

A MASTER'S PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SHAPE TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Program Overview | 2025



COMMUNICATION
leadership

W UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

VALUES-DRIVEN AND FUTURE-READY



Join us for a transformational master's education that goes beyond the transactional. By integrating key and emerging skills in communication, content, and strategy with a deep understanding of social contexts, values, and issues, we prepare our students for robust careers across many fields.

Our classes foster skill-building paired with critical thinking and ethical decision-making. Become an adaptable leader who drives meaningful change with your work, and join a lifelong community of Communication Leaders.

Ekin Yasin, PhD
Director, Communication Leadership Master's Program
University of Washington

Advance your career and shape the future through purpose-driven leadership

Comm Lead is uniquely positioned to empower professionals with the right tools to further their personal and career goals. Through the combination of tried-and-tested strategic fundamentals with advanced technologies like AI, we prepare graduates as future-proofed professionals.

The University of Washington and the city of Seattle have been at the forefront of driving global innovation and impact. This is your opportunity to take advantage of these benefits to maximize your future

#2

STEM job market - Seattle
among top U.S. cities

#8

ranked University in
the world

#7

in driving global
innovation



WHY UW?

What if you could study at one of the top 10 universities in the world, on one of the **most beautiful campuses** in the country?

Experience the blend of Seattle's big-city life with the unparalleled natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

At the University of Washington, you will be earning more than a master's degree —you'll be joining the Husky family.

From working out our state-of-the-art athletics facility, to studying late-night at the picturesque Suzzallo Library – from celebrating W Day, to finding your passion at one of hundreds of student organizations – there's a place for everyone at UW.





"I joined this program to update my skills and knowledge of the evolution of the comms industry since my last stint at full time work almost 6 years ago. I built a network of industry professionals, gained practical work experience, and landed my first job in corporate America."

Ekta Dokania (MCCL, Cohort 18)
Sr. Brand Marketing Manager, T-Mobile

PAVE YOUR OWN CAREER PATH

Every professional's path is unique, which is why we've designed our curriculum to develop essential skills in content, UX, marketing, storytelling and emerging technology – to help you navigate your specific journey and position yourself for success.

Our distinctive approach cultivates critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and responsible AI-focused leadership acumen. Designed by industry experts, our curriculum combines practical training with values-driven learning, empowering you to drive meaningful change.

Designed to empower your unique path in communications

Whether you are an experienced professional or an aspiring communicator, we have three unique degrees tailored to suit your ideal career goals.



Ideal for early to mid-career professionals focused on digital media and marketing communications.



Designed for recent graduates and early-career professionals interested in launching their career in communications.



For aspiring leaders and mid-career professionals to build skills in strategic and organizational communications.

Learn more about each degree [here](#).

Build expertise that matter to you

Customize your learning with 8 specializations – build expertise in the areas that matter most to you.



Emergent Technologies
& Trends



Content Strategy & User
Experience



Community &
Leadership



Marketing &
Branding



Storytelling



Organizational & Professional
Communication



Law & Ethics



Communication &
Culture

HANDS-ON PRACTICAL LEARNING

Industry-leading faculty

Our instructors are industry practitioners and leading experts coming from various professional backgrounds. As a student you get access to curriculum aligned with latest trends and practical learning opportunities.

Meet some of our leading instructors:



JESSICA PARTNOW

An award-winning international public radio journalist, Jessica received the 2014 Edward R. Murrow award for Audio Documentary. She now works as a podcast producer and leadership consultant for non-profit organizations, while teaching Audio Storytelling for Comm Lead.



DAVID EVANS PH.D.

Director of Market Research at Microsoft and author of "Bottlenecks: Aligning UX Design with User Psychology," David's research shaped major Microsoft products including Office 365, Windows 10, and Cortana. Founder of usability firm Psychster Inc., he holds a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Iowa.



CHANG LIU

An Inclusive Design Leader with a distinguished 15+ year career dedicated to fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion across industries. Chang has played pivotal roles at tech giants such as Google and Meta, steering transformative DEI strategies that have reshaped organizational cultures and product offerings.

View our entire faculty list [here](#).



Classes for your learning success

Each class has been designed to challenge your thinking and develop your professional skills, from across the 8 specializations we offer. A comprehensive list can be found [here](#).

COMMLD 515: Advanced User Design: Generative AI Studio

In the Generative AI UX Studio course, students dive into the dynamic intersection of traditional experience design and artificial intelligence (AI), mastering the tools and frameworks that are reshaping how humans interact with technology.

COMMLD 520: Advanced Marketing

This advanced class develops graduate students' marketing management expertise through practical application of contemporary strategies including AI, customer insights, digital transformation, and omni-channel approaches.

COMMLD 570: Culture Design for Communication Leaders

This class explores the key aspects of culture design, co-creation, and leadership for the future of work. Students will identify their own co-creation and leadership style within the context of an organization, and learn to leverage these strengths in coordination with others.

COMMLD 532: Advanced Video Storytelling

In this course students will work together in a professional setting to create one short video for a real-world client. Students will learn how to communicate effectively with their client and navigate studio-based filming environments to ensure that they're delivering quality content that fits their client's needs

APPLIED LEARNING & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Communication Leadership Consulting

A student-led initiative founded in 2020, we connect skilled students with client organizations to tackle communication challenges spanning strategy, storytelling, marketing, and UX.

These paid and volunteer projects are invaluable opportunities for students to hone skills, build their portfolios, and have a real world impact.

400+

Organizations Served

430+

Projects Completed

370+

Students Engaged

Portfolio projects & practicums

Every class culminates in a professional **portfolio-level project as final assignment** that applies course learning to real-world challenges through weekly assignments, case studies, guest lectures, and collaborative discussions.

Past students have had the opportunity to develop podcasts, brand strategy presentations, short films, and communication plans, in collaboration with our regions leading mission-driven organizations.

Practicum courses engage students in contemporary professional practice by addressing real-world challenges. Students can choose the area they focus on based on career goals and needs.

"Comm Lead helped me to jump-start my career in the US. The benefit wasn't just knowledge gained from courses and growth of my portfolio. It was confidence and the camaraderie developed throughout the 18 months."



Thomas Zou (MCDM, Cohort 18)
Sr. Product Marketing Manager,
Microsoft

HOW TO APPLY

Autumn 2026 applications open November 1, 2025. Our priority consideration deadline is January 30. Additional deadlines and details can be found on our [How to Apply](#) page.



Step 1: Explore application requirements

Check your **admission eligibility** and make sure you meet all **requirements**.



Step 2: Create your application account

Create your applicant profile at **The Graduate School** application website to begin the online application process.



Step 3: Application checklist

Prepare everything you would need for your application.

Ensure your application is complete

Make sure you have all required materials submitted successfully before the deadline—incomplete applications will be denied.

Whether you are a U.S. or international student, please refer to the detailed [application steps](#) so that you are well prepared while applying to Comm Lead.

WANT HELP DECIDING? LET'S CONNECT & TALK

We understand – grad school is a huge life decision. We can help! Connect with us to get your questions answered and see if Communication Leadership is the right fit for you.

Write to us

For questions or additional information not covered on our website, contact us at commlead@uw.edu.

Attend an admissions event

Get to know us better by attending one of our admission events where you get to engage with and ask questions directly to staff and student representatives:

- Online Student Ambassador Q&A Sessions
- Virtual Information Sessions
- Open House (November 12th, 2025) - Online and in person

View the entire [schedule](#) of upcoming events.

Follow or subscribe to our channels

Stay connected for program updates, events, learning opportunities, and industry news:

- Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#) for news and updates, and [Eventbrite](#) for our free public online and in person events
- Subscribe to our [newsletter](#), email us at commlead@uw.edu to be added to the list



"I entered Comm Lead with a collection of skill sets that didn't naturally point to a specific job title. The synthesis of several classes, guest speaker insights, and faculty advice really helped me clarify my personal leadership style, hone my voice and pinpoint my career focus. Thanks to the Communication Leadership program, I am more skilled at working in teams to develop novel and useful ways to engage the youth voice on policy issues."

Leslie Daniels (MCCN, Cohort 17)
Communications Specialist, Public
Health Seattle King County



JOIN OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY



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