



**GLOBAL STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION CONSORTIUM**
ETHICS & FUTURISM

Global Strategic Communication Consortium: Ethics & Futurism

Conclave 2024

Location: St. Petersburg, Florida, USA

Date: March 10 - 13, 2024

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Alphabetized List of Participants

(email addresses, affiliations, title, presentation type)

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Thomas Stoeckle tstoeckle@bournemouth.ac.uk Bournemouth University
Can Public Relations Solve Wicked Problems – towards a New Paradigm Approaching Public Relations with Social Value
 Interactive Discussion

Ana Adi ana.adi@quadriga.eu Quadriga University of Applied Sciences and
Thomas Stoeckle tstoeckle@bournemouth.ac.uk Bournemouth University
Future of Public Relations/Comms and their Social Impact
 Completed Research Paper

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Strategies to Mitigate the Spread of Misinformation during Natural Disasters in the Future
 Completed Research Paper

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Life Lessons + Self-Reflection Enrich Strategic Communication Leadership
 Completed Research Paper

Carl Botan cbotan@gmu.edu George Mason University, Emeritus,
The Role of Strategy
 Welcome Keynote

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Futurism in Strategic Communication: Needs and Directions
 Completed Research Paper

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Strategic Transformative Resilience
 Keynote

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Engineering Strategic Resilience Communication for Technology-Focused Teams
 Completed Research Paper

Alice/Yang Cheng ycheng20@ncsu.edu North Carolina State University
Leveraging AI for Crisis Communication: Applications, Challenges, and Future Trends
 Research-in-Progress

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AI @ Public Relations: The Evolution of PRSA Code of Ethics for AI-Driven Public Relations Practice
 Research-in-Progress

Mari K. Eder, Maj. Gen., U.S. Army, Retired mk_eder@comcast.net
Military Issues in Strategic Communications in Future Conflicts
 Concept Talk

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A Typology of Strategies for Virtual Collaborations during the Pandemic: How Communication is Key to Keep the Virtual Workplace Coordinated
 Completed Research Paper

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Metacognition, Organizational Learning, and Generalist Public Relations
 Concept Talk

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The Future of Public Sector Communication: Hybridizations, Platforms, Ethics
 Research-in-Progress

Rita Men rmen@ufl.edu University of Florida
Changes in the Next Workforce in Expectations, Workstyle and Demand: Implications for Internal Communication
 Concept Talk

David D. Perlmutter david.perlmutter@ttu.edu Texas Tech University
The Future of the Iconic Image in an Era of “Unlimited” and “Censored” AI Content Creation, Editing, and Distribution
 Research-in-Progress

Katie Place katie.place@quinnipiac.edu Quinnipiac University
How Women CCOs Lead Ethical Listening
 Research-in-Progress

Marko Selakovic marko.selakovic@spjain.org S P Jain School of Global Management and
Nikolina Ljepava nikolina.ljepava@ae.ae American University in the Emirates
Future Role of Artificial Intelligence in Preparation of Crisis Communication Strategies
Research-in-Progress

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Navigating Strategic Communication: Exploring Methodological Perspectives
Concept Talk

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The Ascending Gradient of Likes and Comments: Exploring Closed Publics' Communicative Behaviors (CAPS) as Predictive Local Features of Online Controversiality
Completed Research Paper

GSCC 2024 Tentative Schedule

March 10th

Date	Time	Speaker/Attendant	Theme/ Presentation Title	Notes
Mar. 10 th	TBA	Conclave Participants Ponce de Leon Hotel 95 Central Ave.	Arrival	Hotel Information: See p. 32
Mar. 10 th (Optional activity)	All day	Conclave Participants (optional, separate ticket purchase required)	Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg presented by RP Funding (100 Laps / 180 Miles)	Track Crossing is Closed: 9:50 AM 12:10 PM 2:55 PM
Mar. 10 th	5:45 hotel lobby walk over; 6pm - 8 pm	Conclave Participants Private museum visit Hors d'oeuvres and drinks	Evening welcome reception: "Cocktails with the Curator – The Rich History of St. Petersburg"	Event Location: St. Peterburg Museum of History 335 2nd Ave NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701 Parking Info See p. 32

March 11th Morning

Opening Remarks				
Mar. 11 th	8:15 meet	Meet in lobby to walk to event or take the Looper Trolley South		University of South Florida – St. Petersburg, University Student Center, 200 6th Ave S., Room 2100
Mar. 11 th	08:30 – 08:35	Shannon A. Bowen, Ph.D. sbowen@sc.edu University of South Carolina	Welcome and Opening Remarks (introductions, format, wifi passwords)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	08:35 – 08:50	Carl Botan, Ph.D. cbotan@gmu.edu George Mason University, Emeritus	Welcome Keynote: The Role of Strategy in the Future	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32 See map on p. 34
2024 Theme Talks and Leadership Section				
Mar. 11 th	08:50 – 09:10	Bruce K. Berger, Ph.D. University of Alabama, Emeritus bberger@retiree.ua.edu	Life Lessons + Self-Reflection Enrich Strategic Communication Leadership (Abs. p. 17)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	09:10 – 09:30	Shannon A. Bowen, Ph.D. sbowen@sc.edu University of South Carolina Elina Erzikova, Ph.D. erzik1e@cmich.edu Central Michigan University	Futurism in Strategic Communication: Needs and Directions (Abs. p. 18)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Section 1: Global Values of Strategic Communication (p. 35 presentation format)				
Mar. 11 th	09:30 – 09:50	Alessandro Lovari, Ph.D.	The Future of Public Sector	Conclave Location:

		alelovari@gmail.com alessandro.lovvari@unica.it Mariano Porcu , Ph.D. mariano.porcu@unica.it Marco Pitzalis , Ph.D. pitzalis@unica.it Department of Political and Social Sciences University of Cagliari, Italy	Communication: Hybridizations, Platforms, Ethics (Abs. p. 25)	University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Coffee Break				
Mar. 11 th	09:50 – 10:05	Conclave Participants	Coffee Break	Catered coffee break
Resume Section 1: Global Values of Strategic Communication				
Mar. 11 th	10:05 – 10:35 Interactive session	Ana Adi , Ph.D. ana.adi@quadriga.eu Quadriga University, Germany Thomas Stoeckle tstoeckle@bournemouth.ac.uk Bournemouth University, UK	Can Public Relations Solve Wicked Problems – towards a New Paradigm Approach in Public Relations with Social Value? (Abs. p. 14)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	10:35 – 10:55	Katie Place , Ph.D. Katie.Place@quinnipiac.edu Quinnipiac University	How Women CCOs Lead Ethical Listening (Abs. p. 8)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	10:55 – 11:15	Yusuke Ibuki ibuki@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp Kyoto Sangyo University	Metacognition, Organizational Learning, and Generalist public relations (Abs. p. 24)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Section 2: AI and Future Approaches to Strategic Communication				
Mar. 11 th	11:15 – 11:35	Marko Selakovic , Ph.D. marko.selakovic@spjain.org S P Jain School of Global Management Nikolina Ljepava , Ph.D.	Future Role of Artificial Intelligence in Preparation of Crisis	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32

		nikolina.ljepava@ae.ae American University in the Emirates	Communication Strategies (Abs. p. 29)	
Mar. 11 th	11:35 – 11:55	Myoung-Gi Chon , Ph.D. mzc0113@auburn.edu Auburn University	AI @ Public Relations: The Evolution of PRSA Code of Ethics for AI-Driven Public Relations Practice (Abs. p. 21)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	11:55 – 12:15	Alice/Yang Cheng , Ph.D. ychemg20@ncsu.edu North Carolina State University	Leveraging AI for Crisis Communication: Applications, Challenges, and Future Trends (Abs. p. 20)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Lunch				
Mar. 11 th	12:25 – 13:25	Conclave Participants	The Participant Thanks Lunch	Catered Lunch, University Student Center
Mar. 11 th	13:25 – 14:00	Conclave Participants	City Walk & Break	Recommended Routes: See p. 34

March 11th Afternoon & Evening

Section 3: Post-Pandemic Global Workplaces and Workforces (p. 35 presentation format)				
Mar. 11 th	14:00 – 14:20	Rita Men, Ph.D. rmen@ufl.edu University of Florida	Changes in the Next Workforce in Expectations, Workstyle and Demand: Implications for Internal Communication (Abs. p. 26)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	14:20 – 14:40	Patrice Marie Buzzanell, Ph.D. pmbuzzanell@usf.edu University of South Florida Kerk Kee, Ph.D. kerk.kee@ttu.edu Texas Tech University Brett Robertson, Ph.D. br31@mailbox.sc.edu University of South Carolina	Engineering Strategic Resilience Communication for Technology-Focused Teams (Abs. p. 19)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	14:40 – 15:00	Mahedi Hasan, mahehasa@ttu.edu Oluwabusayo Okunloye, Oluwabusayo.Okunloye@ttu.edu Kerk Kee, Ph.D. Virginia and Choc Hutcheson Professor in Mass Communication kerk.kee@ttu.edu Texas Tech University Ewa Deelman deelman@isi.edu University of Southern California/Information Sciences Institute	A Typology of Strategies for Virtual Collaborations during the Pandemic: How Communication is Key to Keep the Virtual Workplace Coordinated (Abs. p. 23)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	15:00 – 15:20	Ana Adi, Ph.D.	Future of Public Relations/Comms	Conclave Location:

		ana.adi@quadriga.eu Quadriga University Thomas Stoeckle tstoeckle@bournemouth.ac.uk Bournemouth University	and their Social Impact (Abs. p. 15)	University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Section 4: Methodologies and Values in Public Relations				
Mar. 11 th	15:20 – 15:40	Mari K. Eder Maj. Gen., U.S. Army, Retired	Military Issues in Strategic Communications in Future Conflicts (Abs. p. 22)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Short Break				
Mar. 11 th	15:40 - 15:55	Conclave Participants	Short Break	
Resume Section 4: Methodologies and Values in Public Relations				
Mar. 11 th	15:55 – 16:15	Yicheng Zhu, Ph.D. yichengresearch@gmail.com Beijing Normal University Duo Lan, Ph.D. landuo@bupt.edu.cn Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications	The Ascending Gradient of Likes and Comments: Exploring Closed Publics' Communicative Behaviors (CAPS) as Predictive Local Features of Online Controversiality. (Abs. p. 31)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32
Mar. 11 th	16:15 – 16:35	April Yue, Ph.D. cen.yue@uconn.edu University of Connecticut Laura Lemon, Ph.D. lemon@apr.ua.edu University of Alabama Jiacheng Huang huan1660@umn.edu University of Minnesota	Navigating Strategic Communication: Exploring Methodological Perspectives (Abs. p. 30)	Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 32

Mar. 11 th	16:35 – 16:55	<p>Khalid Alharbi, Ph.D. kalharbi@email.sc.edu Al Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University</p> <p>Shannon A. Bowen, Ph.D. sbowen@sc.edu</p> <p>Colin Piacentine, Ph.D. colinfo@email.sc.edu University of South Carolina</p>	Strategies to Mitigate the Spread of Misinformation during Natural Disasters in the Future (Abs. p. 16)	<p>Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100</p> <p>See p. 32</p>
Keynote Speech				
Mar. 11 th	17:00 – 17:30	<p>Patrice Marie Buzzanell, Ph.D. pmbuzzanell@usf.edu University of South Florida</p>	<p>2024 Keynote Address: Strategic Transformative Resilience</p>	<p>Conclave Location: University Student Center, Room 2100</p> <p>See p. 32</p>
Preparation & Dinner				
Mar. 11 th –	18:25 – 18:30	Conclave Participants	Gather in hotel lobby to walk to dinner	
Mar. 11 th	18:30 – 21:00	Conclave Participants	The Mary Beth West Sponsor Thanks Dinner	<p>Location: Doc Forde’s Rum Bar and Grille, 610 2nd Ave., NE (on the Pier)</p> <p>Thank you to all of our generous sponsors! (See p. 38)</p>

March 12th

Executive & All Participant Meeting				
Mar. 12 th	8:30	Meet in lobby to walk to event or take the Looper Trolley South		
	8:45	Coffee & Bagels University Student Center, Room 2100 , Catered		
	9:00 – 11:00	Conclave Participants Agenda: 2025 Conclave	Executive & All Participant Meeting	USF-St. Petersburg University Student Center, Room 2100 See p. 33
Art Appreciation Event				
Mar. 12 th	12:20	Conclave Participants	Meet in Hotel Lobby for walk to Dali (tickets are included in Conclave)	Salvador Dali Museum group (self-guided) visit Location: See p. 33

March 13th

Optional Writing Workshop				
Mar. 13 th	10:45-15:30	Meet in hotel lobby for walk to location Red Mesa Cantina	Optional Writing Workshop & lunch	Location: Red Mesa Cantina 128 3 rd St. S. See p. 33

Abstracts of Presentations at 2024 GSCC

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Can Public Relations Solve Wicked Problems – towards a New Paradigm Approaching Public Relations with Social Value

Interactive Discussion

Determining the role of public relations in addressing sustainability and other complex societal challenges involves reconsidering how social value and impact are defined and measured. While debates often center on practical solutions for different organizational contexts, the prevailing theoretical foundations merit reexamination. Current realities typically reflect market economic or neo-liberal societal conditions where Public Relations is seen through a narrow transactional, inside-out lens from an organisational perspective. Such a perspective fails to capture systemic intricacies of societal grand challenges (Howard-Grenville & Spengler, 2022), let alone provide adequate responses (Roper, 2005; Demetrious, 2020).

Moving beyond this market logic, the concept of "public value" offers an alternative perspective positioning the public sector to collaboratively define innovation agendas addressing societal problems (Mazucatto, 2022). Adopting such a stance could better align Public Relations' function in cocreating stakeholder-focused solutions rather than advocating the narrow self-interest of organisations. This is supported by metamodern theorising (Pipere & Mārtinsons, 2022) which recognizes society's multiple voices and power dynamics, challenging presumptions of agreed social contracts or priority determinations within prevailing "rules of the game" shaped by narratives Public Relations helps produce (Adi & Stoeckle, 2023a).

Accurately accounting for "social value" as well as "social impact" (thus "public value") demands reframing Public Relations measurement beyond activity outputs to envision social changes and the processes that will sanction and lead to such change (Adi & Stoeckle, 2023b). This also includes the non-desirable, accidental and unplanned social changes, beyond the positive and desirable ones (previously reported solely from the perspective of the organization). Integrating citizenship perspectives on quality of life and culturally-sensitive reputation dimensions could enhance measurement while also providing a more wholistic and realistic outlook of Public Relations' persuasive work. Examinations of trust in advocacy initiatives might also help reveal the potential for indirectly promoting private agendas over public responsibilities. Within sociotechnical systems' complexity, a consilient, facilitating and not organizational-centric mindset may help negotiate and achieve tradeoffs through inclusive deliberation.

While impact assessments focus on outcome metrics, value emerges from diverse stakeholder perceptions in cultural, temporal and identity contexts. Moving beyond compliance, sustainability challenges necessitate governance transformations prioritizing public over private imperatives through reframed innovation direction setting. Conversations are needed bridging organizational and citizen viewpoints and values in an increasingly multi-polar, wicked world (Head 2022) to resolve sustainability dilemmas through collaborative cocreation of shared worth.

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Future of Public Relations/Comms and their Social Impact Completed Research

Public Relations/Comms has traditionally been focused on demonstrating its strategic value over considering long-term impact and value for stakeholders. While embracing a more righteous stance, practitioners still bow to client demands through activities meant to delay, distract or frustrate stakeholders while pleasing others (Demetrious, 2022). Common questionable practices include astroturfing, (Arce Garcia et al., 2022; de Oliveira Giovanelli & Pérsigo, 2022), ghost posting, writing fake reviews, removing or withholding information, and promoting character assassination (Samoilenko & Jasper, 2023) are all driven by a motivation to support organizational demands, and to protect and promote reputations. This regular prioritizing of clients over both ethics and social value raises challenges for the profession's skills, ethics of persuasion, balancing personal values with organizational demands, and legacy - posing questions for both research and teaching.

The Future of Public Relations/Comms and Their Social Impact (Adi & Stoeckle, 2023) research invited practitioners, academics, and educators from 21 countries to consider and reflect over both current and ideal practice of Public Relations/Comms including considering their approach to conflict, and the social impact and social value of Public Relations/Comms as a profession.

This paper aims to briefly present the results of the 6 months long Delphi method study carried out in 3 languages. In doing so it aims to invite further collaborations as a means to both discuss and extend the study and explore bring insight from the study with direct relevance to teaching and research into the classroom in the next years.

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Strategies to Mitigate the Spread of Misinformation during Natural Disasters in the Future

Completed Research

Disasters include accidents, natural disasters, and weather emergencies with evacuations, rescues, and property and infrastructure damage. In 2022, natural disasters cost \$165 billion in the United States (Statista, 2023). Governments, response agencies, local and regional officials, and emergency responders can be overwhelmed by these emergencies. This study examines how social media users view disaster information and how much they value official sources versus lay commentators. Researchers (Gongora-Svartzman & Ramirez-Marquez, 2022) found “over six million tweets” about Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria (p. 1695).

To examine the hypotheses in this study, an experiment was conducted among participants (N = 120) who were randomly assigned and exposed to one of the four (negative, neutral, official account, official figure) experimental stimuli for 60 seconds then completed a questionnaire regarding the social media post and the response as well as the demographic information. The experiment includes the use of eye tracking to measure participants’ time spent, attention and revisits. A series of one-way ANCOVAs and a serial mediation analysis were conducted.

The findings encompass significant ethical elements. Misinformation is impacting individuals in different levels, and it is the duty of government officials to promptly and strategically respond in order to mitigate the adverse consequences of misinformation. Policymakers can benefit practically from an understanding of message reception when developing future emergency communication plans. It appears that individuals continue to trust responses that validate false information. However, employing officials as the authoritative source to counteract misinformation proves to be more impactful than relying on official accounts. The rapid evolution of technologies and shifting in consumer behaviors necessitate a continuous reevaluation of how individuals react to misinformation on social media. Possible responses to misinformation that could be studied in the future include experimenting with various formats (text, picture, short-video, long-video) and similar approaches.

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Life Lessons + Self-Reflection Enrich Strategic Communication Leadership Completed Research

This study examined strategic communication (strat comm) leadership in public relations (Public Relations) from the little explored perspective of life lessons and how they may stimulate greater self-reflection (SR). SR is a primary way we examine ourselves and how others may see us to increase self-awareness (SA), a crucial quality for leaders (Eurich, 2017), and one of four cornerstones of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995).

A qualitative survey with four open-ended questions about life lessons and self-reflection was completed by 76 diverse Public Relations leaders. Many of their narrative responses were powerful, moving stories revealing 50 different life lessons which were often triggered by difficult personal experiences at various times in life. Leaders said their lessons stimulated greater SR on those lessons *and* current issues and experiences in the workplace and in life. Overall, they argued SR on life lessons makes them better, more ethical, and more empathetic people and leaders.

Participants also identified many rich benefits of greater SR: 1) more strategic and ethical leadership; 2) improved decision-making, conflict management, and relationship building; and 3) enriched people skills, e.g., empathy, listening, and focusing on others. As Gannaway argued in *The Power of Life Lessons* (2017), “We can always take the next steps to improve our lives and the lives of others. Life lessons show us the way. By definition they provide ‘practical wisdom’ that helps us reach our goals faster and easier (p.2).”

This study provides a sturdy foundation for building such ‘practical wisdom’ within strat comm leaders, along with rich insights about how those leaders can help develop those skills among their team members and with other leaders across their organizations. Enriched SR at the individual level appears crucial to excellent leadership. Richer SR across the organization may also differentiate and distinguish the organization in positive, highly productive ways. Strat comm leaders can help build this organizational capability.

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Futurism in Strategic Communication: Needs and Directions

Research in Progress

Futurism, innovations, the diffusion of new technologies, and the ever-unfolding turbulence of the modern and future world require scenario building, or engaging in futures research and strategic planning, as well as strategic communication (strat comm) about all of these activities, heightened in importance by rapid technological and social changes. The turbulence of the future offers opportunities for growth among numerous complex and unpredictable threats, but one sure aspect of change is that strategic communication facilitates adaptation of both organizations and society.

Because of the rapid changes in technology and society, this work will avoid a technologically bound definition linked to AI or to specific purposes, seeking to remain futuristic in coordination with sweeping changes across industries and societies. We wish to pose and discuss an overarching definition:

Strategic communication increases organizational effectiveness by enhancing competitive advantage, driving values, vision, mission, and operations in an identifiable and planned manner.

Strategic communication is an interdisciplinary management function responsible for communication between organizations and stakeholders, facilitating a social role and duty. Strategic communication is based on research (formal, informal, primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative, data-driven, and mixed); it seeks to increase organizational effectiveness by enhancing competitive advantage and (normatively) ethical responsibility; driving values, vision, mission, dialogue, and operations in an outcome-seeking, research-backed approach.

Our activities are rooted in the business discipline of strategic management. Management becomes *strategic* when it relies upon the activities of research and planning, controlling, leading, and evaluating. How can, and will, these activities be carried out, improved upon, and implemented in the future, amid complex technological and social changes? The world is changing rapidly and our definition as well as future prediction will be tested in relation to the chapters below along with the public sphere; business sphere; government nation-states sphere; now cyber-state sphere.

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Engineering Strategic Resilience Communication for Technology-Focused Teams

Completed Research

The intersection of strategic communication and communicative resilience is a burgeoning, multidisciplinary field. It explores the dynamic relationship between communication practices and the collective constitution of resilience in individuals and organizations. This chapter focuses on technology-oriented employees' experiences in a post-pandemic world—and how strategic communication and communicative resilience work together.

Several facets of strategic communication are foundational to this exploration of creating robust technology-focused teams, including crisis and risk communication, stakeholder engagement, cross-cultural perspectives, and technological advancements. We present a case study of technology-focused employees navigating hybrid and remote work arrangements. Companies must address workspace support, spatiotemporal strategies, socialization, and the formulation of rules and policies for effective remote work. Workers need to proactively engage with colleagues and management, making strategic choices to balance professional development and work-life equilibrium.

Future research and practice directions emphasize an ongoing, constitutive approach to strategic resilience communication, focusing on the dynamic processes involved in enacting resilience. The Communication Theory of Resilience (CTR) offers a theoretical framework, highlighting five key resilience processes. By cultivating knowledge, language, and interactions about strategic resilience communication, individuals and organizations can effectively adapt to and transform their circumstances in the face of disruptions, crises, and everyday challenges.

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Leveraging AI for Crisis Communication: Applications, Challenges, and Future Trends

Research-in-Progress

In today's fast-paced world, crises demand swift communication strategies. With traditional methods struggling to keep up, artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a vital tool for crisis management. This abstract explores AI's role in crisis communication, emphasizing its use alongside the contingent organization-public relationships (COPR) model to monitor relationships during crises.

The first section emphasizes real-time information dissemination, sentiment analysis, and public engagement as crucial components of effective crisis response. The subsequent part introduces AI technologies like NLP, machine learning, and data analytics, highlighting their role in real-time data analysis, predictive modeling, and proactive crisis response strategies.

By analyzing recent journal articles, the study focuses on AI applications in crisis communication, including AI-powered monitoring and early detection. It showcases how AI swiftly identifies crises by analyzing diverse data sources like social media, news articles, and emergency reports. Real-world cases illustrate AI's role in crisis communication scenarios.

The abstract also underlines AI-driven social media analytics, enabling organizations to gauge public sentiment, counter misinformation, and tailor crisis messaging. AI-based chatbots and virtual assistants provide instant and accurate information, easing pressure on helplines and engaging with affected populations during crises.

However, the study acknowledges ethical challenges with AI tools, emphasizing the need to ensure data privacy, minimize biases, and balance automation with human intervention. It speculates on future AI trends, discussing their potential to revolutionize crisis response efforts and stressing the importance of ongoing research to mitigate adverse societal impacts.

In conclusion, AI offers immense potential in crisis communication by providing real-time insights, boosting public engagement, and optimizing emergency response. As AI continues to advance, collaboration among crisis communicators, policymakers, and stakeholders is crucial in responsibly harnessing its power to ensure community safety and resilience during crises.

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AI @ Public Relations: The Evolution of PRSA Code of Ethics for AI-Driven Public Relations Practice
Research-in-Progress

Vanderbilt University officials faced backlash for their apology following a mass shooting at Michigan State University, as their attempt to convey empathy through a comforting email to students, crafted by ChatGPT, backfired (Korn, 2023). This incident highlights the ethical concerns associated with incorporating AI into Public Relations. In a 2023 survey conducted by USC Annenberg, Public Relations practitioners have acknowledged challenges associated with the adoption of AI (Ewing, 2023). Thus, there is a pressing question regarding the adequacy of guidelines available to Public Relations practitioners for the responsible use of AI.

While guidelines like the PRSA Code of Ethics have been proposed to tackle ethical concerns related to AI integration in Public Relations (Ewing, 2023), there is limited research on how specifically the PRSA Code of Ethics can be effectively applied to address the ethical challenges arising from the adoption of AI. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the ethical implications of incorporating AI into Public Relations practices through the lens of the PRSA Code of Ethics, with a specific focus on the principles of honesty and expertise among the six codes of ethics.

This study aims to navigate specific guidelines for the integration of generative AI into Public Relations practices, drawing upon two principles from the PRSA Code of Ethics. To achieve this, in-depth interviews will be conducted with approximately 20 Public Relations practitioners actively utilizing generative AI. The insights obtained from these interviews will be analyzed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software. Additionally, this research will explore educational tools that offer guidance on the ethical use of generative AI in Public Relations, particularly emphasizing the principles of honesty and expertise. The outcomes of this study are anticipated to assist practitioners in effectively leveraging generative AI while avoiding ethical pitfalls and to contribute educational resources for aspiring Public Relations professionals.

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Military Issues in Strategic Communications in Future Conflicts

Concept Talk

The potential for future conflict involving the armed forces of the United States is growing. The world has never been more fragmented and dangerous than today and the clash of great powers – China, Russia, the U.S., and others - continues to expand in all areas in which nations exercise national power – from economic, information, and diplomatic, to military. The resulting communication environment is becoming increasingly complex with numerable and conflicting voices crowding an already saturated information space. The 24-hour news cycle, sophisticated communications technology and proliferating platforms, plus the ability of bad actors to manipulate information venues is affecting the ability of single voices to even be heard, much less be effective. Likewise, the demand for information from varied sources can also drive its factual content, intent, and focus.

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A Typology of Strategies for Virtual Collaborations during the Pandemic: How Communication is Key to Keep the Virtual Workplace Coordinated
Completed Research

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an unprecedented global experiment on virtual work. In this paper, we present a strategy typology for virtual collaborations in a specific work context – the work of professionals at major facilities (MF, e.g., Academic Research Fleets, National Radio Astronomy Observatory, Large Hadron Collider; see <https://new.nsf.gov/focus-areas/infrastructure>) funded by the US National Science Foundation. This work context is unique because MF professionals were already highly virtual pre-pandemic, yet part of their work is also inherently tied to being a specific geographical site. We conducted 56 interviews with MF professionals about how they adapted at work during the pandemic. Through 3 phases of data collections and analyses between December 1, 2020 to August 28, 2023, we developed a typology of 10 strategies, with which we asked 26 of our participants to rate their (dis)agreement with the stated strategies, and then suggest any other strategies our typology did not capture. Surprisingly, no new suggestions did not eventually subsume under our original typology after close considerations. The 10 strategies in ranked order based on average agreement scores by the 26 participants: (1) Change work expectations to consider colleagues' personal/family needs (4.68/5), (2) Provide flexibility for workers to focus on quality and quantity of work, and not where they do the work (4.44/5), (3) Reach out to peers in other facilities/organizations for ideas, strategies, and best practices (4.44), (4) Do what you can, when you can (4.18/5), (5) Have a master scheduler/ project management platform to keep track of all the tasks and who is doing what (4.12/5), (6) Get used to delays, changes, uncertainty, and feeling overwhelmed (4.10/5), (7) Schedule virtual meetings strictly, to create a team arrangement for workers not to miss a meeting due to interruptions/chaos at home, etc. (3.94), (8) Actively use nonverbal cues to make online meetings engaging (3.79/5), (9) Form a committee/taskforce to collect input and explore solutions across multiple levels in the organization (3.79/5), and (10) Set up social platforms for workers to interact informally (3.48/5). Overall, we observed that all 10 strategies aimed at leveraging communication to keep the workplace coordinated virtually.

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Metacognition, Organizational Learning, and Generalist Public Relations

Concept Talk

Kunieda, Yamamura, and Miyabe (2018) introduced the concept of "generalist Public Relations." This concept is derived from the human resource management of public relations in Japan. The key characteristic of "generalist Public Relations" is so-called job rotations, that is, a person who has no experience in the public relations field suddenly becomes a public relations practitioner one day through intra-organizational personnel transfers. This means that many Public Relations practitioners in Japan are not professionals (We think it is not limited to Japanese organizations, though).

Does this mean practices in public relations fields in Japan are left behind? Not competitive? Not ethical? We would like to say "NO." Some Public Relations practices were awarded in many famous international creative festivals. The Public Relations Society in Japan (PRSJ / similar organization of PRSA in Japan) has its Code of Ethics and many organizations both in client-side and agency-side follow this Code.

Why can not-professional Japanese Public Relations practitioners make success? We think there are two secret reasons which are not often mentioned in the public relations academia: Metacognition and Organizational Learning. Metacognition is for the individual capability and organizational learning is for the organizational capability. Ibuki (2023) proposed the importance of metacognition in public relations practice, but as far as we know, this is just the beginning of the discussion.

At the conference, we will show the basic concepts of these words and propose their application to public relations practices. After the talk, we would like to discuss if these concepts are attractive in many countries.

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The Future of Public Sector Communication: Hybridizations, Platforms, Ethics

Research-in-Progress

Public sector communication (PSC) has regained centrality with the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in those organizations where it was planned and delivered strategically to different publics, adopting a multichannel approach in which social media played a key role. These flows allowed to inform citizens and the media, but they have often shown the visibility of political leaders especially on digital platforms. The controversial relationship between PSC (apolitical and nonpartisan) and political communication (propagandistic and partisan) in institutions is the subject of numerous studies in communication (Sanders & Canel, 2013; Gelders & Ihlen, 2010; Graber 1992; Lovari et al. 2020; Luoma-aho & Canel, 2020). This relationship was studied in different public organizations, both a central and local level, highlighting the blurred boundaries and the hybridizations between these two flows. This process is today particularly visible, and it's important to investigate it due to the lack of publics' trust, the socio-political and technological turbulences, and the platformization that shape our society (van Dijck, Poell & De Waal, 2018).

In this framework this paper presents the results of a research project carried out in Sardinia (Italy). The study has investigated the problematic relationships between PSC and political communication in municipalities using different research methods (Facebook content analysis, survey and focus groups) and involving public communicators, citizens, and mayors.

Starting from the findings the paper discusses how public sector organizations should strategically identify hybridizations, detonate the cannibalization of communication spaces by politics, and assume an ethical approach and a new responsibility in dealing with communication in digital channels.

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Changes in the Next Workforce in Expectations, Workstyle and Demand: Implications for Internal Communication

Concept Talk

The rapid evolution of social, technological, political, and business landscapes is fundamentally transforming the workforce. The incoming generation, dominated by Generation-Z in the short term and following cohorts in the future, brings unique values, expectations, workstyles, and demands to the workplace. This generational shift is set to redefine the traditional parameters of employment and communications in the workplace. This shift is not merely a demographic transition; it herds paradigm shift in how work is perceived, pursued, and performed, driven by vast changes in digital technologies, and catalyzed by global occurrences such as pandemics, increasing natural disasters, shortages of necessities, wars, and social movements.

The implications of these changes are profound, particularly in the realm of internal communication. As the backbone of any organization, internal communication is the lifeblood that keeps the corporate body functioning smoothly. It serves as the nexus that connects the various parts of an organization, keeping employees, the number 1 stakeholders of the organization informed, connected, motivated, and engaged. However, as the workforce evolves, the goals, methods, and channels of internal communication must adapt. This paper provides an overview of the changing expectations and demands of the upcoming workforce and examines the future opportunities and challenges awaiting internal communication.

Specifically, the changing expectations of the next workforce (e.g., Gen-Z, Gen-Alpha and beyond) include emphasis on corporate purpose and social responsibility, tech savviness, value of flexibility and gig work, stressing mental health, work-life balance and wellbeing, personal development and mentorship, transparency and authenticity, and diversity and inclusion. Understanding the next generations' priorities, expectations, and values enables organizations to align their communication with their employees' expectations. The paper then discusses and speculates what future holds for organizations' internal communication practices to create optimal experiences for future employees. What to communicate and how to communicate with Gen-Z, Gen Alpha and beyond employees is discussed.

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The Future of the Iconic Image in an Era of Unlimited Content Creation, Editing, and Distribution

(Tabled)

Research-in-Progress

The *iconic* image has a long history and prehistory. From the magnificent cave paintings crafted by the first anatomically modern humans to the reliefs of ancient civilizations through the era of painting and then mass reproduced photography, film, and videography and now unlimited generative AI visual content production and all-media distribution, there have always been those special images that seem to have some qualities that make them much more famous and perhaps even much more persuasive and powerful than others. Among the possible but not necessarily co-occurring or imagined “powers” of icons have been high numbers of quantitative reproduction through the present day; memorability as historically and/or culturally significant; unassailable aesthetic magnetism as capturing a sensational event; status as “great” in the history of news photography; recognizability to multiple generations of viewers; continuing multitudinous presence in academic and popular press published histories as “summing up” a historical event; recrudescence in new forms of media from social media to regenerative visual AI; repeated use as a tool of political persuasion; and, most controversially, the ability to influence or change public opinion and government policies. Today the “meme,” the recurring image, often a pastiche of mixed content, context, and captioning, with intent ranging from commercial gain to shock to humor to harvesting “likes” to political influencing, has become almost synonymous with the traditional photoicon.

The hope of the presentation is to forecast for discussion possible scenarios for the future of powerful pictures. Topics to explore will include: In a world in which images are generated wholly by technology, with no “original” event, will some pictures have different kinds of powers than others? What will be the criteria of power and influence when anyone, from a government to an individual or an AI, can create pictures that fulfill the aesthetic and content expectations of the icons of yesteryear? Can we calculate, to draw from Walter Benjamin’s famous essay, what level of “mass reproduction” a powerful picture of the future will require? What will be the role of the image-makers, from the traditional “frontline” professional and industrial photographer to the “citizen journalist” with a cellphone to an uncontrolled AI generating pictures for reasons beyond human understanding? What will be the channels or portals of distribution for pictures that might assist in their achieving meme or icon status? What existing, amended, and new ethical, moral, and legal issues will affect how we assess the icons of the future? Finally, might the wave of future technology dethrone the icon, making it more difficult or even impossible for any image to achieve central and celebrated political, cultural, or historical status?

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How Women CCOs Lead Ethical Listening

Research-in-Progress

Recent organizational listening research has argued that listening must be championed by leaders who espouse values associated with ethics, care and humility, organizational policies that offers guidance for listening, organizational structures that intentionally make space for listening, and mentoring programs that support ethical and equitable listening (Place, 2023). Indeed, Bowen (2015) found that organizational leaders in chief executive roles foster a culture of ethics via authentic leadership, communications channels, town hall meetings and teambuilding exercises, and rewards and recognition programs. In the Chief Communications Officer role, only 41% are women, with women earning only 90% of what men in the same role earn (Zippia, 2023).

To address this issue, the purpose of this paper (and guiding research questions) is to explore: How do women leaders in elite Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Communications Officer (CCO) roles lead (ethical) organizational listening?

In-depth interviews were conducted with 11 women CEOs (2) and CCOs (9) across corporate and Public Relations agency organizations between August 2023 and November 2023, with additional interviews expected in 2024 – for a total of 20 women chief officers. Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used to achieve a diverse cross-section of U.S.-based participants. Interviews followed a 10-question protocol, were recorded, professionally transcribed, and analyzed for themes.

Initial analysis of interviews suggests that women CEOs and CCOs and mindful of how their gender identity and lived experiences affect their listening leadership roles and affect how they are perceived as leaders in their respective organizations and across the communications discipline. Evidence suggests that dominant, hegemonic stereotypically masculine narratives still influence perceptions surrounding chief communications officers and how they must listen. For example, one CCO participant shared a vignette of when a male member of the C-Suite approached her to help her “fix” her co-creational, participative listening style in order to adopt more stereotypical masculine approaches to communications management. Implications for listening and cultivation of ethical strategic communications environments will be discussed in the final paper.

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Future Role of Artificial Intelligence in Preparation of Crisis Communication Strategies

Research-in-Progress

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly taking an increasingly important role in the daily work of communication professionals. Novel forms of AI have emerged, expanding the application of artificial intelligence from data analytics, and editing into content generation and in-depth secondary data analysis. AI-based solutions are increasingly being used to identify and counter fake news, as well as to collect data for the preparation of communication strategies.

Bearing in mind the propulsive growth and development of AI solutions, this research aims to identify future directions for applying AI-based solutions in preparing crisis communication strategies. Existing secondary sources indicate that current directions of AI solutions development have the potential to improve its applicability for the collection and analysis of historical data. Such features can significantly accelerate the preparation of crisis communication strategies; however, collected examples may be extracted from different historical, cultural, and social contexts. Therefore, it is recommended to take the strategic solutions proposed by AI with critical reservations. A critical approach toward AI-proposed strategic solutions can mitigate the risk of incorporation of conclusions based on wrong premises.

Additionally, with the further development of AI, it is anticipated that AI will be able to offer situation-based models for strategic responses to crises. To use AI in this direction, it will be necessary to understand the context of the crisis from multiple perspectives. Such an approach will mitigate the risk of creating a crisis communication strategy based on generic responses.

The future application of AI can also be expected in the domain of reputational risk assessment, a critically important aspect of adequate crisis response planning.

Based on the reviewed literature sources and anticipated directions of development of the application of AI in strategic crisis communications, it can be concluded that AI will play a more significant role in the preparation of crisis communication strategies. Due to contextual differences and limitations of AI tools, professionals from the domain of strategic communications will remain a decisive factor in selecting strategies and tactics involved in crisis communication of organizations and institutions.

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Navigating Strategic Communication: Exploring Methodological Perspectives

Concept Talk

In this paper, we explore contemporary research methods in strategic communication and public relations. Our objective is to assess evolving trends and advancements in research methods, focusing on three perspectives: quantitative, qualitative, and computational approaches. By doing so, we aspire for this conceptual paper to provide insights into the current state of strategic communication research and to offer guidance on future directions.

To advance quantitative methods in strategic communication, we propose testing robust causal relationships through longitudinal surveys and field experiments in real-world organizational settings. Although field experiments can be resource-intensive, they offer a compelling blend of high internal and external validity, enabling generalizability to diverse populations and real-world contexts while facilitating the establishment of causal relationships between variables. We advocate for cultivating lasting partnerships with industry practitioners to secure the necessary permissions for field experiments. Furthermore, we encourage the practice of method triangulation, where multiple methods are synergistically integrated to investigate the same research question.

While quantitative methods provide an overview of causal relationships across populations, qualitative methods offer depth into the nuance and reasons why such relationships exist. Qualitative approaches, including interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, provide rich details into the human experience that cannot be captured in quantitative and computational methods. Organizational life is underpinned by complexity, and qualitative methods offer a way to holistically capture these insights. In doing so, strategic communication transitions from being a simple mechanism to becoming a function that facilitates intricate organizational processes.

Computational methods enable new forms of behavioral inquiries and research practices for strategic communication research by analyzing digital traces that could not be identified through traditional research techniques. The adoption of Artificial Intelligence further propels this field, granting researchers powerful capabilities in pattern recognition and predictive analytics and enabling the processing of extensive data sets with machine learning methods such as natural language processing. However, with an increasing focus on computational methods, researchers must be mindful of potential biases and ethical considerations, particularly when dealing with large datasets and AI-driven analyses. The future of strategic communication research will require not only rigorous methodology but also a commitment to **ethical practices** that protect the rights and privacy of individuals whose data is collected and analyzed.

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The Ascending Gradient of Likes and Comments: Exploring Closed Publics' Communicative Behaviors (CAPS) as Predictive Local Features of Online Controversiality.

Completed Research

Based on the CAPS framework, this study conceptualizes publics' use of the like button as a reactive communication behavior of closed publics and identifies a local network structural feature: the *ascending gradient of likes*, to be a potentially effective index in detecting issue controversiality. Method-wise, the study analyzes 352,353 post-comment structures from TouTiao and Reddit platforms surrounding seven controversial issues and compares the distribution of key predictors between different types of issues.

Information on Important Locations

Conclave Location:

University Student Center, Room 2100

Address: 200 6th Ave S, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, United States

Website: <http://www.usfsp.edu/usc/>

phone: (727)873-5179

Hotel:

Ponce de Leon

Address: 95 Central Ave., St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Website: www.poncedeleonhotel.com [Link](#)

phone: (727) 550-9300.

Special rates: \$109 plus tax per night for a one-bed room; \$120 for a two-bed room.

How to book: Attendees should call the hotel staffer Elona on 1-727-209-0506 and mention the three code words: **Global Strategic Communication** for reservations. The cutoff group rate is

March 1, 2024.

March 10th Welcome Event Location:

St. Petersburg Museum of History

335 2nd Ave NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Metered parking is available adjacent to the St. Petersburg Museum of History in the St. Pete Pier's Dolphin Lot. **Other options** include the St. Pete Pier's Pelican lot, the Pier's street parking, or the Sundial Parking Garage (117 2nd Street N) located three blocks west of the Museum.

Street parking is metered by the hour and enforced by the City of St. Petersburg Parking Enforcement.

March 11th Participant Thanks Lunch: Catered at the event location

March 11th Dinner Restaurant: Doc Ford's Rum Bar and Grille, 610 2nd Ave. NE, on the Pier, St. Petersburg

March 12th Executive and All Participant Meeting Location: Room 2100**March 12th Salvador Dali Museum Location (walk from lobby or meet):**

Address: 1 Dali Blvd, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, United States

Website: <https://thedali.org>

Phone: 727-823-3767

Writing Workshop, March 13: Meet in hotel lobby at 10:45 am to walk to**Red Mesa Cantina**

Address: 128 3rd St S, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, United States

Website: www.redmesacantina.com

phone: 727-896-8226

City Walk Map

(More info at: [link 1](#) and [link 2](#))(USF-SP campus map:

<https://www.stpetersburg.usf.edu/about/visit/documents/usf-st-petersburg-campus-map.pdf>)



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Additional GSCC 2024 Information

Presentation Structure:

Presentations on March 11th at the Conclave Venue: University Student Center, Room 2100.

A tentative two-part structure of each presentation is:

Presentation of a concept or study results (5 minutes).

Group interactive discussion (15 minutes):

- *What can we learn from this research?*
- *How does this research expand our understanding of strategic communication and foster innovative approaches?*
- *How does this research inform future research in the field? What are possible directions?*

These two parts will hopefully be within a 20-minute duration. The GSCC is dedicated to promoting more interactions and discussions, while also ensuring a reasonable amount of presentation time for the speaker. We believe this approach fosters real communication between the presenter and discussants about an idea, concept, case, or other findings.

We **STRONGLY discourage the use of PowerPoint** in Concept Talks and In-Progress-Research. We realize data visualization may be needed in Completed Paper sessions, but we ask that you keep **PowerPoint or handouts brief: to a maximum of 3 slides**, to encourage the dynamic and robust discussion we seek to foster among thought leaders attending the GSCC Conclave. Thank you.

Presentation set-up/environment: Audio-Visuals, Internet Access

Host: There will be a host onsite providing indications of presentation sequences and durations.

Important Times:

For morning sessions, you can choose either (time noted on schedule):

- a) To come gather in the **Ponce de Leon Hotel lobby** before the group departs, **or**
- b) To commute to the Conclave Venue **on your own schedule**.

Tentatively, we plan to conclude the March 11th sessions at 17:30 PM, and gather in the Riverside Hotel Lobby at 18:25 PM for our departure for dinner.

Attire: Business casual or resort wear

Addresses: Provided on the schedule in case you want to Taxi/Uber/Lyft or drive to meet us.

Social Media: Please follow **@GlobalStratComm**. We will have updates posted from the Conclave, but welcome your input using Twitter hashtag #GSCC.



Acknowledgements

The Executive Board expresses its sincere gratitude to the following organizations and individuals for their assistance in organizing the 2024 Conclave:



Lindsay Perdue, St. Petersburg Museum of History



University of South Florida:

Jennifer Barrett, Department Operations Manager, Department of Communication

Ryan McGahan, Academic Program Specialist, Department of Communication

University of South Florida St. Petersburg:

Andy Dang, Assistant Director, Student Center Events

Erin McFee, Events Manager, Student Center Events



University of South Carolina:

Megan Walker, Administrative Assistant to the Director, SJMC

Damion Waymer, Director, SJMC

Future Conclave Announcement

GSCC Conclave 2025, May 10 – 13 Sardinia, Italy



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**In consecutive meetings with the
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Conference, whose participants may visit our presentation sessions.**

Please hold the dates!

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