

Sydney Olivia Scheller

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Education

Ph.D., *Media & Communication, Texas Tech University, Lubbock TX, expected May 2027*

Cognate: Philosophy (Religious Studies)

Research Areas: Faith-based organizations, organizational communication, crisis and risk communication, social media, digital culture, congregational trust, pilgrimage, religious revivals
4.00/4.00 GPA

M.A., *Communication, Asbury University, Wilmore KY, August 2024*

Thesis: *The Kids Are Alright: A Systematic Review of Tumblr's Role in the Queering of American Youth Culture*. Chair: Dr. Jim Shores

Research areas: Youth Culture, Political Communication, Social Media
3.78/4.00 GPA

B.A., *Communication, Asbury University, Wilmore KY, Spring 2020*

Thesis: *Megachurch Pastoral and Online Authority Cultivation*. Chair: Dr. Elizabeth Jones

Concentration: Public Relations; Research Area: Religion and social media
3.69/4.00 GPA, *Cum Laude*

Record of Academic Activity

Instructor of Record

- Texas Tech University, Spring 2025, 40-seat, ONLINE. *COMS 2310: Communication and Popular Culture*
- Texas Tech University, Spring 2025, 60-seat. *COMS 2310: Communication and Popular Culture*
- Texas Tech University, Fall 2024, 45-seat. *COMS 2310: Communication and Popular Culture*

Graduate Assistantships

- Texas Tech University, 2024-2025, *Research Assistant to Dr. Mark Gring*

- Assist in conduction research regarding historical covenantal communication practices utilizing archiving and rhetorical methods
- Asbury University, 2020-2021, *Communication Graduate Assistant*
 - Aided in advising the PRSSA under Dr. Todd Wold, assisting in transition as president to the next generation of leadership. Advised communication and theater undergraduate social media managers alongside Dr. Jim Shores. Managed the @asburygradcom social media channels. Served as a research assistant to Dr. Elizabeth Jones and Dr. Todd Wold.

Publications

- Jones, E., **Scheller, S.**, Vick, N. “#MarketingFaith: Megachurch Pastors as Social Media Influencers.” *Research Perspectives on Social Media Influencers*. Lexington Press, 2021.

Conference Papers and Presentations

- **Scheller, S.** (2025, March). *Thou Shalt Not Cover Up: a Case Study in Megachurch Crisis Communication*. [Conference Presentation]. International Risk and Crisis Communication Conference, Clemson, SC.

Public Engagements

- **Scheller, S.** (2025, March). *From Mishapocalypse to #MeToo: How Tumblr’s Fandom Became a Force for Social Change*. [Invited talk]. Lubbock Comic-Con, Lubbock, TX. Presentation based on master’s thesis research.

Major Research in Progress

- Wold, T. & **Scheller, S.O.** (In Progress). *The Gospel According to the Media: Examining News Frames of the 2023 Asbury Revival*.
 - This study utilizes Entman’s (1993) framing theory and a qualitative content analysis to identify and analyze how the Asbury Revival was framed and in turn impacted public perceptions of the event, contributing both to framing literature and faith-based organization messaging in the mainstream news media.
- **Scheller, S.O.**, Medina, A., Brown, D., & Wold, T. (In Progress). *By Their Words You Will Know Them: Why Churches Need a New Approach to Crisis*.
 - Employing Coomb’s (2007) Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), this study utilizes survey data to determine what role individual religiosity and leaderships’ crisis communication messaging play in maintaining congregational trust following a major crisis event perpetrated by a member of church leadership, contributing to the

growing body of literature which expands crisis communication frameworks for faith-based organizations.

Leadership Positions

- Public Relations Student Society, *Asbury University Chapter*.
 - *President*, 2017-2018; 2019-2020
 - *Vice President*, 2018-2019
- Asbury University Concert Committee, *Asbury Student Congress*.
 - *Chair*, 2018-2020

Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

- Louisville Institute Doctoral Fellowship, Vocation of the Theological Educator Initiative, 2025-2027
 - Nationally competitive fellowship supporting advanced doctoral research in theology and religion. Awarded to doctoral students committed to teaching and scholarship that strengthens religious life and education in North America.
- Top Diffusion Paper (First Place) Recipient, *Innovation Diffusion Lab at Texas Tech University*, April 2025
- Graduate Fellowship Recipient, *Texas Tech University*, 2024-Present
- Dean's List, *Asbury University*, 2017-2020
- Asbury University Communication 2020 Character and Leadership Award, *Asbury University*, Spring 2020
 - Given to one communication student per year who possesses superb leadership abilities and exemplifies the qualities of a servant leader through excellence in both coursework and mentorship of peers and younger students throughout the communication department during his or her four years at Asbury University.
- Outstanding Student Activities Board Member of the Year, *Asbury University*, Spring 2019
 - Given to one board member per year that has excelled both academically and as chair of their committee. Received April 2019 for service to the Student Activities Board while serving as the Concert Committee Chair.
- Servant Leadership Award (Nomination), *Asbury University*, Spring 2019

- o Given to three juniors who excel in servant leadership during their tenure at the University. Nominated by the Communication Department Chair for service to the Communication Major, participation in Asbury Student Congress, and mentorship of younger students.

Work History and Outside Activity

Employment

- Pylons Cloud Innovations, *Sales Development Representative, Oct. 2022-Present*
- Long Haul Management, *Campaign Manager, Nov. 2021-October 2022*

Internships

- International Olympic Committee, Instructional Design Apprentice, Summer 2021
- PR Intern, VisitLex, Lexington KY Spring 2020
- Philanthropy Intern, Christian Student Fellowship, Lexington KY, Fall 2019

Community Service

- Youth Ministry Leader, *Fellowship Church Louisville, Fall 2022-Spring 2023*
- Production Volunteer, *Christian Student Fellowship, Fall 2019-Spring 2020*
- Social Media Assistant and Producer, *Paradox Show, Summer 2019*
- Lead Video Volunteer, *Southeast Christian Church, 2014-2017*

Professional Memberships

- International Crisis & Risk Communication Association, *2025-Present.*
- Public Relations Society of America, *2020-Present.*
- Public Relations Student Society of America, *Asbury University Chapter, 2018-2020.*

References

Dr. Todd Wold

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Dr. Jim Shores

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