

Strategic Communications Academy for UF Leaders & Scholars



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**ANN SEARIGHT
CHRISTIANO,
MPAP**
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Ann Searight Christiano is the founder and Director of the Center for Public Interest Communications and a clinical professor in the department of public relations. She developed a first-ever curriculum in public interest communications, connecting practitioners and scholars who are already working in the field, and nurturing and sharing research that can advance this newly emerging academic discipline. Public Interest Communications uses science-driven strategic communications and storytelling to advance positive social change. She completed a 10-year term as the inaugural Karel Chair in Public Interest Communications in May 2020.

Ann also directs the frank gathering, which brings together hundreds of leaders from around the world who are working at the front lines of social causes, as well as scholars and funders to share the best of what they know in Gainesville every February.

Before she came to the University of Florida in 2010, Ann was a senior communications officer for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, where she directed communications efforts for programs that address the social factors like housing, education and mental health that drive health and well-being.

Ann's writing has appeared in the Stanford Social Innovation Review and Quartz and she was the University of Florida's Teacher of the Year in 2014. Her work through the Center includes partnerships with the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, The Department of State, and several agencies that work in this domain. She has worked with several federal agencies, the Gates Foundation, and nonprofits and other foundations throughout the United States. She regularly trains leaders to more effectively convey the importance of their work.



ANNIE NEIMAND,
Ph.D.

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Annie Neimand is the Director of Research for the Center for Public Interest Communications. As the Director of Research, she works with organizations to apply behavioral, cognitive and social science to their work. Partnerships include the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Innovation Service, The United States Department of State, and public interest communications agencies in the United States. For five years, she has led the research arm of *frank*, an annual meeting in Gainesville that connects practitioners, funders, scholars and activists working on public interest communications around the world. In this role, she connects the field of public interest communications practitioners to research.

As part of the SCA Academy Training team, she integrates the research from a range of disciplines into communication trainings for scientists and non-profit leaders. Trainees have included the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, National Academy of Medicine, scientists and program officers at the National Institute for Food and Agriculture; University of Florida scientists, program leaders and educators; and many foundation and nonprofit communicators.

Her writing has been featured in the Stanford Social Innovation Review, The Conversation, Quartz, Salon, The Huffington Post, and Newsweek. Annie is a trained qualitative researcher, with expertise in interviewing, focus groups and ethnography. Her areas of study include the social and psychological underpinnings of public interest communications, science communication, and social movements.



ELLEN NODINE,
MAE

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As the Center's Director of Programs and Training, **Ellen Nodine** oversees the daily operations as well providing leadership in the strategic direction of the unit. As a member of the SCA, she delivers in-person and online training to various constituents. Ellen is also program director for the online master's with a specialization in public interest communications. Ellen has served as the lead organizer for the *frank* gathering since its inception. Ellen received her Masters in Education from UF, with a specialization in Education Technology. Her area of study is community building, social media and social presence.



MATT SHEEHAN,
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Matt Sheehan is managing director of the Center for Public Interest Communications and the interim administrator of the UF Consortium on Trust in Media and Technology. Sheehan is a journalist who has spent his career working in established and emerging media. Currently on the UF journalism faculty, he's served as director of UF's Innovation News Center serving the University's seven media properties, including the NPR, PBS and ESPN affiliates and as the College's director of stories and emerging platforms. He is a former assistant news editor at The Washington Post, was COO of a digital media startup in D.C. and previously worked in administration at University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism.



JACK BARRY,
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Jack Barry, Ph.D. is a postdoctoral research associate at the Center for Public Interest Communications. Jack received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Connecticut. In his previous position he was a postdoctoral research associate at UConn, working closely with the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on their Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative and Study of the United States Institute international programs. His area of research focuses on the impact of information communication technology on development, poverty and politics and also investigating how the internet as a new emergent human right.



BRENDAN
MARTIN

Brendan Martin is the operations and client services coordinator at the Center for Public Interest Communications. He joined the Center shortly after its official launch in 2017. He holds a bachelor's from the University of Florida and currently is working on his master's in public health.

