H6a Qual. Research	3.57	3.59
H6b Quant. Research	3.65*	3.53*
H6c Advertising Principles	3.55*	3.39*

*(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential) \* = Hypothesis supported*

*Table C3 Matrix of Hypotheses Means, Dependent Variables, Strategic Communications vs. Advertising (N = 212)*

MVOI	Strategic Comms.	AD Comms.
<b>Applied Comms.</b>		
H7a Biz. Mgt.	3.40*	3.31*
H7b Strat. Plan.	3.88*	3.76*
H7c Stakeholder Comms.	3.62*	3.04*
H7d Shareholder Comms.	3.47*	2.90*
H7e Crisis Comms.	3.69*	2.89*
<b>Specialty Comms.</b>		
H8a Tech. Comms.	3.00	2.98
H8b Public Speaking	3.49*	3.27*
H8c Intellect. Property	2.59	2.54
H8d Regulatory Compliance	3.01	3.02
H8e C.S.R.	3.63*	3.25*
H8f Not-for-profit	3.38*	3.13*
<b>Comms. Skills and Traits</b>		
H9 PR Principles	3.75*	3.36*

(1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Of Little Importance, 3 = Average Importance or 4 = Essential) \* = Hypothesis supported

## APPENDIX D PAIRED T-TESTS, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS VS. ALL OTHER COMMUNICATIONS DISCIPLINES

Following are a series of paired t-tests for all dependent variables compared against Strategic Communications.

*Table D1 Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications  
Applied Communication Single tail t-test.*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tail)</b>
Biz. Mgt.	.68	.00	211	.50
Strat. Plan.	.52	3.44	211	.00*
Mktg. plan.	.60	-5.12	211	.00*
Branding	.57	-2.17	211	.02*
Media Rel.	.68	4.24	211	.00*
Stakeholder Comms.	.67	5.88	211	.00*
Shareholder Comms.	.73	5.68	211	.00*
Campaign Plan	.55	.37	211	.36



Event mgt.	.66	.83	211	.20
Crisis Comms.	.71	6.78	211	.00*
Media Buying	.80	-6.01	211	.00*

\* = Significant ( $p < .05$ )

*Table D2 Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications  
Specialty Communication Single tail t-test*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tail)</b>
Tech. Comms	.57	1.21	211	.11
Intellectual prop.	.58	1.66	211	.05*
Political Comm.	.65	6.62	211	.00*
Regulatory Compliance	.60	2.42	211	.01*
Interpersonal Comm.	.64	3.23	211	.00*
Corporate Social Resp.	.58	6.15	211	.00*
New Media	.46	-.75	211	.23

Video Prod.	.64	-3.55	211	.00*
Website	.58	-1.76	211	.04*
Social Media	.49	.70	211	.24
Public Speak.	.60	4.56	211	.00*
Digital Analytics	.56	-.49	211	.31
Not For Profit	.58	5.21	211	.00*
Search Engine Optimization	.59	-1.98	211	.03*

\* = Significant ( $p < .05$ )

*Table D3 Strategic Communications vs. Integrated Communications Communication Skills and Traits Single tail t-test.*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tail)</b>
Qualitative analysis	.59	.35	211	.36
Quantitative Analysis	.54	2.27	211	.01*
Receive Criticism	.49	3.83	211	.00*
Collaborative Leadership	.46	2.82	211	.00*

Persistence	.42	1.82	211	.04*
Proactive Determination	.40	3.42	211	.00*
Ad Principles	.60	-3.44	211	.00*
PR Principles	.57	2.42	211	.01*

\* = Significant ( $p < .05$ )

*Table D4 Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations Applied Communication Single tail t-test*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tail)</b>
Biz. mgt.	.62	-2.10	209	.02*
Strat. Plan.	.45	1.86	209	.03*
Mktg. plan.	.62	1.67	209	.05*
Branding	.59	1.05	209	.29
Media Rel.	.57	-6.33	209	.00*
Stakeholder Comms.	.58	-5.59	209	.00*
Shareholder Comms.	.66	-4.93	209	.00*
Event mgt.	.70	-9.01	209	.00*

Crisis Comms.	.53	-5.62	209	.00*
Media Buying	.97	1.28	209	.10

\* = Significant ( $p < .05$ )

*Table D5 Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations Specialty Communications Single tail t-test*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig. (1-tail)</b>
Tech. Comm.	.75	-3.42	209	.00*
Intellectual property	.75	-3.70	209	.00*
Political Comm.	.75	-3.31	209	.00*
Regulatory Comp.	.75	-4.43	209	.00*
Interpersonal Comm.	.68	-4.64	209	.00*
C.S.R.	.61	-3.06	209	.00*
New Media	.54	-3.43	209	.00*
Video Prod.	.69	-3.09	209	.00*
Website	.63	.77	209	.22
Social Media	.53	-1.55	209	.06

Public Speak.	.59	-5.60	209	.00*
Written Comm.	.41	-2.02	209	.02*
Digital Analytics	.65	.32	209	.38
Not For Profit	.68	-4.24	209	.00*
S.E.O	.62	1.00	209	.16

\* = Significant (p<.05)

*Table D6 Strategic Communications vs. Public Relations Skills and Traits Communications. Single Tail t-test*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig (1-tail)</b>
Qualitative analysis	.54	-.51	209	.31
Quantitative Analysis	.56	3.18	209	.00*
Receive Criticism	.46	-1.82	209	.02*
Collaborative Leadership	.49	-2.53	209	.01*
Persistence	.48	-1.16	209	.13
Proactive Determination	.48	-.42	209	.34

Ad Principles	.64	3.6	209	.00*
PR Principles	.49	-4.36	209	.00*

\* = Significant (p<.05)

Table D7 Strategic Communications vs. Advertising Applied Communication  
Single Tail t-test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig (1-tail)</b>
Biz. Mgt.	.75	1.65	209	.05*
Strat. Plan.	.54	3.60	209	.00*
Mktg. Plan.	.62	-5.76	209	.00*
Branding	.65	-2.34	209	.01*
Media Rel.	.86	6.37	209	.00*
Stakeholder Comms.	.85	9.99	209	.00*
Shareholder Comms.	.87	9.57	209	.00*
Campaign Plan	.65	.11	209	.46
Event mgt.	.86	2.34	209	.01*
Crisis Comms.	.84	13.91	209	.00*

Media Buying	.88	-11.61	209	.00*
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\* = Significant ( $p < .05$ )

*Table D8 Strategic Communications vs. Advertising Specialty Communication  
Single tail t-tests*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig (1-tail)</b>
Tech. Comm.	.84	.50	209	.31
Intellec. prop.	.82	.85	209	.20
Political Comm.	.84	6.0	209	.00*
Regulatory Comp.	.87	.00	209	.50
Interpersonal Comm.	.81	3.50	209	.00*
C.S.R.	.89	6.36	209	.00*
New Media	.57	-.48	209	.32
Video Prod.	.73	-9.14	209	.00*
Website	.79	-1.75	209	.04*
Social Media	.60	-1.04	209	.15

Public Speak.	.84	3.85	209	.00*
Written Comm.	.64	3.78	209	.00*
Digital Analytics	.69	-3.12	209	.00*
Not For Profit	.87	4.07	209	.00*
S.E.O.	.67	-2.69	209	.00*

\*= Significant (p<.05)

*Table D9 Strategic Communications vs. Advertising Skills and Traits  
Single Tail t-tests.*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig (1-tail)</b>
Qualitative analysis	.69	-1.11	209	.14
Quantitative Analysis	.60	.00	209	.50
Receive Criticism	.49	-.87	209	.20
Collaborative Leadership	.52	-.13	209	.45
Persistence	.53	-1.03	209	.15
Proactive Determination	.55	.88	209	.19



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Ad Principles	.68	-7.99	209	.00*
PR Principles	.71	8.11	209	.00*

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\* = Significant (p<.05)

## **APPENDIX E FACULTY RESEARCH FREE RESPONSE COMMENTS**

Free response answers Questions 6 and 10:

Q6 “Please list any other essential applied communication, type of communication, skill or trait that you think are relevant to the practice of Strategic Communication and/or Integrated Communication that was not asked in the questions above.”

Q10 “Please list any other essential applied communication, type of communication skill or trait you think is relevant to the study of Public Relations and/or Advertising that was not asked in the questions above.”

### **Analytical/Critical Thinking Skills (11)**

Ability to analyze data and glean insights.

Ability to interpret research data but to find actionable insights to develop effective and resonant messaging

Ability to see connections.

Ability to understand how to generate insights and to develop a platform idea based off those insights.

Advanced critical thinking skills

### **Account Planning (3)**

Account and/or Client Management.

Account Planning skills

### **Active Listening (3)**

Active listening and the ability of a practitioner to understand the motivation of groups or individuals either opposed to or neutral towards the message content.

### **Analysis**

The ability to effectively perform a target market analysis,

The ability to regard good marketing as good storytelling.

The ability to see emerging trends and patterns from raw data or marketplace developments.

**App. Development (3)**

Native Advertising for Integrated Comm.

**Big Data Analysis (3)**

**Brand Communication/Development (3)**

Nation and place branding,

**Budgeting (2)**

**Business acumen/Business Literacy**

How to read a balance sheet

**Case study analysis**

**Civics (3)**

Interest in current affairs.

**Client management.**

**Collaboration (3)**

**Communication Theory (2)**

**Competitive Analysis**

**Computational social science**

**Computer simulation**

**Conceptual thinking**

**Conflict management**

**Consumer behavior (2)**

**Content creation/development/Management (3)**

**Copyediting/copywriting (5)**

Skills in all phases of the writing process, from pre-writing and pre-planning, all the way through to revising.

Writing skills (2).

**Corporate Media,**

## **Corporate or organizational culture**

### **Creating videos**

### **Creativity (14)**

Brainstorming (2)

Creative development

Creative problem solving (2),

Creative thinking (3)

Creative Thinking! Insight. Evaluative skills. If the result of the strategic, integrated, PR or Advertising work is no impact, no point of difference from the competition, then everyone's doing a lot of planning and thinking to create wallpaper. Strategies require execution, and they are not separate actions. The two work together. The demand on communications professionals to be startling with their ideas is intense. In some industries a startling idea might be a change in business focus that is disruptive in category (like Apple deciding to be a mobile company instead of a computer company). In other cases, especially advertising and PR, it might a consumer-facing issue where great creativity is required to engage consumers. Regardless of the kind of industry in which a communications professional might work, translating the learning from data gathering and customer/stakeholder touch points into actionable change agents requires great creativity.

### **Crisis communication (3)**

### **Cultural awareness**

Deep understanding of emotional drivers across cultures (and within).

### **Curiosity (3)**

### **Customer management/service(4)**

### **Debate**

### **Decision maker and leader.**

### **Design literacy/principles (8)**

### **Diversity (4)**

### **Emotional intelligence**

### **Employee communication (2)**

### **Entrepreneurial thinking/Entrepreneurship (6)**

## **Enunciation**

### **Environmental awareness and assessment**

Anticipate issues development and prepare strategically.

Environmental scanner multi-tasking

### **Ethical decision-making (7)**

PRSA Code of Ethics

### **Evaluation Skills**

KPI's

Measurement and evaluation methods (2)

Need an understanding of Google analytics. The field is increasingly data driven affair.

ROI (2)

Translating Consumer information into Consumer insight?

Trend spotting

Opportunity analysis,

### **Flexibility**

### **Fundamental training in rhetorical theory (2)**

### **Good synthesis skills.**

### **Graphics arts and videos/Visual Design (9)**

Typography

### **Grit/Determination/Perseverance Under Pressure (4)**

### **Guerrilla Marketing (2)**

### **Human behavior/Psychology (2)**

### **Hard Skills (3)**

Excel (2)

Google Docs

### **IMC professional must understand selling (2).**

### **Independent Judgment**

**Innovation**

Insight and idea.

Being able to stay calm and collected under stress boldness to grasp and innovate.

**Inspirational****Intercultural Orientation**

Intercultural advertising

Intercultural strategic communication practice

Intercultural/cross-cultural PR

**Internal communication****Interpersonal skills.****Leadership/Leadership skills (3)****Marketing (5)**

Segmentation,

Marketing principles

Marketing theories

Marketing/Brand managers must understand both strategic and integrated comms.

Good storytelling is good marketing

**Media and Information literacy**

Media Planning and Buying (2)

**Media law (2)****Multi-tasking (2)****New media dynamics are blending media forms.****Nothing/None (11)****Participation in student teams**

Bateman or NSAC (2)

**Patience/Perseverance (2)**

**Personal Communication (2)****Personnel management (2)****Persuasion**

More training in argumentation and persuasion to represent and advocate for a strategic or integrated strategy.

Persuasive message design

Persuasiveness

**Planning (2)****Political astuteness****Positioning**

PR and Advertising are essential components of the new strategic communication web. Much more important than marketing which is more involved with sales. PR is essential to the CEO and should be on the same level, not a subset of marketing which means disaster for the organization

**Presentation skills (2)****Proactivity (9)****Problem solving skills (3)****Productive conflict****Project management (4)****Proposal writing****Public speaking****Reputation management (2)****Research**

Not sure how I would write the question, but it would have to do with the connection of research to the strategic or integrated communication goals and objectives. Research should provide the foundation for these and for end of and on-going evaluation. The concepts cannot be separated from the process. Also would have been helpful if you had offered your definition of both strategic and integrated communication; I don't think there is a widespread agreement on the two definitions.

**Resource management**

## **Risk Assessment**

**Run like a business and think and act like a not for profit.**

## **Situational analysis**

### **Social Awareness**

Social issues,

Social listening techniques;

Social networks

### **Social Media**

Recognition that Social Media, like all media aspects, is a Tactic not a Strategy, when considered as a part of "Strategic Communication" and/or "Integrated Communication."

## **Storytelling**

### **Strategic development (7)**

Audiences and insights

Development of audience

Development of messaging

Strategic planning (2)

Strategic thinking (2)

### **Tact and diplomacy**

### **Target marketing, and positioning (2).**

### **Team building/Teamliness (6)**

Skills of inclusion

Group communication (2)

### **Theoretical concepts related to communications (advocacy/persuasion, agenda-setting, multiple-/two-step flow....)**

Theory of communication principles

### **Thinking strategically**

### **Time management/Timeliness (3)**



**Trust****Understanding**

Identifying target markets.

Consumer behavior/psychology (3)

Each target audience as needed. (Not needed in IC)

Motivation and tactics of those opposed to a specific entity or its initiatives in strategic communication.

Acronyms used in the field

Current field of communications;

Tools regardless of their traditional connection with either public relations or advertising

**Web design/Website development (2)**

## APPENDIX F INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER for EXEMPT REVIEW

This is to certify that the research proposal: **Pro00046771**

Entitled: *Poll Faculty Around the Country Who have Experience Working/Teaching Mass Communication and Strategic Communication Particularly with Student-Run Agencies*

Submitted by:

Principal Investigator: Jeffrey Ranta  
College/Department: Mass Communications & Information Studies  
School of Journalism and Mass Communication  
Coliseum  
Columbia, SC 29208

was reviewed in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on **7/21/2015**. No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, the Principal Investigator must inform the Office of Research Compliance of any changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three (3) years after termination of the study.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (USC IRB). If you have questions, contact Arlene McWhorter at [arlenem@sc.edu](mailto:arlenem@sc.edu) or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa M. Johnson".

Lisa M. Johnson  
IRB Manager