

# **SMC** **Strategic** **Communications** **Plan**

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# Table of Contents

Executive Summary	03
Mission and Vision	04
Background Research	05
Potential Publics	12
Goal and Objectives	17
Strategies and Tactics	22
Evaluation	36
Budget & Timeline	38
Appendix	39

# Executive Summary

The School of Mass Communication (SMC) combines the strengths of the Media Production and Design, Strategic Communication, Film, and Journalism programs to expose students to a broad spectrum of media studies and prepare them to be leaders in their fields after graduation. It's staffed by faculty who possess real-world, first-hand experiences and knowledge, who empower students with skills and knowledge to advance their careers. Faculty and students alike come from diverse backgrounds. This diversity enriches the learning environment, as it brings a variety of perspectives and expertise into the school.

However, confidence in higher education is declining in the U.S., with perceptions of political bias and irrelevant skills. These sentiments are among several challenges that have negatively affected student enrollment in the SMC graduate program.

This campaign was written to help the SMC increase student enrollment in its graduate program. The solution consists of two solutions. The first solution is to build its online presence and relationships, thus forming a connection with the student community and organizations that partner with SMC. The second solution is to increase outreach efforts to enroll potential students into the SMC graduate program.

The SMC boasts flexible degree plans and affordability. They've graduated thousands of students who have maintained connections with the school and established professional internships and networking opportunities for its future graduating class.

# Mission and Values



## MISSION

Its mission is to develop students' professional media skills and prepare them to be leaders in their field after graduation. It strives to instill in students a high degree of social responsibility, career-related professionalism, and a lifelong desire to learn through post-graduate education and experience.



## VALUES

The SMC is dedicated to improving students' lives and enhancing its communities.

# Background Research

## Case Description

The SMC is nestled in the heart of Little Rock as part of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The University of Arkansas at Little Rock, established in 1927 ([UALR](#)), sought to enhance its community by providing central Arkansans with quality higher education to fulfill the job opportunities in the area. With over 200,000 residents and an economy of over 14,000 businesses, Little Rock is the prime location for emerging opportunities ([data.littlerock.gov](http://data.littlerock.gov)).

Within Little Rock, 44 percent of the population obtained at least a Bachelor's degree ([U.S. Census](#)). Central Arkansas houses key media organizations such as the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the Arkansas Times, KATV, KARK, and Arkansas PBS, among the major finance corporations, hospitals, research labs, and agricultural offices.

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette is the leading newspaper in Arkansas, with the Arkansas Times trailing second. Central Arkansas ranks 60 out of 210 DMAs in the U.S., servicing a media market with a population of 1.3 million viewers ([Katz Radio Group](#)). Arkansas television news stations are among the best in the nation, winning highly coveted broadcasting awards.

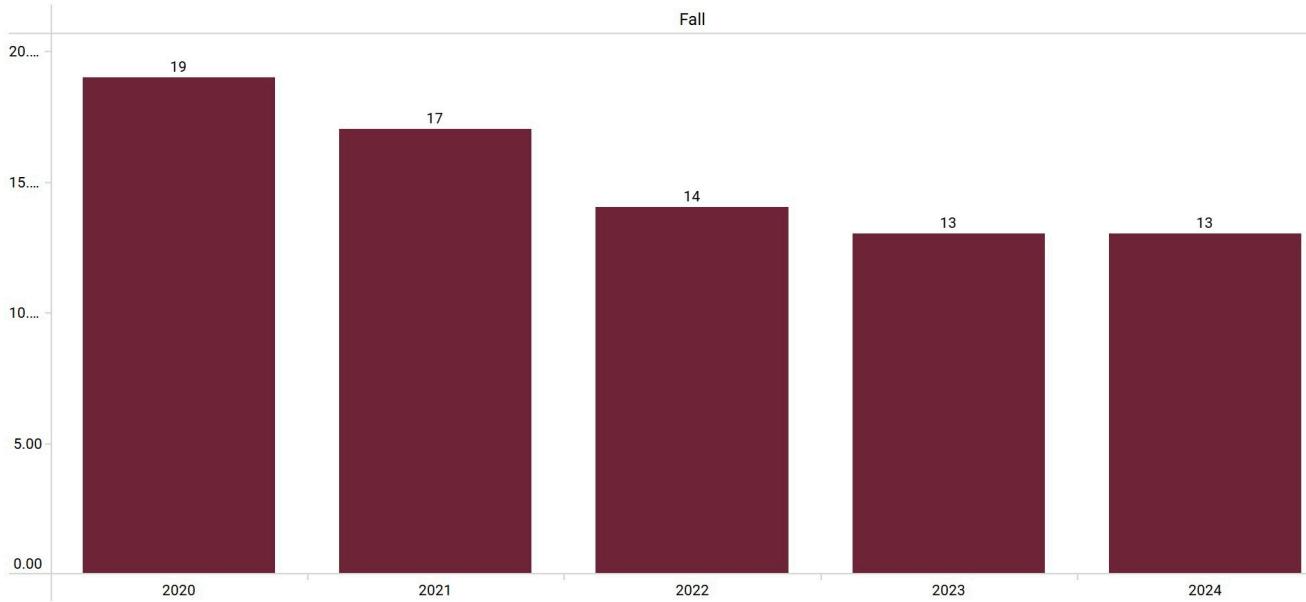
The SMC's value lies in its location – the

center of commerce, media, and education for the state. It gives students unique opportunities, unlike any other university in Arkansas. Its graduates have advanced in rewarding careers in various industries, serving as leaders in their fields in Arkansas and the nation.

The SMC provides equipment rentals and recording rooms for students to build real-world application skills relevant to their careers, including its own public radio station and news forum for students to partake in. Media organizations located in central Arkansas, including alumni, partner with the SMC to bring promising internships and networking opportunities to its students.

The SMC faculty is highly involved with the department. According to SMC students, their teachers often inform them of scholarship opportunities and facility resources/equipment through email and/or in-person conversation. However, a decline in student enrollment is a concern. Data from [UALR's website](#) reveals little enrollment growth over the past few years in the SMC graduate program. One challenge that has negatively impacted enrollment is the limited faculty.

According to Dr. Timothy Edwards, SMC graduate coordinator, the faculty is limited, and the administration lacks



assistance. This has negatively impacted marketing efforts. For example, the SMC's social media accounts are underutilized and outdated, but could be used to engage with students within UALR and other institutions. Dr. Edwards noted that students had managed the SMC social media accounts in the past, but that practice has dwindled. Their last Facebook post was in 2022, and their latest YouTube video was posted a year ago. Instead, strategic initiatives have been limited to email notices, face-to-face communication, and occasional promotional events, such as a graduate promotional booth during basketball season.

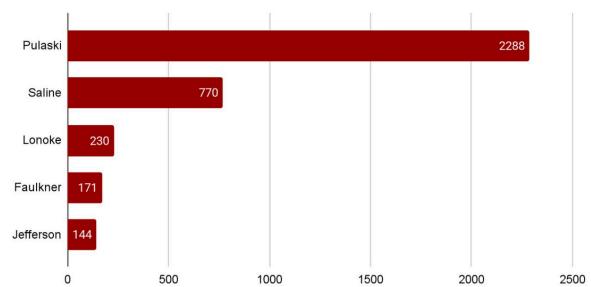
Other factors threatening SMC enrollment efforts include legislation and public sentiments towards higher education. To overcome these barriers, the SMC must expand awareness of its graduate program and its opportunities so it can increase student enrollment.

## Environmental Scan

Several competing ideals and institutions

affect the SMC's recruitment agenda. Confidence in higher education is declining in the U.S., with perceptions of political bias and irrelevant skills. A [Gallup study](#) shows a sharp ideological divide, with only 20 percent of conservative Republicans viewing colleges positively, compared to 53 percent of moderate and liberal Republicans. While Arkansas leans conservative, Pulaski County is moderately liberal, with 60 percent voting Democrat. This may imply that the UALR undergraduates who reside in Pulaski County (roughly 90 percent, as illustrated in the chart) may also view higher education positively.

UA Little Rock Enrollment Profile by County (Fall 2024)



Another competitor is the public's perception of attending college, which has changed in the last two decades.

According to the [Pew Research Center \(2024\)](#), 49 percent of U.S. adults believe having a four-year college degree is not beneficial for obtaining a well-paying job. This change in perception is influenced by the rising cost of tuition and the inaccessibility of financial aid.

## Case Description

Legislation poses threats to SMC. Arkansas lawmakers introduced a bill for Higher Education Overhaul (ACCESS), affecting funding, admissions, and scholarships ([Arkadelphian.com](#)).

This bill complicates access to higher education and pressures professors to comply with anti-diversity measures, risking tenure loss and exacerbating faculty shortages. [Senate Bill 3](#), prohibiting race-based discrimination, threatens scholarships and programs for students of color, potentially reducing funding and student numbers.

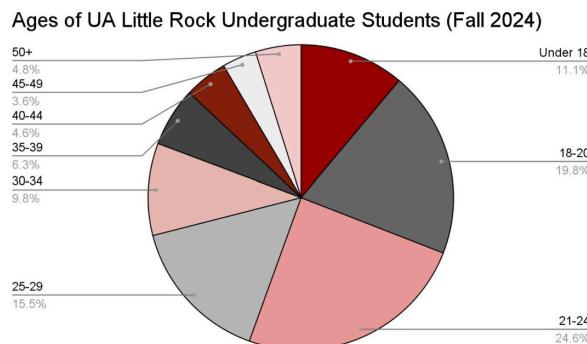
This is a threat to SMC because if these scholarships or programs are shut down, there will not be as much funding for students, and it could decrease the number of students able to complete their higher education due to a lack of funding.

Beyond politics, SMC faces threats from declining graduate enrollment at UALR, linked to fewer international students. Uncertainty around [F-1 visas](#) may prolong this issue.

Since SMC seeks to expand its outreach to potential students, it's important to

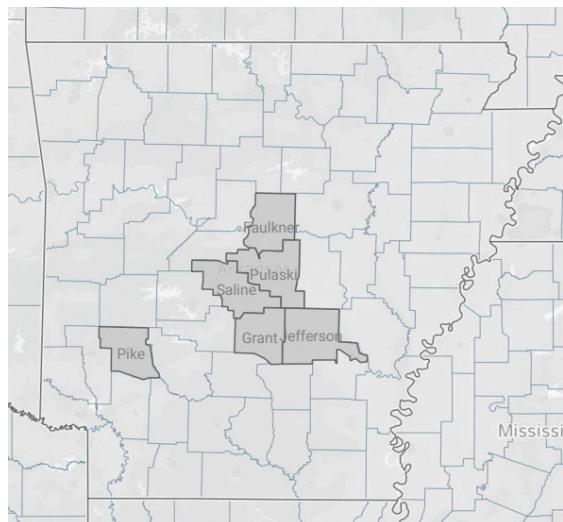
understand the student landscape in Arkansas. According to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education, the total unduplicated headcount for the fall 2022 term in all Arkansas higher education sectors, including universities, was 147,740 students.

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported the college enrollment rate for 18 to 24-year-olds in Arkansas was 41.9 percent in 2023. This reflects the typical age group enrolled in UALR undergraduate and graduate programs, as shown in the chart below.



Other undergraduate student factors include:

- Most students who enroll in the SMC graduate program reside in central Arkansas.



- Only 38 percent of bachelor's degree holders say college was extremely useful in helping them develop specific skills and knowledge that could be used in the workplace ([The Pew Research Center](#)). Results from a study by the [Center for Graduate Career Success](#) found that 50 percent of graduate students lack foundational knowledge about the professional job search, and 61 percent of individuals with master's degrees are underemployed two years after graduation.
- Research shows that students look to their departments for professional development before seeking other on-campus resources. "When alumni struggle, they blame their institution and doubt the value of their degrees. And they are doing so in public forums: surveys, news articles, and social media posts," Dr. L. Maren Wood, founder of the Center for Graduate Career Success.
- In an article by [NPR \(2024\)](#), the current and emerging generations are leaning more towards trade schools and blue-collar jobs as opposed to careers that require bachelor's degrees or higher.
- Younger generations (Gen Z and Millennials) are looking for faster pathways to employment. A growing number of individuals are also seeking autonomy in employment: choosing to start their own businesses rather than work for someone else.
- According to an article by [Forbes](#) magazine, 50 percent of Gen Z desire to become influencers and would leave their current jobs if they could earn a sustainable income as full-time content creators. The Bureau of Labor Statistics highlights that the "Arts,

Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations" category, including Influencer, experienced a growth rate of 13 percent in 2023, far outpacing traditional job sectors.

- While nearly half of Americans do not believe in obtaining a four-year degree, even fewer see the benefits of pursuing an advanced degree. However, of those who have a postgraduate degree, 72 percent say the degree was relevant and extremely useful in their careers ([Pew Research Center, 2024](#)).

The SMC offers multiple scholarships for its graduate and undergraduate programs that could benefit students who are reluctant to enroll in graduate school because of cost.

Its Early Entry Program allows undergraduates to take graduate coursework, enabling them to complete their graduate degree sooner than the traditional path. Furthermore, SMC offers graduate assistantships that include a partial or full tuition waiver and a stipend. For students who are concerned about relevant skills, SMC provides hands-on experience and internships with partnered organizations.

Many of these partnerships are local to the Little Rock area, making it convenient for students to take full advantage of these opportunities. The close proximity allows for easy access to internships, events, and other activities, which fosters a strong sense of community and provides students with the chance to engage with the industry on a local level. These collaborations benefit students and strengthen the relationship between the

university and the local media sector, creating a vibrant and mutually beneficial ecosystem for growth and innovation.

Organizations like the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and Cumulus Media are prime examples of local industry leaders that offer students invaluable hands-on experience. Through internships and real-world opportunities, these companies help students deepen their understanding of the media landscape and stay abreast of evolving trends within the field.

The internship programs provided by these organizations are especially appealing to SMC students, as they offer direct exposure to high-profile companies that are recognized within the industry. These experiences help students hone their practical skills and enhance their resumes, which will be essential as they transition from college into the workforce.

Partnering with well-known companies like the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Cumulus Media, and Def Jam Recordings not only provides students with an impressive portfolio but also gives them a competitive edge when seeking employment post-graduation. Additionally, these organizations are instrumental in offering valuable networking opportunities. Students have the chance to connect with influential professionals in the media world, building relationships that could prove pivotal in their career development.

The ability to network with individuals who have established themselves within the industry is one of the key benefits of these partnerships, as it opens doors to future collaborations, job offers, and



mentorships. These connections can help students get their foot in the door and propel their careers forward, ensuring they are well-prepared for success in the competitive media landscape.

The School of Mass Communication has produced many notable alumni who serve as leaders in their fields in Arkansas and across the nation, including:

- Diane Jarrett – Director of Education/Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- Suzi Parker – Author, national freelance journalist
- Rachel Selby – Public Affairs Specialist, U.S. Army Pine Bluff Arsenal
- Mary Hightower – Director of Communication Services, Division of Agriculture, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension
- Steve Eddington – Vice President of Public Relations, Arkansas Farm Bureau

According to the SMC graduate coordinator, most students who enroll in the SMC graduate program come from other UALR undergraduate programs, other universities, UALR online programs, or are working professionals seeking to advance their careers. Below is a brief

summary of the recommended groups that should provide positive returns if they are targeted as students for the SMC graduate program.

SMC undergraduates have direct access to SMC benefits to pursue an advanced degree, especially through the Early Entry program. This group wants a degree that enhances their skills, but isn't interested in an advanced degree if it doesn't provide an immediate return on investment. Many SMC undergraduates feel that their bachelor's degree is enough.

The next group is UALR online undergraduates. According to the Internet and Higher Education, this group seeks flexible learning options and practical skills relevant to the job market. This can be a good targeting strategy for the SMC graduate program because it aims to develop students' critical thinking and communication skills, which are among the top requirements for higher-paying jobs.

The next group is the UALR undergraduates in other programs. There is great potential with this public because they represent a large, accessible pool: 65 percent of the UALR student population. This group also includes a subgroup, undergraduates aged 21 to 34, because this age range makes up over half the UALR undergraduate population. A 2024 survey from the [Pew Research Center](#) found that younger adults (ages 18 to 29) and those with more formal education are more likely than older adults and those with less education to view educational institutions positively.

The next group is undergraduate students

at other institutions, ages 21 to 24. The potential is great because few universities in Arkansas offer a master's degree in mass communication. Plus, the SMC's prime location connects students to a thriving cultural community and career opportunities with local businesses. According to [stjohns.edu](#), one of the top five reasons why students transfer from one university to another is to pursue a degree that will advance their career and for a change of scenery. Students want to feel connected to the campus community.

The next group is partnered organizations. There is great potential with this group because existing organizations that partner with the SMC could play a crucial role in enhancing the local media industry, providing students with hands-on experiences that prepare them for successful careers and contribute to the economic growth of Central Arkansas. Furthermore, many people who pursue a master's degree are professionals seeking to enhance their skills for an advanced career. Regular communication with partnered organizations can both increase engagement with the students in the other groups and encourage enrollment among individuals in the partnered organizations.



## SWOT Analysis

The background research identifies several areas in which the SMC graduate program has the potential to grow enrollment. The research also indicates areas that may make growth difficult if not addressed. The strengths and weaknesses listed below represent the SMC graduate program's current situation, and the opportunities and threats show positive and negative research findings for moving forward.

### STRENGTHS

- Early entry for undergraduate UALR students
- Fully online degree option
- Over 20 scholarships awarded to undergraduate and graduate students
- Offers 5 different minors to study while obtaining a Master's degree

### WEAKNESSES

- Professors and staff are limited
- Outdated social media and webpage
- Decline in student enrollment

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Updated and increased social media presence can lead more students to discover the SMC
- The hands-on learning offered can appeal to students wanting real-world experience

### THREATS

- Other Mass Communication programs
- Few communication channels (word-of-mouth, school emails)
- No reputation

# Potential Publics

## SMC Undergraduates

According to the UALR website, there were eighty-two undergraduate students in SMC as of fall 2024. Their general motivation for pursuing a degree is to enhance their skills, increase job opportunities, and give back to their community, according to the NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

They have direct access to hands-on learning experiences through SMC's television studio, radio stations, media labs, and student organizations. However, not all undergraduate students fully utilize these resources, nor do they always recognize the benefits of forming a long-term relationship with SMC beyond graduation. Many report a positive relationship with SMC. However, limited faculty has prevented additional efforts that could strengthen SMC's relationship with students through its social media, website, or sponsored organizations such as the National Journalism Honor Society.

Over half the students in this group are 34 or younger, and 66 percent are between the ages of 18 to 24. Therefore, an important subgroup to target within this public is ages 21 to 24. Interviews with SMC students reveal they prefer email to communicate coursework and important UALR messages, but digital platforms (i.e., Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok) for promotional events and opportunities.

According to NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, most students work full or part-time and are interested in financial security. They want to be able to afford college. An article by the Hetchinger Report revealed that graduate enrollment rates have dropped from 8.4 percent to 6.5 percent over the last ten years, based on research from the education research and advisory firm Eduventures. One reason is that a strong labor market has many people staying in their jobs instead of furthering their education. Another reason is a growing interest in lower-priced, shorter-term certificates and other non-degree offerings. Studies from the Pew Research Center show that the number one reason students don't pursue advanced degrees is that they cannot afford it, and/or don't want to accrue student loans.

While ninety percent of students who are studying toward or just got bachelor's degrees say they are interested in graduate school, more than half consider the return on investment an important part of their decision, a survey by Spark451 found. According to SMC's graduate coordinator,

**"Most SMC undergraduate students do not want an advanced degree because many don't see the value in it and think it is too difficult to attain from an academic perspective as well. Most are satisfied with just getting a bachelor's degree."**

## Current relationship

The current relationship is generally positive. Students report that SMC does a great job informing them of scholarship opportunities and facility resources and equipment. However, limited faculty has hindered additional efforts that could strengthen SMC's relationship with students, such as networking opportunities with Alumni and partnered organizations.

## Influentials

The influentials are peers, advisors, teachers, employers, and parents.

### Self-interests

Self-interests include career success, financial increase, and making a difference in their community.

### Communication methods

Preferred communication methods include email, social media, in-person, and text.

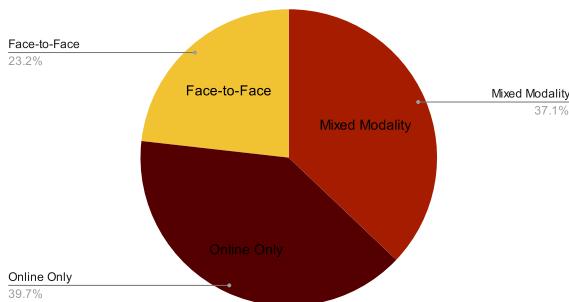
## UALR online undergraduates

According to the UALR Office of Institutional Research and Analytics,

roughly 40 percent of UALR undergraduates are enrolled in an online-only program during Fall 2024. 31 percent of those in the College of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, and Education are online-only. Many students in this group are working professionals, career changers, or individuals seeking advanced education while balancing jobs and family responsibilities. These students often complete their coursework remotely and rarely engage with the broader SMC community beyond their immediate academic requirements.

The Internet and Higher Education state that online undergraduates may be

Fall 2024 Delivery Method



motivated by career advancement, flexible learning opportunities, and acquiring practical skills relevant to the job market. Work-life balance, personal development, and the desire for a supportive and engaging learning community can also be motivating factors. Educause research shows that online undergraduates often rely on digital communication tools such as email, messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Slack, Messenger), and social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) for both academic and personal communication. Video conferencing tools like Zoom or Microsoft Teams are commonly used for virtual classes and meetings.

The relationship between this group and SMC varies based on involvement, accessibility, and awareness of opportunities. According to the UALR online program, online undergraduates hear of graduate programs through self-motivation, hearing of the program through peers, advisors, promotional material posted via the web, and Grad Fest (an event during which expecting graduates can purchase their cap and gown, join the UALR alumni, and hear of graduate program opportunities).

Most members in this group remain disconnected from SMC due to a lack of

awareness or access to engagement opportunities.

Some have expressed feeling isolated from the program because they do not physically interact with faculty or peers. Without structured mentorship or networking programs, these students miss out on valuable career-building experiences available to on-campus students (Graduate Education Report, 2023). Universities that actively integrate online students into campus activities see a 30 percent increase in student satisfaction and program retention (Inside Higher Ed, 2024).

### **Current relationship**

The current relationship varies from initial contact with their academic advisor to exposure from friends, family, co-workers, and the UALR website.

### **Influentials**

The influentials are academic advisors, employers/co-workers, teachers, student organizations, and parents.

### **Self-interests**

Self-interests include career success, financial increase, and making a difference in their community.

### **Communication methods**

Preferred communication methods include email, social media, and the UALR website.

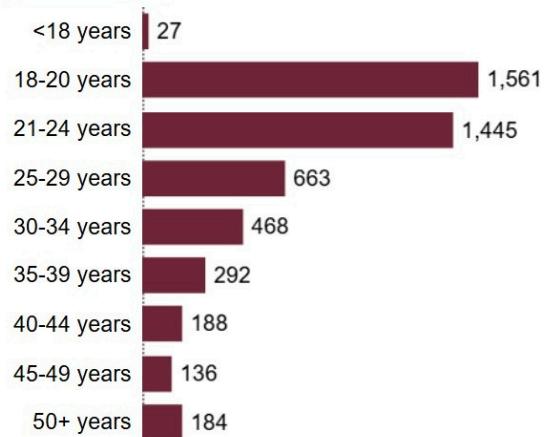
### **UALR undergraduates in other programs**

This group represents 65 percent of the UALR student population. They appreciate face-to-face communication when discussing academic information because there's an immediate opportunity to ask

for clarity. They are interested in personal growth, development for more job opportunities, and gaining a sense of purpose, according to [NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education](#).

An important subgroup to target in this public is undergraduates aged 21 to 34. Almost half the UALR undergraduate population is between 18 and 24 years old. 24 percent are between the ages of 25 and 34. It's also important to note that women make up roughly 60 percent of UALR undergraduates. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, young women (18 to 24 years old) are more likely to enroll in college than young men because many young men don't think more education is needed for the job they want or because they're busy supporting their family.

### **Age Groups**



This subgroup embraces digital media and new technology. A survey by [Statista](#), a global data and business intelligence platform, found that social media was by far the most popular news platform among 18 to 34-year-olds in the United States.

Interviews with students from this subgroup reveal that they consider "hands-on opportunities" one of the most

significant factors in their graduate school decision-making process. Their report aligns with a survey conducted by [Spark451](#), a marketing firm, that found most young undergraduate students also consider research, internships, fellowships, and “return on investment” significant factors when considering graduate school.

### **Current relationship**

The current relationship varies from initial contact by their academic advisor to exposure from friends enrolled in a mass communication program, to full enrollment in a mass communication course or major. Reports from non-mass communication undergraduates reveal a pattern that suggests many undergraduate students are unaware of the SMC’s presence at UALR.

### **Influentials**

The influentials are peers, advisors, teachers, student organizations, and parents.

### **Self-interests**

Self-interests include career success, financial increase, and making a difference in their community.

### **Communication methods**

Preferred communication methods include email, social media, and A-frame signs.

### **Undergraduate Students at Other Institutions, ages 21 to 24**

This group represents 65 percent of the UALR student population. They appreciate face-to-face communication when discussing academic information because there’s an immediate opportunity to ask

for clarity. They are interested in personal growth, development for more job opportunities, and gaining a sense of purpose, according to [NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education](#).

The challenge is that there may not be enough of a reputation for the SMC program to have any impact on students within other institutions. For every school, there are certain faculty members, staff, or advisors who could help carry out the message about the SMC graduate program at UALR or block it for students. Parents of students are also influential, whether due to financial values or beliefs about the program. Bosses or coworkers could also influence this group. Some businesses offer to reimburse workers who choose to attend a graduate program in their profession.

SMC records show that, as of 2024, almost a third of the SMC graduates are international students. According to SMC, word of mouth and program reputation are how international students learn about its graduate program. International students in the SMC graduate program reported they are motivated to pursue an SMC graduate degree because of their passion for journalism and desire to “understand the complexities of global communication.” Other students from this public transfer from Arkansas Tech University, University of Central Arkansas, Henderson State University, and Quachita Baptist University.

This group appreciates social media for its easy access to entertainment and information-gathering. Though they embrace technology, they prefer direct personal communication, especially with

their influentials, which allows them "to note and evaluate nonverbal cues such as body language and facial expressions," according to Forbes' evaluation of the GenZ generation.

They are strongly committed to social justice causes, value transparency, and insist on maintaining a healthy work/life balance. Pursuing a different degree that will advance their career is one of the most common reasons why students in this group transfer colleges. They desire connection and to feel like part of a community.

### **Current relationship**

The current relationship varies from self-initiated contact with the UALR website to word of mouth from family and friends, to full enrollment in a mass communication course or major at UALR. Interviews with students from other institutions reveal that most are unaware of the SMC graduate program.

### **Influentials**

The influentials are academic advisors, teachers, friends & family, and social media.

### **Self-interests**

Self-interests include career success, financial increase, and joining a community better fit to help them thrive both socially and academically.

### **Communication methods**

Preferred communication methods include social media and local news.

### **Partnered Organizations**

Organizations partnering with the SMC vary in size and their level of involvement.

Organizations range from the UALR Alumni Association, which has 62,614 living alumni members dedicated to supporting graduates and the university, to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, a local newspaper with 450 employees, to several local industries that offer students invaluable hands-on experience, internships, and real-world opportunities. These organizations want to give back to their local community by helping students at UALR advance their education and careers.

A majority of these organizations are connected through their relationships with employees who are UALR graduates turned Alumni members. They prefer to receive information about the university and the SMC via email. However, the older alumni wished the postal service were used more effectively because they are not as familiar with technology as the younger alumni.

Through informal interviews, some alumni reported they would like to see improvements in the SMC in internship opportunities and better engagement and communication with alumni. They seemed to have nearly forgotten about SMC due to a lack of engagement. Many did not know that the SMC now offers a graduate program and expressed a desire to see more events catered towards current students and alumni, like networking events, panel discussions, happy hours, etc.

### **Current relationship**

After initial contact with the school, not much of a relationship exists.

**Influentials**

The influentials are the leadership at the organization, employees, UALR alumni, and other organizations.

business/organization success and helping their community.

**Self-interests**

Self-interests include

**Communication methods**

Preferred communication methods include email, social media, and newsletter.

# Goal & Objectives

## The Goal

The School of Mass Communication's (SMC) goal is to reach potential students and encourage enrollment in their graduate program through strategic communication.

## Primary Messages

"Invest in your future with an SMC graduate degree and gain the competitive edge you need for a rewarding career, enhanced skills, and the ability to create positive change."

"Flexible, affordable, and career-focused; SMC's online graduate program delivers the practical skills and supportive learning environment you need to advance your career, on your own time."

"Unlock your potential and find your purpose with the SMC graduate program, which offers a pathway to career advancement, personal growth, and the opportunity to make a difference."

"Partner with the SMC to help build a stronger community and empower the next generation of communication professionals to achieve organizational success."

"By joining our thriving community, the SMC graduate program will connect you with the skills and support you need to advance your career and boost your income."

## Secondary Messages

### SMC Undergraduates

1. Achieving an advanced degree not only increases your expertise but also builds your confidence, which studies show is closely linked to higher career advancement and earning potential (Five Reasons Why Education Helps to Advance Your Career at Any Level | Cornerstone University)
2. The SMC allows students to connect with a diverse community of peers and industry professionals, expanding their network and opening doors to new opportunities and collaborations (UALR SMC).
3. The SMC has cutting-edge facilities, expert faculty, and hands-on opportunities to help graduate students build their portfolio (SMC website).
4. 54% of Americans aged 18 to 60 would leave their current jobs if they could earn a sustainable income as full-time content creators. An article by Forbes, Jessica Maddox, an assistant professor in the Department of Journalism and Creative Media at the University of Alabama, referred to social media as a legitimate career path for hopeful influencers "We would be remiss if we did not treat [aspects of the influencer industry] as a skill our students need going out into the world."
5. The Bureau of Labor Statistics highlights that the "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations" category, including Influencer, experienced a growth rate of 13% in 2023, far outpacing traditional job sectors.
6. While ninety percent of students who are studying toward or just got bachelor's degrees say they are interested in graduate school, more than half consider the return on investment an important part of their decision, a survey by Spark451 found.
7. SMC provides scholarships and the Early Entry program to help students complete their master's degree faster and with little to no debt. According to NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, most students are interested in financial security. They want to be able to afford college. An article by the Hetchinger Report revealed that graduate enrollment rates have dropped from 8.4 percent to 6.5 percent over the last ten years, based on research from the education research and advisory firm Eduventures. One reason is that a strong labor market has many people staying in their jobs instead of furthering their education.
8. Surveys from the NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education found that students are interested in personal growth and development for more job opportunities and to gain a sense of purpose.
9. Many people have monetized online content; a phenomenon known as the creator economy, epitomized in the Forbes article, Understanding The Rise Of The Creator Economy. The SMC graduate programs equip students with both advanced theoretical knowledge and practical skills directly applicable to their workplace, including content creation.
10. Employees with a master's degree earn, on average, 20% more than those with a bachelor's degree; a master's degree can help show employers that graduates have the dedication, interest, and work ethic to excel in the role. (The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

### **UALR Online Undergraduates**

1. The SMC graduate program costs as little as \$335 per credit hour. That is more affordable than their top in-state competitors (A-State, UARK, and UALR).
2. The SMC graduate program prioritizes assisting students in professional experiences they can add to their portfolio (UALR) (Indeed-Work Experience and Your Career)."
3. According to an SMC professor, Byron Tate, many professionals choose to advance their education to make themselves eligible for higher positions in their careers.
4. According to Forbes, an advanced degree broadens your job market, your connections, and your skill set.
5. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 24% of communications jobs require an advanced degree.
6. The SMC provides networking opportunities and internships with local employers and internship programs, so students can gain more experience in the industry (UALR.edu/masscomm).
7. More than 85% of UALR SMC graduate students work full-time, demonstrating that the program is designed to accommodate busy, working professionals.
8. The SMC online graduate program can be completed in as little as 12 months, allowing students to quickly apply new skills to real-world careers.
9. SMC's faculty brings real-world PR, journalism, and marketing experience into the classroom—bridging academic theory with practical, applicable insights.
10. The fully online format means students can earn a degree from anywhere—no need to relocate, commute, or pause their life (educationusa.state.gov).

### **UALR Undergraduates In Other Programs**

1. Critical thinking, collaboration, and communication are the top 3 skills employers look for in job candidates (naceweb.org). According to new reports from the Strada Institute for the Future of Work and the Burning Glass Institute, over half of recent 4-year college graduates are unemployed within a year after graduation due to a lack of critical thinking and communication skills. Graduate school is a great way for students to develop these skills.
2. Some students seek an MA in a different field to pursue a more specialized area of study.  
Testimonial: "I enrolled in SMC to enhance my current skills."
3. Per SMC graduate coordinator, Dr. Timothy Edwards, most undergraduates come from other UALR programs because they want to advance their careers with a skill(s) that complements their BA.
4. Per informal interviews with UALR undergraduates, many want to pursue a degree that empowers them to make a difference in the world and increase their career opportunities.
5. According to a survey conducted by the marketing firm Spark451, most young graduates value education but will only further their degree if they believe they'll receive a return on their college investment.
6. An MA degree shows potential employers that a candidate is dedicated and has the skills needed to succeed in a competitive environment (usnews.com).
7. Per informal interviews with UALR undergraduates, many want to obtain a degree that

## GOAL & OBJECTIVES

- can better prepare them with life skills as well as work-related skills.
8. Online students have the flexibility to gain experience in the fields in which they are interested in being employed while also obtaining a higher level of education. According to usnews.com, employers value that experience and are attracted to candidates who have obtained the necessary skills in a resourceful way.
  9. Per informal interviews with UALR undergraduates, many want to stay at UALR to obtain a higher level of education due to the comfort and location of the school.
  10. Obtaining an MA is relatively inexpensive through UALR. According to ualr.edu, it is \$335.00 per credit hour. There are only 33 credit hours to complete the SMC graduate program, which brings the total to \$11,055.

### **Undergraduates From Other Institutions**

1. SMC is part of the UA Little Rock metropolitan university in the heart of Arkansas, where students from all walks of life can immerse themselves in a dynamic college experience and take advantage of opportunities both in the classroom and out (UALR).
2. One of the top five reasons why students transfer from one university to another (stjohns.edu) is to pursue a degree that will advance their career and for a change of scenery. Students want to feel connected to the campus community.
3. Many young undergraduates want a college experience that will prepare them for the workplace. According to the Pew Research Center, "Younger college graduates were less likely than older ones to see value in their college education. For example, only a third of college graduates younger than 50 said their college experience was extremely useful in helping them develop skills and knowledge that could be used in the workplace."
4. According to a survey conducted by the marketing firm Spark451, most young graduates value education but will only further their degree if they believe they'll receive a return on their college investment.
5. Testimonial from international student, "As an international student from a mass communication background, I am highly motivated to pursue a master's degree in the USA. My passion for understanding the complexities of global communication and the desire to contribute to the field's evolution have driven me to seek advanced education. The opportunity to learn from renowned faculty, engage with diverse perspectives, and gain practical experience in a dynamic environment like the USA is incredibly exciting."
6. Networking opportunities with other individuals who are experienced in the field can help open doors to advanced career opportunities (Why Networking is Important: Harvard Business).
7. "Transfer students may move to be closer to family, find better opportunities, attend school in a new environment, or leave an area they do not prefer. Some may transfer to a school in a new location simply to add variety to life or due to some life circumstance like marriage or a job change." (coursera.org).
8. The Mass Media industry is ever evolving, so there is always more to learn (TMT Insights).
9. Some people switch schools for financial reasons. Compared to other colleges, obtaining an MA is relatively inexpensive through UALR. According to the school's website, [www.ualr.edu](http://www.ualr.edu), obtaining the degree costs \$335.00 per credit hour. There are only 33 credit

## GOAL & OBJECTIVES

- hours to complete the SMC graduate program, which brings the total to \$11,055.
10. A Master's degree can push people forward in the competitive job market according to an article from Forbes.

### Partnered Organizations

1. "Alumni often serve as powerful ambassadors for their institution's brand and speak glowingly of their college years...Continuing a custom experience improves engagement with the institution: 85 percent of alumni agree they would donate more often if they knew their money was funding organizations or initiatives with which they had been involved as a student" ([educause.edu](http://educause.edu)).
2. Partnerships build stronger communities. Research shows that students look to their departments for professional development before seeking other on-campus resources, "when alumni struggle, they blame their institution and doubt the value of their degrees. And they are doing so in public forums: surveys, news articles, and social media posts," Dr. L. Maren Wood, founder of the Center for Graduate Career Success.
3. Little Rock's economy comprises over 14,000 businesses, creating a constant demand for skilled communication professionals. Partnering with the SMC is an investment in the future of our community.
4. Thousands of SMC alumni have remained connected to the SMC and are now working in Central Arkansas, demonstrating the SMC's long-term impact on the community (SMC website).
5. "SMC faculty bring real-world experience to the classroom, like Professor Tate's extensive background in editing and publishing, ensuring students gain practical skills and industry insights." - SMC graduate student testimonial
6. Partnerships with leading media organizations like the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Arkansas Times, KATV, KARK, and Arkansas PBS, along with connections to our 62,614 living alumni, provide SMC students with invaluable internship and networking opportunities (SMC internships).
7. Organizations like the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and Cumulus Media are prime examples of local industry leaders that offer students invaluable hands-on experience. Through internships and real-world opportunities, these companies help students deepen their understanding of the media landscape and stay abreast of evolving trends within the field (SMC internships).
8. Partnerships allow students to grow their skills in an ever-evolving industry ([displayground.net](http://displayground.net)).
9. Partnerships provide knowledge that can inspire students working towards a degree (Why Institutions Need an Alumni Community).
10. The media industry does not stop growing after earning a degree. The media's rapid changes provide fresh learning opportunities for media professionals (TMT Insights).

## Objectives

**Objective 1:** Implement outreach activities with 10% of SMC undergraduate students within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 2:** Enroll 8 new SMC undergraduate students into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 3:** Increase engagement with UALR online undergraduates to 10% within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 4:** Enroll 8 new UALR online students in the graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 5:** Organize partnerships with other institutions that do not offer the SMC as a graduate program with 2 schools within 18 months.

**Objective 6:** Enroll 5 new undergraduates from other institutions into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 7:** Notify partner organizations of collaborative opportunities once a month for an academic year.

**Objective 8:** Recruit 5 new graduates from partner organizations within a year of implementing this plan.

**Objective 9:** Increase engagement with UALR undergraduates in other programs to 10% within 18 months.

**Objective 10:** Enroll 8 UALR undergraduates in other programs into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

## Strategies & Tactics

### SMC Undergraduates

Objective 1: Implement outreach activities with 10% of SMC undergraduate students within a year of implementing this plan.

## STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Objective 2: Enroll 8 new SMC undergraduate students into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

Events	
Strategy: Demonstrate through campus events that SMC undergraduates can advance their careers and make a difference in their community with a continued education in the SMC graduate program.	
Tactic 1	Host an Alumni success panel Q&A & discussing their experiences with the program.
Tactic 2	Host a senior SMC graduates' networking mixer with SMC undergraduates.
Face-to-Face Interactions	
Strategy: Demonstrate through face-to-face that SMC undergraduates can advance their careers and make a difference in their community with a continued education in the SMC graduate program.	
Tactic 1	Present to SMC undergraduate scholarship recipients of the SMC graduate opportunities during the annual scholarship banquet.
Tactic 2	Professors share SMC graduate program opportunities and benefits, such as the Early Entry Program.
Tactic 3	Present interactive workshops led by SMC grad program alumni now working in lucrative fields

<b>Digital</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through email/website that SMC undergraduates can advance their careers and make a difference in their community with a continued education in the SMC graduate program.	
Tactic 1	Email the graduate program benefits and enrollment process using compelling subject lines and headers ("Unlock Higher Earning Potential: SMC Graduate Program Success Stories," for example).
Tactic 2	Add Interactive content to the SMC webpage, such as a career pathways calculator/quiz.
<b>Printed Material</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through printed materials that SMC undergraduates can advance their careers and make a difference in their community with a continued education in the SMC graduate program.	
Tactic 1	Create a brochure spotlighting the SMC program and career success testimonials to hand out during SMC events.
Tactic 2	Business Card with SMC brand and email to share during events and in the SMC advisor/professor offices.

<b>Social Media</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through social media that SMC undergraduates can advance their careers and make a difference in their community with a continued education in the SMC graduate program.	
Tactic 1	Post videos on the SMC YouTube channel of “Behind the scenes” look at the SMC graduate program (current students participating in internships, projects, or networking events).
Tactic 2	End the academic year with a Hashtag campaign (#SMCgradsuccess, for example) - TikTok, Facebook: encourage SMC graduates and partner organizations to hashtag their SMC experience.
Tactic 3	#SMCGradSuccess Series – TikTok, Facebook, Instagram: Post short videos or graphics featuring current grad students who completed their undergrad in SMC and are now making moves (jobs, fellowships, or community work).
Tactic 4	Post Before & After Reels – TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn: “Where they started vs. where they are now” spotlighting SMC undergrads turned grad students.
Tactic 5	Alumni Mini-Docs – Instagram, TikTok: Post 60-second interviews showing how the SMC degree helped them make a difference locally.
Tactic 6	Post Templates –LinkedIn, Instagram: Encourage SMC grads to post “Why I stayed at SMC for grad school” and reshare it from the SMC page.
Tactic 7	Student-Led Lives – Host Instagram Lives with recent SMC grads talking about their transition into the graduate program and impact in their community.

**Partnered Organizations**

Objective 1: Notify partner organizations of collaborative opportunities once a month for an academic year.

Objective 2: Recruit 5 new graduates from partner organizations within a year of implementing this plan.

<b>Events</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through events that partner organizations can make a difference in their community and advance their career with the SMC.	
Tactic 1	Organize or participate in career fairs specifically targeting graduates from partner organizations.
Tactic 2	Organize joint workshops or seminars where industry professionals can share media insights and trends with students.
<b>Printed Material</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through printed materials that partner organizations can make a difference in their community and advance their career with the SMC.	
Tactic 1	Send out flyers that contain a clear description of UA Little Rock's SMC, the benefits of partnership, and specific collaboration opportunities.
Tactic 2	Send out flyers promoting partnered organizations to current students to show the strong partnership and inspire them to get involved in the SMC.

<b>Email</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through email that partner organizations can make a difference in their community and advance their career with the SMC.	
Tactic 1	Keep partners informed about the progress and impact of their involvement through newsletters or reports.
Tactic 2	Present examples of alumni who are making an impact in the community and media industry.
Tactic 3	Email testimonials of recently graduated students thanking the partnered organizations for their partnership and the influence the partnership had on their graduation and future career goals.
Tactic 4	Design visually appealing emails with engaging content, such as 30-second videos (or link to YouTube channel) or infographics, that showcase the SMC's culture, values, and career development opportunities.
Tactic 5	Design visually appealing emails with engaging content, such as 30-second videos (or link to YouTube channel) or infographics, that showcase the SMC's culture, values, and career development opportunities.

<b>Social Media</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through social media that partner organizations can make a difference in their community and advance their career with the SMC.	
Tactic 1	Highlight testimonials and success stories on Facebook of recent SMC graduates who have joined partnered organizations. Use engaging formats like video interviews or written profiles to illustrate their career growth, community impact, and personal development.
Tactic 2	Post on social media (Facebook and Instagram) appealing images/videos of different organizations that partner with SMC.
Tactic 3	Collaborate with partner organizations to create content emphasizing the benefits of becoming an SMC graduate. This could include joint webinars, blog posts, or social media takeovers where current employees share their experiences.
Tactic 4	Share on social media (Instagram and TikTok) the professional development opportunities available to SMC graduates through partner organizations, such as mentorship programs, training sessions, and career advancement paths.
Tactic 5	#PartnerSpotlight Series – Facebook, LinkedIn: Feature leaders or interns from partnered orgs explaining how SMC collaboration helped.
Tactic 6	Impact Graphics – Email, LinkedIn: Infographics showing measurable community impact through SMC + org partnerships.
Tactic 7	Co-branded Content – Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook: Collaborate with organizations to produce shared posts that promote their work and SMC.

Tactic 8	"Where Our Students Intern" Map – Facebook, Email: Share a digital graphic showcasing where SMC students are gaining real-world experience.
Tactic 9	LinkedIn Case Studies – Professional-style posts showing how organizations benefit from hiring SMC grads or hosting interns.

### UALR Online Undergraduates

Objective 1: Increase engagement with UALR online undergraduates to 10% within a year of implementing this plan.

Objective 2: Enroll 8 new UALR online students in the graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

<b>Digital</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through the email/website to UALR online undergraduates that the SMC graduate program is affordable, flexible, and career-focused.	
Tactic 1	Add a section "Why Choose SMC?" featuring affordability and flexibility to the SMC webpage.
Tactic 2	Have an option on the SMC webpage for potential students to sign up for regular email marketing.
Tactic 3	Link an email newsletter sign-up on the UALR social media accounts for potential students.
Tactic 4	Send an email about the SMC graduate program highlighting scholarships and flexibility.

<b>Events</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through virtual events to UALR online undergraduates that the SMC graduate program is affordable, flexible, and career-focused.	
Tactic 1	Host 1 Zoom Q&A sessions with current graduate students and alumni per semester.
Tactic 2	Organize virtual info sessions with program advisors.
<b>Social Media</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate through social media to UALR online undergraduates that the SMC graduate program is affordable, flexible, and career-focused.	
Tactic 1	Create monthly Instagram Reels and TikTok videos featuring student testimonials and program highlights.
Tactic 2	Launch a “Takeover Tuesday” series where current grad students run the Instagram account.
Tactic 3	Post an archive of video testimonials from current SMC students on UALR social media accounts.
Tactic 4	Post informative and creative graphics to social media (Facebook, Instagram) that detail the SMC’s attributes.
Tactic 5	“Study Anywhere” Photo Series – Instagram and Facebook: UGC campaign showing where online grad students are learning from (home, work breakroom, etc.).
Tactic 6	Financial Aid Friday – LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram: Posts or Stories every Friday highlighting scholarships, assistantships, and cost breakdowns.

Tactic 7	#SMCOnYourTime Testimonials – LinkedIn, Instagram: Post Quotes/videos from students who juggle work, family, and school with success.
Tactic 8	"Work + School = Growth" Carousel – LinkedIn: Explain how students applied what they learned to their current jobs.
Tactic 9	Instagram Polls/Quizzes – Quick interactions asking followers if they knew how flexible or affordable SMC's online grad program is.

### UALR Undergraduates In Other Programs

Objective 1: Increase engagement with UALR undergraduates in other programs to 10% within 18 months.

Objective 2: Enroll 8 UALR undergraduates in other programs into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

<b>Face-to-Face Interactions</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate to UALR undergraduates in other programs through face-to-face interactions that an SMC graduate degree will help them expand their skills, advance in their careers, and become valued members in their community.	
Tactic 1	Present to undergraduates during sporting events the benefits of joining the SMC graduate program.
<b>Printed Material</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate to UALR undergraduates in other programs through printed material that an SMC graduate degree will help them expand their skills, advance in their careers, and become valued members in their community.	
Tactic 1	Create a flyer demonstrating how the SMC can better support undergraduates in other programs and hang them around campus.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Tactic 2	Display double-sided signs across campus that highlight the benefits of joining the SMC graduate program.
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**Events**

Strategy: Demonstrate to UALR undergraduates in other programs during campus events that an SMC graduate degree will help them expand their skills, advance in their careers, and become valued members in their community.	
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Tactic 1	Collaborate with the campus GradFest event to promote the SMC to undergraduate students in other programs.
Tactic 2	Collaborate with the RSO/Department Fair event in the Student Experience Center to promote the SMC graduate program.
Tactic 3	Collaborate with the “Interview Etiquette” event to offer SMC faculty to attend for support to teach communication skills for undergraduates to gain awareness of the SMC program.
Tactic 4	Implement application days on campus to share SMC graduate program opportunities and waive application fees for enrollment into the graduate program.

**Digital**

Strategy: Demonstrate to UALR undergraduates in other programs through email/website that an SMC graduate degree will help them expand their skills, advance in their careers, and become valued members in their community.	
Tactic 1	Add SMC events to the UALR online calendar.
Tactic 2	Post testimonials on the SMC webpage of SMC alumni/graduates from other programs on how their SMC M.A. impacted their careers.

Tactic 3	Showcase a video of how the SMC graduate degree can help students stand out in a competitive job market on the SMC webpage.
<b>Social Media</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate to UALR undergraduates in other programs through social media that an SMC graduate degree will help them expand their skills, advance in their careers, and become valued members in their community.	
Tactic 1	Produce videos to post on TikTok and Instagram Reels/ Story about how the SMC has helped former students gain a competitive edge in the job market.
Tactic 2	Create Instagram and Facebook posts demonstrating how a graduate degree from SMC can empower them to make a difference in the community.
Tactic 3	Post on all SMC social media accounts the SMC upcoming events.
Tactic 4	"Why I Switched" Spotlights – YouTube, Instagram: Videos or graphics from grad students who studied another major but pivoted to SMC.
Tactic 5	Skill Crossover Infographics – LinkedIn: Show how SMC strengthens other majors (e.g., "Psych major + SMC = crisis comms pro")
Tactic 6	Career Path Tuesdays – LinkedIn: Weekly post about careers unlocked with communication expertise (even from unrelated majors).
Tactic 7	Faculty Collab Posts – YouTube: Joint content with other departments (e.g., Business + SMC = Marketing Pro)
Tactic 8	Post Instagram reels: "You Don't Have to Be a PR Major To..." – Short, funny or inspirational videos breaking the myth that SMC is only for Comm majors.

### Undergraduates From Other Institutions

Objective 1: Organize partnerships with other institutions that do not offer the SMC as a graduate program with 2 schools within 18 months.

Objective 2: Enroll 5 new undergraduates from other institutions into the SMC graduate program within a year of implementing this plan.

<b>Digital</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate to undergraduates from other institutions through digital channels that the SMC graduate community provides opportunities and support for personal and professional growth.	
Tactic 1	Update the list of available media organizations/companies offering internships for graduate students.
Tactic 2	Strengthen the website by including testimonials from SMC graduate students.
Tactic 3	Provide a virtual Q@A (Zoom, Facebook Live, or YouTube Live Stream) for students from other institutions to ask questions about the SMC and how it can benefit them.
<b>Social Media</b>	
Strategy: Demonstrate to undergraduates from other institutions through social media that the SMC graduate community provides opportunities and support for personal and professional growth.	
Tactic 1	Post videos/stories (Instagram/Youtube/Facebook) of current graduate students who transferred from another college and showcase why they chose the SMC.
Tactic 2	Post images of the UALR campus community/experience and the opportunities with the SMC graduate program (Instagram, Facebook).

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Tactic 3	Collaborate #hashtag campaigns with other institutions via social media (i.e., friend/follow on Facebook and Instagram), highlighting SMC's graduate majors/benefits.
Tactic 4	Welcome Wednesday Highlights – Meetup via Zoom: Show how SMC welcomes out-of-state or non-UALR students (Zoom meetups, socials).
Tactic 5	#FromThereToHere Stories – LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok: Tell how students from other schools found a new home and purpose at SMC.
Tactic 6	Peer Mentor Introductions – YouTube: Feature supportive structures in place for newcomers.
Tactic 7	Interactive Q&A Boxes on Instagram Stories – “Not from UALR? Ask us anything about grad life here!”
Tactic 8	DM Us for Info Campaign – LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok: Promote that out-of-institution prospects can message SMC on social for fast info.

**Events**

Strategy: Demonstrate to undergraduates from other institutions through events that the SMC graduate community provides opportunities and support for personal and professional growth.	
Tactic 1	Hold an expo of partnered organizations and media-related jobs to provide networking opportunities and demonstrate how the SMC graduate program can support students' personal and professional development.
Tactic 2	Attend career fairs at other colleges to promote the benefits and opportunities with the SMC that don't offer mass communication.

# Evaluations

Included are ways the objectives can be measured for effectiveness.

## For evaluating enrollment:

Use a spreadsheet such as Google Sheets or Microsoft Excel to track enrollments.

Structure: Create a spreadsheet with separate rows for each prospective student and columns for relevant information

Key columns should include:

- Name:
- Contact Information: (Email, Phone)
- Current Student Status: (SMC Undergraduate, UALR Online, Other Institution Undergraduate, Partner Organization, UALR Other Program)
- Initial Contact Date:
- Follow-up Dates: (Multiple columns for tracking interactions)
- Application Status: (Not Applied, Applied, Accepted, Enrolled)
- Enrollment Date:

Notes: (Any relevant information about the student's interests, communication preferences, etc.)

**Data Entry:** Enter prospective student information as you make initial contact. Update the spreadsheet regularly as you interact with them and track their progress through the application and enrollment process.

**Evaluation:** Use the spreadsheet to:

- Track the number of inquiries and applications from each target group.

- Calculate conversion rates: (e.g., inquiries to applications, applications to enrollments).
- Monitor progress toward each objective: Use filters and sorting to see how many students from each target group have enrolled.
- Identify areas for improvement: Analyze the data to see where you're losing prospective students in the recruitment funnel.

## Surveys:

Conduct short surveys with prospective students to gather feedback on their experience with the recruitment process. Also, gain feedback from faculty, students, and administrators to see how the school feels about certain partnerships and how beneficial they are.

## Tools for evaluating engagement:

Spreadsheet/Database: Similar to the enrollment tracking, use a spreadsheet to record each outreach activity.

Include columns for:

- Date of Activity:
- Type of Activity: (e.g., classroom presentation, club meeting, informational session)
- Number of SMC Undergraduates Reached, UALR Online undergraduates Reached, UALR undergraduates in other programs Reached:

Notes: (Any relevant observations or feedback)

**Sign-in Sheets/Attendance Records:** For in-person events, use sign-in sheets to

## EVALUATION

accurately track attendance and gather contact information.

**Surveys:** Administer short surveys to participating SMC undergraduates to gauge their interest in the graduate program and the effectiveness of the outreach activity.

**Additional Tools:** The SMC could use tools such as CRM software (customer relationship management), and project management programs to keep track of current partners and future partners, and what follow-up actions need to be taken with those partners.

Enrollment tracking tools like Slate can help analyze what effect these partnerships have on enrollment numbers.

Email marketing platforms such as Mailchimp can monitor how partners engage with email content that the SMC sends them for collaborations.

For collaborations, the SMC can use tools like Eventbrite to track registrations, attendance, and engagement with the partner organizations to help see how effective those collaborations are. Lastly, the SMC could use project management tools such as Asana to help track the progress of collaborations with partners and completion of these events.

Lastly, the SMC could try student success tracking, such as LinkedIn insights, to track graduate student employment outcomes.



# Budget and Timeline

Project and Initiative	Value	Percentage
Social Media	\$1921.22	14%
Printing	\$1097.83	8%
Events	\$10,703.93	78%
TOTAL	\$13,722.98	100%

A full breakdown of the budget and timeline to complete the campaign can be found at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JUITUa-KO8NUdWb38DrAGpSBaR9JzsO-?usp=sharing>

## APPENDIX

### COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

For help creating compelling and attractive design pieces that support UALR's brand, collaborate with UALR's Communications and Marketing department. Their designers create everything from logos and postcards to viewbooks, billboards, and window clings. Their services are free to the campus community.

They also provide photography and videographer services, and prioritize faculty and staff led events, especially for recruitment initiatives.

#### Contact Information

Dickinson Hall

501-916-3397

Website:

[www.ualr.edu/communications/graphic-and-print-design-requests/](http://www.ualr.edu/communications/graphic-and-print-design-requests/)

#### UALR PRINTING SERVICES

UA Little Rock Printing Services provides commercial copying and offset printing services for UA Little Rock faculty, staff and student organizations.

#### Contact Information

University Services Building

501-916-3260

Website:

[www.ualr.edu/printingservices/](http://www.ualr.edu/printingservices/)

