Have you ever wondered what makes great leaders truly great? Do your friends tell you YOU are a great leader? Do your career plans involve leadership in some way? Are you wondering what to do with your life after college? Are you wondering how everything you have learned as a Communication major "fits together?" If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then this is the capstone for you!

Together, we will explore advanced leadership and communication theory and their relationship to organizational culture. I believe that leadership should be studied in a very personal way, applying concepts to your lived experience. We will review leadership literature, study great leaders, and prepare a personal leadership development plan to help you set and achieve your personal and professional goals for the next five years. We will also work on preparing resumes, practice interviewing and study effective techniques for networking and building your career. Students will learn how to showcase their work using an electronic portfolio or website as appropriate for their field. By the end of the first semester you will have a leadership action plan, a killer LinkedIn profile, and be able to knock your interviews out of the park!

You will also become an expert in some area of leadership theory by conducting primary and secondary research on an area of interest to you. These studies will be designed and proposed in the first semester and completed in the second with the goal of presenting this research at a regional undergraduate communication conference or publishing it on LinkedIn or another professional venue. Students in past sections of this course have studied topics like gender, humor, emotional labor, face work, leadership emergence in small groups, storytelling, organizational rites and rituals,
images of leadership in literature and television, and leadership in virtual teams.

Students applying for this course should have interest in leadership and organizational culture. Our class sessions are highly interactive and require a willingness to prepare and participate with enthusiasm. I enjoy working with students who are curious, collaborative, and have a strong respect for the relationship between theory and practice. If you rank this class, you must be willing to take a few risks and do the work necessary to better prepare yourself for life beyond COFC both personally and professionally. By the end of this course (and your major), I expect you to be able to demonstrate the department's goals of writing beautifully, speaking eloquently, thinking critically and researching effectively. If you are willing to put in the work, I will help you achieve all of these goals (and more). Students taking this course are required to complete an internship, hold a leadership position in an organization on campus or be employed part-time (please be sure to provide information about how you will meet this requirement in your application).

**COMM 480, section 02: Capstone in Communication: Strategic Communication Campaigns**

**Instructor:** Dr. Amanda Ruth-McSwain  
**Course Meeting:** M/W 2:00 – 3:15

Students will engage in communication campaign development for a community organization (course partner). Working as a student agency, student teams will enact the strategic planning process to create a research-based, comprehensive campaign that meets the partner's greatest communication needs. The capstone begins with intensive secondary and primary research including environmental scanning, organizational research, issues examination, industry exploration, interviews, focus groups, observations and surveys. Based on the insights gleaned from the research phase, students will generate realistic goals and measurable objectives that will provide the foundation for campaign strategy and tactics. At the end of the first semester, students will prepare and present a formal pitch presentation for the partner. Following partner and instructor feedback, student teams will execute their campaign plan throughout the second semester of study, including evaluation of their campaign efforts. The final
assignment for this capstone experience is a formal presentation of the campaign for the partner as well as special guests from the Department of Communication. By the end of this capstone experience, students will have a significant portfolio of professional work including materials that demonstrate ability in strategic communications planning, public relations, media relations, social media/digital communication, event management and organizational communication.

**Important Considerations:** Students that apply for the Strategic Communication Campaigns capstone should be comfortable working in groups as well as interacting with community clients; professionalism is required at all times. A portion of the grade for the Strategic Communication capstone is based on peer and client performance evaluations. The aforementioned personal characteristics will be important to demonstrate in the application process. In addition, students that have taken COMM 336: Strategic Communication Management, COMM 216: Principles and Practices of Strategic Communication and/or COMM 410: Social Media/Social Marketing will be given special consideration as will students that have completed internships in public relations, content marketing, integrated marketing communication or a related field. Finally, this capstone course requires a significant time commitment outside of classroom hours as well as initiative and time management skills, please consider your fall and spring semester workload before selecting this course experience. As a culminating experience to your program of study, this course should be one of the most rewarding - albeit most challenging - experiences of your college career.

**COMM 480, section 03: Capstone in Communication: Narrative and Public Memory**
**Instructor: Dr. Elena Strauman**
**Course Meeting: T/TH 12:15 – 1:30**

"If you're going to have a story, have a big story, or none at all." --Joseph Campbell

What are the “big stories” that motivate us? How do our collective histories drive our beliefs? What are the stories that engage us? That move us? That make us open our minds (or wallets)? Human beings structure their lives in and around narratives and those narratives provide “good reasons” for thought, feeling and action. This course will consider the broad place of
narrative in our lives, particularly in terms of the stories that influence us in the public sphere.

This capstone experience will draw on theory and research on the place of narrative in the study of communication. While we will explore the social, political, and personal implications of stories in a variety of contexts, more specifically, we will consider the question, “What makes for a good story?” This question should be of particular interest to communication majors, as the ability to critique and tell good stories is fundamental to a variety of career paths.

COMM 480 will provide an overview of narrative theory and practice, examining the ways in which narratives are structured, popularized, and embedded in public imagination. The terrain of the course will include traditional (film, television, etc) and social media narratives, as well as historical narratives of people and places. We will consider the ways in which the lessons of narratives help us to build our own persuasive story. We will review the process and practice of critical, historical, and other qualitative methods for studying narrative. These methods will be applied in a series of individual research projects focusing on the role of the narrator, articulation of motive, means and mechanisms of memorializing, and the development of our concept of personal and public memory.

COMM 481 will build on our common understandings of narrative theory and methods with students working in groups to propose and execute a substantive research project focusing on a solid literature review, a clear articulation of method, good research practice and analysis and conclusions that highlight the significance of the project. A process of research, writing, and revision will be repeated throughout the semester culminating in a completed project suitable for presentation to a larger audience.

Success in this course will require attention and dedication to good research and writing practice. Students will be asked to engage, analyze and challenge ideas and topics that may be difficult, unfamiliar, unexpected, or uncomfortable. An open mind is necessary. Priority will be given to students who have a demonstrated interest in conducting critical or qualitative research. We will be working both in and out of the classroom for this course. Students may be asked to complete short ‘field trips’ which may require small activity/admission fees.
The rise of digital technologies has unquestionably transformed the configuration of traditional audiovisual media like print, radio, television, and film. But these technologies have also changed how we relate to bodies—both our own bodies and the ones we connect to through digital communication networks. GPS and geolocation services structure the way we move through and navigate space; fitness trackers nudge us to exercise more; photosharing apps shape clothes we wear and the food we eat; online dating apps allow us to make decisions about which bodies we connect physically with; and we even interact with automated artificial intelligence bots that don’t have physical bodies at all. While our bodies seem like things are naturally linked to with our individual identities, our bodies are constantly being constructed and reshaped through digital technologies, with media extending our bodies’ borders outward.

In this capstone, we explore this reshaping and reconstruction of the body, with an interest in understanding the past, present, and future of the human body. We will examine topics such as the quantified self; gender, sexuality, and computing; disability and digital media; the body in virtual and augmented reality; haptics and digitally mediated touch; videogames and player bodies; the relationship between robot/nonhuman and human bodies; the social construction of race through digital media; and the new forms of bodily surveillance and monitoring enabled by computers. We will also historicize these recent developments. The first semester will feature class visits and readings from prominent researchers and practitioners whose work examines the impact on digital technologies on the body. The second semester will focus on developing and executing original, group-based qualitative research projects. Students will also have the option of developing creative works (data
visualization/data physicalization; software/hardware; interactive maps) in lieu of the research project.

This course builds on themes and concepts introduced and discussed in COMM 214: Media in the Digital Age; COMM 315: Digital Media Ethics; and COMM 410: Media, Communication, and Technocultures. Students with an interest in Computing in the Arts and/or Medical Humanities are also encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to those students whose applications demonstrate thoughtfulness and passion for the subject matter. Outlining specific ideas for potential research projects will prove especially helpful in the selection process.

**COMM 480, section 05: Capstone in Communication: Narrative, Identity, and Relationships**  
**Instructor: Dr. Jenna Abetz**  
**Course Meeting: T/TH 9:25 – 10:40**

What stories do you tell yourself about your life? We have conversations with ourselves about who we are, the decisions we make, and the things we do. The voices that tell these stories come from all kinds of places in our life: loved ones, parents, teachers, friends, coaches, and religious institutions. Indeed, our lives are co-authored by cultural expectations, mediated by societal and organizational norms, and shaped by interactions with friends and family in daily life. In everyday life, we participate not only as tellers, but as listeners, audience members, and characters in our own narratives and those of others. This capstone comes from an interpersonal perspective and will explore theory and research which situates narrative as central to making sense of, constructing, and reflecting our relational lives.

We are all storytellers — all engaged, as the anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson puts it, in an “act of creation” of the “composition of our lives.” Our identities and experiences are constantly shifting, and storytelling is how we make sense of it. We tell stories to teach, to explain, to understand, to cope, to survive. Storytelling frames how we interpret our lived experiences, builds order and coherence out of chaos and despair, provides tools for resistance, and connects us in relational webs with others. There are dark, underexplored
sides of narrative as well. Narratives can constrain our sense of self or be limited by wider cultural scripts that help to regulate behavior.

During this course, students will work with case studies, visual/video materials, podcasts, and memoirs as they engage with narrative approaches to identity and relationships. Creating and maintaining a blog as well as engaging in weekly reflection will be a central component to this course. To facilitate personal engagement with course content, students will design and carry out their own research, employing a mix of qualitative methods. Each project will produce a portfolio of materials that simultaneously illustrate students’ creative and critical thinking skills.

COMM 480, section 06: Capstone in Communication:
Communication and the 2018 Midterm Elections
Instructor: Dr. Namjin Lee
Course Meeting: T/TH 12:15 – 1:30

This capstone explores the role that communication plays in the democratic election process. In particular, we will use the upcoming 2018 midterm election as “laboratories” for examining the influence of various forms of communication, luding news coverage, campaign commercials, televised candidate debates, social media campaigns, entertainment shows, and voters’ engagement in discussions of campaigns issues with fellow citizens, on a range of election outcomes. We will also analyze campaign messages and strategies of specific candidates, and potential influences of such messages and strategies on voter reactions. Either individually or in small groups, students will develop and conduct small-scale research projects where they apply various theories developed at the intersection of communication and political science to study whether election communication campaigns facilitate “crosstalk” among candidates, media, and the public, thereby helping voters to make a better choice that reflects their values and interests.

This year-long capstone course is roughly divided into three parts. Part I (August – Election Day) will focus on data collection. Students will develop a research project addressing a certain communication aspect of the elections and closely observe the unfolding general election campaigns until the Election Day. Students can employ such observational methods as surveys, experiments, focus groups, content analysis, case studies, and participant observations. In Part II (November – February), we will then focus on the
analysis of the collected data. Students can gather additional data or utilize existing secondary data to further explore their questions. In Part III (March – May), students will finalize their project and present their findings though their chosen outlets (academic conferences, student research showcase, journal submissions, etc.)

This year’s midterm elections, taking place in the middle of President Donald Trump's term, will feature hundreds of congressional, state, and local contests, the results of which will carry significant implications for our political landscape for many years to come. Students can take a single race (or a single candidate), multiple races, or the entire elections as their research focus. Regardless of their research scope and focus, students will apply key theories and empirical research on election campaign communications to better understand the underlying processes through which various forms of communication shape public opinion and influence election outcomes.

COMM 480, section 07: Capstone in Communication: Destination Italy! – Experiencing and Investigating Communication and Culture Abroad
Instructor: Dr. Celeste Lacroix
Course Meeting: Abroad.

Have you reached your senior year and not had the opportunity to study abroad? Have you always wanted to, but there was never the right time? Or perhaps you’ve studied abroad, dreamed of going again, but thought it wasn’t possible? Have you dreamt of Italy – one of the most intriguing places on earth? A country with a history, geography, cuisine, arts scene, and politics uniquely its own… Or are you particularly passionate about food or sustainability? Now is your chance to choose to study abroad and apply for Capstone in the COMM semester abroad program in beautiful Italy!

Study Abroad Capstone Program Overview:
This capstone experience begins with COMM 480, during fall semester study abroad in Florence, Italy. Students in the Capstone also will be registered for a full semester load of courses in Italy (12 -15 hours of COMM, and HIST/WGST courses – see below for the full list of available classes). In Florence, students will be immersed in Italian culture by living with other CofC students participating in our program in apartments in the heart of the city and
through studying Italian culture and communicative practices with Dr. Lacroix, who has co-directed study abroad programs in Italy ten times prior to Fall 2018. This course will have a special focus on issues of sustainability -- specifically through the lens of the Slow Food movement – an international movement that was born in Italy and that works to promote food that is Good, Clean and Fair for all.

***Note: You do not need Italian language background to participate in this program. We will provide some basic Italian vocabulary instruction before and upon arrival.

As noted above, in addition to COMM 480, participants in this study abroad capstone experience will choose from other Communication History/Women’s and Gender Studies courses, in order to be enrolled full time at the College (see further details below).

**COMM 480/481 – Course Overview:**
In COMM 480, we will become culture learners by immersing ourselves in the Italian culture in an engaged and conscientious way. In this course, we will focus our attention on the relationship between communication and culture. Over the course of the semester we will engage in field trips, guided experiential learning activities, as well as journaling, to reflect on what we are learning about both Italian culture and ourselves. As the semester progresses, we will form teams and design research projects, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, primarily through ethnographic and survey methods. Data collection will take place in Italy before our return home to the U.S.

In Spring semester back on campus in Charleston, the COMM 481 course will focus on analyzing the data collected and the completion of research papers reporting our findings. In addition, we will work in teams to produce a social media campaign about our experiences abroad – we’ll produce blogs, photo essays, podcasts, etc.

**Other Important Information about the Destination Italy Capstone:**
Cost: In addition to regular tuition, there is a program fee of $6400, which includes housing in shared apartments for the 10 weeks we are in Florence, ground transportation and fees for all field trips (day and overnight), hotel accommodations and meals for a group trip to Turin – see this link for specific details: [http://international.cofc.edu/study-abroad/cofcflorence.php](http://international.cofc.edu/study-abroad/cofcflorence.php)
Worried about affording this trip?

- This semester study abroad program is affordable for many students. Because this is a CofC faculty-led trip, for most students all financial aid in your Fall 2018 package applies to tuition and the program fee.
- Scholarships of up to $2,000 from the Center for International Education are available to degree-seeking CofC students who study abroad for academic credit. Eligibility is based on demonstrated financial need and academic merit. For more information on the Center for International Education scholarship as well as additional scholarships for study abroad, please visit: http://international.cofc.edu/study-abroad/scholarships.php.

Courses Offered:
In addition to COMM 480 – Capstone in Communication, students will enroll in 3 – 4 additional courses (for a total of 12 to 15 credit hours).

- COMM 315 – Ethical Communication: Ethics in a Multicultural Context (3 credits). ***(COMM 315 can be taken twice – the second time, hours go to general electives). Taught by Dr. Robert Westerfelhaus.
- COMM 336 – Addressing Problems in Context: Representation, Identity and Culture (3 credits). ***(COMM 336 can be taken twice – the second time, hours go to general electives). Taught by Dr. Celeste Lacroix.
- COMM 410 – Analysis of Communication Practice: Travel Writing (4 credits). Taught by Dr. Robert Westerfelhaus.
- HIST 250 – Special Topics: History, Families and Food (3 credit hours). Taught by Dr. Cara Delay.
- HIST 252 – Women in Europe (3 credits). Taught by Dr. Cara Delay.

There are no prerequisites for the HIST courses. These courses also count for the WGST major or minor, and Humanities courses for General Education.

Some Program Highlights:
- Living in Florence, cradle of the Renaissance and in the heart of Tuscany
- Excursions to Slow Food producers in Florence and other popular locales in Tuscany
- Classes taught by CofC professors and presentations by native Italians
- Opportunities for travel in Italy and Europe during long weekends and an extended Fall Break at the end of the program
If you are interested in this unique Capstone experience, you should attend the 30 minute information session on Tuesday, February 6th 3:00 pm - 7 College Way #201 (conference room).

COMM 480, section 08: Capstone in Communication: Investigating Communication and Culture through Ethnography
Instructor: Dr. Celeste Lacroix
Course Meeting/Delivery: Hybrid.
This class will meet face-to-face on campus August 21 – September 6 & December 3 – 12 and online from September to December.

This Fall 2018 COMM 480 will be delievered in hybrid form – some face-to-face meetings at the start and end of the semester, and the majority of the course delivered online. This capstone’s focus is on researching and writing about culture as people enact it in their daily lives. In the fall, we will prepare to become culture learners by learning about ethnographic approaches to studying communication and culture. As the semester progresses, students will design research projects, preparing for and then collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, primarily through ethnographic and survey methods. Students will choose the site for their research projects and will be able to focus their attention on a subject about which they are passionate. In the spring, this section of 480 will be combined with the abroad section (07 above) and 481 will be taught face-to-face on campus. COMM 481 will focus on analyzing the data collected and the completion of research papers reporting our findings, as well as preparing some professional portfolio artifacts.

Note: This capstone will have significant reading, research and writing requirements, and because it is delivered primarily online, will also require a high level of self-motivation and self-direction.