HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF ARTS
COMMUNICATION & BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Spring 2025

The Master of Arts Degree in Communication and Business Leadership is built around four "Power Skills" of communication, leadership, teamwork and critical thinking. This is accomplished through personal and organizational leadership development, ability to craft thoughtful and strategic communication messages to manage relationships, organizations and brands, being able to negotiate for mutual benefit, critical thinking and synthesis of information to solve problems, using available data to improve decisions and weigh multiple options, collaborate with people from different backgrounds for team success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Graduates with a degree in MA-CBL will demonstrate mastery in:

COMMUNICATION | Create and deliver well-structured documents and presentations that effectively demonstrate analytical thinking, adhering to industry standards and expectations to address organizational needs and support business objectives.

LEADERSHIP | Articulate vision and goals clearly to influence others to achieve desired outcomes and build strong professional relationships with stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds.

TEAMWORK | Actively participate in and facilitate collaborative problem-solving processes and manage group dynamics to develop innovative solutions to pursue common goals.

CRITICAL THINKING | Analyze complex situations, evaluate and align communication strategies with business objectives to enhance organizational performance, support strategic goals, while considering broader impact on the organization and stakeholders.

CORE COURSES

CBL 5000 | STRATEGIC MESSAGE DESIGN

This writing-intensive course provides a general overview to the theories and practices of written, oral, and mediated strategic messaging. Emphasis is placed on understanding how strategic communication can influence public opinion, audience behavior, and organizational outcomes. Students will also examine the role and use of technology to communicate and lead in several workplace settings, ultimately creating a communication plan grounded in best technological practices for use in a number of circumstances, including high-stakes scenarios frequently encountered by those in leadership positions. Throughout the course, students will practice several genres of professional communication that they will encounter in workplaces, gaining the writing and presenting skills they will need to gain and excel in a variety of professional roles.

CBL 5100 | DATA AND DECISION-MAKING

This course exposes students to research methods and statistics available for acquiring and analyzing data to improve decision making. Topics involve learning and applying both qualitative and quantitative methods and analysis and conveying outcomes to a target audience. Students will learn how to use surveys, focus groups and interviews to gather data and use statistics to compare differences and identify relationships. They will also utilize excel to create graphs and use financial information to create benchmarks and measure key performance indicators. Students will learn techniques to best communicate data persuasively, both orally and visually.

CBL 5200 | PERSUASION AND NEGOTIATION

Business people need analytical skills to discover optimal solutions to problems but need persuasion and negotiation skills to get them implemented. The course asks students to learn persuasion and negotiation skills experientially and to understand communication strategies via analytical and theoretical frameworks. The class emphasizes readings, simulations, exercises, and case study analysis.

CBL 5020 | ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

This graduate-level course in Organizational Behavior provides a comprehensive exploration of human behavior within organizational contexts. Students will gain theoretical insights and practical knowledge to understand individual and group dynamics, leadership, communication, motivation, and organizational culture. Through critical analysis and case studies, students will

develop the skills necessary to enhance workplace effectiveness, foster positive organizational outcomes, and excel as leaders in dynamic and diverse business environments.

CBL 5220 | LEADERSHIP

This course critically examines major theories of leadership through discussions of relevant research and practice. Important aspects of leadership such as leading change, team leadership, and women in leadership are explored. Emphasis will be given to contemporary theories and their application to current political, societal, and business leaders and the issues surrounding them. Students will evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses with respect to leadership and create individualized development plans to improve their leadership skills.

CBL 5010 | PRACTICUM

The goal of this course is for students to develop specific knowledge and skills that professionals need to be successful in the workplace. Students will be provided a menu of practicum options for each semester. Options include, among others, internships/professional experience, research internships, learning new technology, working in NQSC's student-run PR agency, or teaching/training experiences. Graded Credit/No Credit. Can be repeated for credit. One to Two Credit Options

CBL 5950 | CAPSTONE PROJECT I

This capstone course is part one in a two-part series. Students will learn to examine problems from multiple angles and consider the short-term and long-term consequences of decision-making. The semester project, completed over 72-hours, requires students, working in small groups, to analyze a case study and design an action plan. The plan is presented to the course instructor who evaluates its conceptualization, feasibility, and overall presentation.

Graded Credit/No Credit. One credit.

CBL 5960 | CAPSTONE PROJECT II

This capstone course is part two in a two-part series. Students will learn to examine problems from multiple angles and consider the short-term and long- term consequences of decision-making, especially the ethical implications of the problems and solutions. The semester project, completed over 72-hours, requires students, working independently, to analyze a case study and design an action plan. The plan is presented to a committee that evaluates its conceptualization, feasibility, and overall presentation. Graded. One credit. Prerequisite: CBL 5950

ELECTIVE COURSES

CBL 5400 | SUPER COMMUNICATORS

This course provides students with an in-depth understanding of effective communication. Understanding the three layers of communications: practical, emotional and social, students will learn how to connect on the proper layer by using two critical skills: listening and questioning. By learning effective techniques to hear more clearly and connect more deeply, students will sharpen their teamwork and leadership skills. The course will create opportunities for students to engage in active communication techniques of different formats and audiences to effectively target their message. Students will enhance their oral, written and visual communication skills in addition to crafting a cohesive message.

CBL 5410 | CORPORATE CULTURE

The course examines the impact of culture (internal organizational environment) on organizational behavior and success. Students will learn the elements of creating, and sustaining, a positive organizational culture. The course will include an analysis of individual motivations and core values, shared values, structure, personal and shared beliefs. The course will examine different cultures and the impact culture has on strategy and enhancing employee engagement. Students will be able to understand the mechanisms that create strong cultures, the leadership necessary to sustain it and the challenges of changing an existing culture.

CBL 5420 | COMMUNICATING WITH A STRATEGIC MINDSET

This course provides students with knowledge related to strategy as a critical thinking tool. The course builds student understanding of how vision, mission, core values and strategy are developed and effectively communicated to organizations. Students will evaluate existing strategies and positions of real-world examples and explore the positive and negative results of those examples. They will focus on how best to craft communications, both internally and externally, to bring vision and strategy to life. They will develop alternatives and communicate a strategy to align organization efforts.

CBL 5500 | MESSAGE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION (Online asynchronous)

Students develop message campaigns for specific corporate and non-profit audiences. Coursework focuses on the technical skills and design principles necessary to produce effective campaign materials for print and online delivery. This course requires that students have access to:

  a computer on which they can install at least 4 GB of software (Mac, PC, or Linux)

a computer that can operate Adobe Creative Suites--specifications available here:
https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/system-requirements.html

CBL 5520 | CRISIS COMMUNICATION (In health and medicine) (Online asynchronous)

This course provides students with a fundamental understanding of crisis management, risk communication and media relations in multiple contexts. It introduces students to crisis management principles, strategies, tactics, and communications methods. In this section, students will focus on crisis and risk as they relate to high-stakes public health scenarios. The class will also focus its lens on optimal rhetorical strategies meant to move communities to better health and medical outcomes. Working with a community client, students will produce a crisis communication plan that can be utilized to communicate important health messaging in times of distress and uncertainty.

CBL 5610 | LEADERSHIP ETHICS IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

This course explores approaches to leadership and analyzes how they address the complex ethical issues faced by individuals and corporations in our global context. It teaches students how to develop and assess ethical solutions by drawing on rigorous philosophical theory. Through collaborative problem-solving and real world case studies, the course engages students in becoming ethical leaders as it equips them with the knowledge and skills to tackle the ethical challenges they face

CBL 5650 | STORYTELLING AND LEADERSHIP

The ability to engage, motivate and coordinate others to create value as an organization is a core leadership necessity. The leaders who can effectively create a "story narrative" around the vision, mission and values of their team or organization increase their ability to set a desirable course and navigate the roadblocks created by a changing environment. This course provides students with an in-depth presentation of the "Why, what and how of effective storytelling." Students will understand why storytelling is essential in building and motivating teams and organizations as well as themselves as individuals. They will engage in reviewing effective stories currently in the world and will also be challenged to develop their storytelling skills through individual and team exercises and projects.

CBL 5699 | CONSUMER INSIGHTS

In this course, you will enhance your understanding of how and why people consider, choose, use, and evaluate goods and services. Students will learn various marketing research techniques to collect, analyze and act upon customer information, especially in the Internet and digital environment. These tools will help students better understand and predict customer behavior and will become essential for developing a successful career in marketing/management consulting, customer relationship management, database marketing, digital marketing, etc. Course discussions center on empirical insights and theories developed in marketing and other behavioral sciences to better predict how consumers will respond to different marketing activities.

CBL 5699 | SALES AND MARKETING IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY

Through this course, students will acquire necessary skills to be competitive in the global economy. Students will examine trends and developments in the global economy and their impact on sales and marketing strategies and learn how to design and implement effective marketing strategies tailored to different regions and cultures. This course will cover best practices for recruiting, training, motivating, and leading sales teams across various countries and cultural backgrounds. Students will also gain insights into the legal and regulatory frameworks that impact sales and marketing activities in different countries. Throughout the course, students will analyze real-world case studies of successful and unsuccessful global sales and marketing initiatives. By examining practical scenarios, students will gain valuable problem-solving skills and critical thinking abilities.

CBL 5699 | AI ISSUES IN DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (online, synchronous)

This course explores the effective use of Artificial Intelligence in content creation and marketing. Students explore the evolution of AI technologies, with a focus on the transformative impact of Generative AI on content development, consumer analysis, and marketing strategies. The course examines the application of tools like ChatGPT, DALL-E, Canva, and Sora in marketing campaigns, as well as the use of AI-powered insights for consumer targeting. Ethical considerations surrounding AI adoption are critically assessed.

CBL 5710 | CHANGE MANAGEMENT

An organization's ability to anticipate, plan for, manage, and navigate through mergers, acquisitions, downsizings and leadership changes and emerge stronger afterward is an important measure of the effectiveness of its leaders. Strategic communication plays a critical role in the

change-management process, and students will examine best practices in organizational leadership and change management. Strategic communicators also need to understand organizations' business goals, the motivations of their leaders, and the framework in which business decisions are made.

CBL 5820 | LEADING MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

This course provides an opportunity to explore the scientific discipline of group and team dynamics. Students will gain an intellectual and personal understanding of fundamental differences between teams and groups, including team processes, development, interaction, and how one's interpersonal style impacts both personal and professional dynamics in a team. Topics of study include effective formation and development, cohesion, structure, interpersonal influence and power, leadership, performance, decision-making, and inter and intra team conflict. Course emphasis will focus on how teams can be created effectively and deliver value added results.

PRACTICUMS

CBL 5011: INTERNSHIP (1 credits)

This course enables students to develop practical skills, relate theory to practice and to gain a sound base of industrial experience by working – on a paid or voluntary basis – for a range of organizations. In addition, this course seeks to develop leadership skills to assist students' career trajectories. Students coordinate their own internship site, which must be approved by the internship instructor. Students will occasionally meet as a class and complete assignments related to leadership. Students work a minimum of 45 hours for this practicum. Can be repeated for credit.

CBL 5013: INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT (1 credit)

Instructional assistants work with individual faculty members in classrooms, studio, or labs. Students coordinate their own instructional assistantship, which must be approved by the course instructor. Students work a minimum of 45 hours for this practicum. Students will occasionally meet as a class and complete assignments related to leadership. Can be repeated for credit.

CBL 5015: RESEARCH ASSISTANT (1 credit)

Research assistants work with individual faculty members on research projects. Students coordinate their own research assistantship, which must be approved by the course instructor. Students work a minimum of 45 hours for this practicum. Students will occasionally meet as a class and complete assignments related to leadership. Can be repeated for credit.

CBL 5010: ETHICAL DECISION MAKING FOR RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP (1 credit)

Through ethical analysis of case studies and current issues, this course will give students the skills they need to recognize ethical concerns for leaders in business and communications. By engaging in team-oriented discussion and debate, students will learn that successful ethical leadership requires the consideration of multiple perspectives and effective communication with stakeholders. This problem-based learning approach will empower students to address ethical challenges faced by leaders and to apply those skills in their capstone project.

CBL 5010: MEDIA TRAINING FOR THE SPOKESPERSON (1 credit) (online or F2F sections)

This course examines the methods and practices involved in being an effective spokesperson, with a particular focus on preparing for media interviews. The course will explore concepts related to effective on-camera performance during interviews. Students will identify and plan strategies to create messages that will resonate with reporters.

CBL 5010: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (1 credit)

This course prepares students for future success through developing their professional brand and documents. Content areas include networking, resumes, cover letters, interviewing tactics and communicating value to the organizations they work for.

CBL-5010: MASTERING THE CLIFTON STRENGTHS FINDER ASSESSMENT (1 credit)

This course prepares students to successfully navigate the often used Clifton Strengths Finder. Students will undergo self-assessment and strategies for future success.

CBL 5010: THE CBL BOOK CLUB: EMERGING LEADERSHIP (1 credit)

Learn about leadership from proven leaders under the guidance of the writer who ghostwrote, The Buying Brain: Secrets for Selling to the Subconscious Mind, an award-winning publication that delivered a 40% increase in name recognition and mindshares. In this "book club" you will read, discuss, and present about leadership lessons.

CBL 5010: RISK MANAGEMENT (1 credit) (online)

Leadership is about understanding risk and planning accordingly. This course explores different aspects of organizational risks and ways to successfully navigate inherently risky environments.

CBL 5010: PROJECT MANAGEMENT (1 credit) (online, asynchronous)

Using a project team approach, students are exposed to the fundamentals of project planning, scheduling and budgeting. Both project leaders and team members learn approaches used in organizing efforts and communicating goals while managing risks, maintaining project task focus, and avoiding wasteful activities.

CBL 5010: PEP TALKS: A PRACTICUM FOR POWERFUL PRESENTATIONS (1 credit) (online, synchronous)

You'll develop a core life skill, master stage fright, and strengthen your personal performance. Learn to provide positive feedback, communicate clearly, and engage your audience. As you hone your communication skills, you become a stronger leader and inspire success in others.

CBL 5010: BRAND MANAGEMENT (1 credit)

Social media is a powerful force in the communication realm, for positive and negative ends. Companies working to manage the perception of their brands on social media have to balance cooperative and supportive employee policies with control of brand images and messages. Using real world examples, this workshop will explore the creation and implementation of policies intended to help companies ensure their employees and supporters are well prepared to use social media to be "ambassadors" for their brand. Students will write their own policy for a brand of their choice that could be implemented in a real-world situation.

CBL 5010: TRUST FACTOR: GETTING MORE OUT OF PEOPLE AND BRANDS (1 credit)

This class emphasizes the importance of trust in leadership. Trust is a cornerstone of leadership and motivating others in the organization.

CBL 5005: PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY (1 credit)

The goal of this course is for students to develop specific knowledge and skills that professionals in the PR field use. Students must have completed the undergraduate PR agency course. (Reserved for students who completed the agency as undergrads--or with permission of the instructor.)

CBL 5010: PODCASTING WORKSHOP (1 credit) (online or F2F sections)

Podcasts are an increasingly vital way to tell an individual's or organization's story and to communicate a brand. In this seven-session workshop, you will be guided by an instructor with years of experience in digital storytelling and audio production. After discussions about storytelling and the principles of podcasting, and several hands-on tutorials, you will work to find an angle for your podcast and enhance your performance skills to deliver it. By the end of the workshop, you will produce a professional podcast segment ready for an audience.

CBL-5010: CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL BRANDING (1 credit) (online)

Students will use advanced professional writing and design techniques and technologies to craft a creative and professional digital presence for use in employment searches, business and organization start-ups, and professional growth. Students will utilize various digital tools and social media platforms and create professional artifacts for use in their branding portfolio. These artifacts, among others, will include a professional logo, letterhead and business cards, personal or business/organization website, and a professional web presence using social media technologies.

CBL 5010: THE STORY OF LEADERSHIP: A MASTER CLASS (1 credit) (online, synchronous)

"Story" is the hidden language of the imagination. Those who can master both the science and art of story will become the next generation of masterful leaders that the world desperately needs. In this workshop, you will learn the 7 Powers of Story and how to effectively draw upon these powers to become a formidable, persuasive leader who can effectively engage communities to embrace the changes we need to make to create a more sustainable world. There will be short lectures, engaging exercises, opportunities to explore each power of story through presentations, and interactive learning and sharing within smaller groups (do not take this workshop if you have or are taking the Storytelling and Leadership elective).

CBL 5010: HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (1 credit) (online, asynchronous)

This course helps students transition from being a full-time student to full-time professional. Students will integrate and apply classroom learning with future career goals. Students will examine State and Federal labor law and how such laws apply to the rights and responsibilities of both employees and employers. Using real life scenarios, students will learn appropriate strategies in how to handle common employee/employer conflicts.

CBL 5010: LEADERSHIP AND THE MOVIES (1 credit)

Movies and pop culture can teach us a lot about leadership if we pay attention to it. This course uses movies to understand different leadership styles, challenges and how to navigate different situations.