

COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COM)

COM 103 Interpersonal Communication 4 credits

Students examine their methods of interpersonal communication in various contexts including dyadic, small group, and mediated communication. Individual activities and group work include both oral and written components. Class discussions and small group activities provide opportunities to practice and refine interpersonal communication skills. Objective exams and quizzes focus on cognitive learning of the principles and concepts in the various communication contexts. (COM 103 is one of the two choices for the communication general education requirement for all students. It is also a prerequisite for all communication majors.)

COM 105 Listening as a Communication Tool 2 credits

An essential skill for administrators is effective listening; too often hearing is confused with listening. Students will discover their personal barriers to effective listening; learn how to mitigate listening barriers to make others feel heard, integrate new listening skills from the telephone to the boardroom, and discover how much better informed they will be about: business, employees, and customer.

COM 109 Introduction to Communication 3 credits

This course introduces the practices and principles of interpersonal communication. This course will require students to gain introductory knowledge of theory as well as apply course concepts through written assignments in addition to individual and group presentations. Emphasis is placed on the communication process. Issues to be addressed include: interpersonal relationships, sending and receiving messages, language, listening, and cultural considerations. Additional emphasis will engage students to think critically about cultural implications regarding interpersonal communication.

COM 205 Small Group Communication 4 credits

Students study and practice communication in small discussion and task groups. Topics include leadership and facilitation of groups as well as group dynamics. Group activities include problem solving discussions and task completion. Course units include goal setting, cohesion and norms, power, leadership, decision-making and problem solving, conflict and facilitating task and interpersonal relations in face-to-face and virtual groups. (Prerequisite: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 212 Public Speaking 4 credits

Students prepare and deliver various types of public performances including speeches and oral interpretation. The evaluation and criticism of speeches is studied. Videotape helps students adjust to their performance style and improve presentation delivery. Course units include speech construction, presentation and delivery, audience and text analysis, informative, persuasive and special occasion speeches as well as visual aid construction. (COM 212 is one of the two choices for the communication general education requirement for all students. It is also a prerequisite for all communication majors.)

COM 222 Social/Mass Media Communication 4 credits

Students study and critically appraise the history and development of the various traditional mass and contemporary social media with an emphasis on the impact of these communication developments on individuals and society. The content of the course also includes a strong focus on the dominant social media platforms and their role in marketing and public relations. Students will be able to edit video and utilize basic metrics applied to online communication tools. (Prerequisite: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 309 Intercultural Communication 4 credits

Students explore the principles and processes of communication between cultures. Course topics include intercultural communication models, the impact of different cultural patterns on the communication process, the anthropological concept world view and its impact on intercultural communication, detection of communication problems in intercultural situations, gender and diversity issues in intercultural communication, and constructing valid strategies for communicating interculturally. (Prerequisite: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 320 Media and Public Relations 4 credits

Students are introduced to both media relations and public relations as fields of study and as a practice. Students will learn and apply principles of media and public relations, including effective and ethical stakeholder management. Topics addressed include communicating with various media, creating strategic public relations plans, audience analysis, how to communicate risk, and managing crisis situations. Special attention is given to the role of social media.

COM 322 History of Film and Television 3 credits

Students study film and television as it has developed throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Screenings of classic films and television are complimented by class analysis and discussion of how the moving image has changed over time. This is not a production course, as students will focus instead on understanding film theory and aesthetics.

COM 325 Social Media Relations & Analytics 4 credits

Students develop an understanding of the theory and strategic management of social media especially in the public relations context. By analyzing history, tactics and current trends, students learn how the public relations process and the goal of relationship building with various stakeholders is impacted by various social media applications. Students also become acquainted with social media tactics in various professional settings. (Required prerequisite: COM 103 or COM 212) (Suggested prerequisite: COM 222)

COM 327 Topics in Communication 2 credits

This course offers students an opportunity to study communication from a variety of contextual perspectives. Topics will vary from term to term. May be repeated.

COM 403 Family Communication 4 credits

Students examine communication patterns in functional families and interpersonal relationships. Reading and discussion are combined with experiential activities. Course units include diverse family systems, health communication, communicating with aging family members and those with disabilities, communication patterns, family roles, power, decision-making, conflict, stress and coping, ecology, and improving family communication. (Prerequisites: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 409 Advanced Intercultural Communication Seminar 4 credits

Advanced Intercultural Communication Seminar advances student knowledge and understanding of the various components of intercultural communication competence. The focus is on deeper exploration of intercultural dimensions, communication styles across cultures, intercultural conflict styles, and bridging cultural differences. Students gain experience in several fundamental approaches to and methods of managing intercultural differences and facilitating intercultural competence development including the communication styles approach and the Cultural Detective method. Students take intercultural assessments and an intercultural conflict styles inventory, to understand how their own intercultural experiences have influenced them. Students in COM 409 participate in discussion boards, analyses, research, and activities to promote further growth in intercultural knowledge and skills. (Prerequisite: COM309)

COM 441 Communication Research Methods 4 credits

Basic quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods are applied to communication studies. The course includes question construction, survey research and design, experimental design, quantitative content analysis and comparisons, and qualitative analysis of participant observation, interviewing and focus group methodology. Critical studies and approaches in the field of communication will be discussed. This course is a prerequisite for COM 442 because it implements the research proposal. (Prerequisites: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 442 Communication Theory 4 credits

Students study and apply theories to human communication including interpersonal and public communication, small groups, mediated communication, persuasion, gender studies, as well as work, friend, and marital relationships. Perspectives on and methods of critical inquiry and research are an integral part of the course content. Research projects are presented to the rest of the class as well as submitted to professional organizations for review. COM 442 implements the research proposal developed in COM 441. COM 442 and COM 443 are intended to be a year-long capstone sequence. (Prerequisites: COM 103, COM 212, and COM 441)

COM 443 Persuasive Communication 4 credits

Students study and apply persuasive communication theories to the study and analysis of communication events including speeches, posters, films, campaigns, television programs, advertising, social media and other forms of public communication. Students examine the ways in which beliefs, values, attitudes, and behavior are deliberately affected through various forms of human and electronic communication. The major project is an application of theory and research. Research projects may be submitted to professional organizations or an online journal for review. COM 442 and COM 443 are intended to be a year-long capstone sequence. (Prerequisites: COM 103 or COM 212)

COM 444 Communication Research Methods 3 credits

Basic quantitative approaches and methods are applied to communication studies. The course includes research question construction, survey research, SPSS, and quantitative comparisons.

COM 478 Organizational Communication 4 credits

Students examine theories of communication systems, processes and assumptions in organization structures. Topics include roles, relationships and responsibilities of individuals within organizations as well as skills in and applications of organizational communication, including communication audits. Interviewing skills in the various demands of organizations will be examined and practiced. Values and ethical communication behaviors are explored through a variety of activities including case studies and self-assessments. Exploration of crisis communication strategies and their effectiveness in organizational image restoration are examined. (Prerequisites: COM 103 and COM 212)

COM 488 Independent Study 1-5 credits

Independent study offers the opportunity to pursue advanced study in communication. Independent study is open only to students with substantial preparatory course work in communication. It is not intended to be taken in the place of a regularly offered course. (Prerequisite: permission of communication faculty)

COM 490 Senior Seminar 2 credits

Students finalize their capstone research project in this culminating experience in the discipline. Students will be expected to prepare their research projects for dissemination to professional organizations for review, presentation, or publication. (Prerequisite: Minimum grade of C- in COM 441 and COM 442, Permission of instructor, Senior Standing)

COM 498 Internship 1-12 credits

Students participate in a variety of internship programs in such experiences as editing, publishing, broadcasting, television, human resources, and public relations under the supervision of Communication faculty. Internships are tailored to the needs, interests, and career aspirations of the student. Portfolios, learning logs, and meetings with the internship faculty supervisor are required for all internships. (Prerequisites: COM 103, COM 212, COM 222, COM 325, ENG 120 and permission of communication faculty advisor)

COM 500 Strategic Leadership and Management 3 credits

Examine strategic leadership and management topics, addressing the communication theories, dynamics, research, principles, and practices prevalent in all aspects of organizational life. Utilize leadership and management theories to address challenges and opportunities facing for-profit corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies. Group relationships are fostered, creating a collaborative learning environment conducive for personal and professional growth that emphasizes effective communication, problem solving, and healthy decision-making.

COM 510 Persuasive Communication 3 credits

This course covers the principles and practices of persuasion, advocacy, and marketing. Learners explore theories of motivation, attitude, and behavior that guide how an ethical communicator strives to gain compliance; properly advocate for people, values, and ideals; and change attitudes and behavior. Students learn about how research informs marketing and persuasion tactics, and apply key concepts and conceptual frameworks in marketing such as how to segment, reach target audiences, and influence others in a socially responsible way. Students work with a communications plan that addresses a real issue that draws upon the things you have learned in this course. Students also have an opportunity to develop presentation skills through in-class presentations.

COM 515 Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethical Leadership 3 credits

Connects morality, ethics, and values with leadership and influence. Explore and respond to challenging organizational dilemmas while balancing personal integrity and organization goals, incorporating these elements into the personal and professional decision-making process. Think critically, gain sensitivity in using appropriate language, express clear ethical reasoning in both written and verbal communication, and research the role of leadership in the creation of an ethical corporate culture. Assess ethical risk to organizations in the public sphere and develop insights into personal philosophies.

COM 520 Media Strategies 3 credits

Develop a structured approach to understanding and managing internal and external communications. Explore media relations, the research and creation of strategic public relations media plans, audience analysis, media characteristics, media and marketing decisions, and how to manage various communication technology functions and budgets. Special attention given to the role of navigating current and future media landscapes.

COM 525 Digital Communication 3 credits

Explore how digital communication technologies affect interpersonal and organizational communication. Address how to use various digital avenues to reach diverse publics. Integrate digital communication tools into strategic communication plans. Devise an effective digital communications campaign.

COM 530 Interactive Media Mgmt 3 credits

This course explores how emerging interactive communication technologies affect interpersonal and organizational communication. Students are introduced to different types of interactive media, while also researching and discussing issues related to cyberspace, virtual communities, collaborative teams, business on global networks, search engine optimization, search engine marketing, digital brand integration, Web analytics, blogs and podcasts, and wireless marketing.

COM 540 Communication Inquiry & Measurement 3 credits

Learn various research methodologies that are relevant and effective in organizational settings. Become an effective organizational change agent. Gather, analyze, and synthesize complex credible information using action research methodologies. Students select a capstone project that will demonstrate, using action research methodology, organizational change management. Utilize change management theory to affect organizational change.

COM 545 Project Management and Analytics 3 credits

Increase leadership effectiveness using resources and tools to manage major projects, analytic performance evaluations, and information from cross-platform projects. Students will utilize project management tools to plan for the successful completion of their capstone project.

COM 550 Communication Strategies for Conflict Management 3 credits

This course provides an overview of the nature and functions of perspectives, viewpoints, and values on conflict, as well as the difficult elements and role of communication in human conflict. Students develop communication skills, such as listening and collaboration, which are necessary for managing conflict productively in interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural contexts. Professionals will gain an understanding of patterns, research strategies, and processes associated with conflict management styles with civility. This course addresses how language, perception, gender communication, generational differences, and context influence the conflict process.

COM 560 Intercultural Communication 3 credits

Explore the major concepts, research, theories, and models that constitute intercultural communication, with an emphasis on using these ideas in applied contexts. Important topics include: worldviews, communication styles, skills development in intercultural arenas, societal influences on stereotyping, ethnocentrism and racism, cultural value orientations, nonverbal dimensions of communication, language interaction, gender communication, intra-cultural issues, stereotypes, intercultural transitions, and adaptation.

COM 570 Leadership Communication 3 credits

Analyze how leadership depends on healthy communication skills that nurture a healthy organizational culture. Critical management techniques also rely on understanding those leadership skills essential to work with people in a dynamic interactive culture. Focus on successful leadership and management strategies as part of human interaction, conflict, decision making, problem solving, persuasion, mentoring, collaboration, team building, change management, and facilitation. Explore how to effectively communicate with top executives in an organizational setting.

COM 575 Content Strategy 3 credits

Create a content strategy that develops meaningful, cohesive, engaging, and sustainable communication content to attract and retain target audiences. Develop a strategic perspective on how content is aligned with customer needs and organizational goals. Analyze stages in the content life cycle. Measure content effectiveness using analytics and feedback. Study storytelling, multi-channel, cross-channels, and omni-channel techniques.

COM 585 Strategic Customer Experience 3 credits

Explore the benefits of a customer centric organization through analyzing different strategic models. Craft a customer experience (CX) strategy to aid organizations in competitive markets. Evaluate how brand, technology, internal and external stakeholders, and processes should be successfully communicated. Understand the dimensions of customer value and effectively map the customer journey.

COM 590 Crisis Communication 3 credits

Address the basic types and elements of crises, and the importance of providing effective leadership and management in those conflict laden times. Intersections with other fields will also be addressed, including public relations, conflict management, and risk management. Analyze the role strategic communication, media relations, power, and organizational culture play during a crisis. Develop tools for dealing with the media in less-than-optimal situations, learn how to develop plans for different critical audiences (both internal and external), analyze effective persuasive methods, and discover ways to utilize effective public relations strategies for communicating the organizational message during a crisis.

COM 595 Reflection and Capstone 3 credits

Review and reflect upon the program's courses and capstone project to leverage learning for future success as a strategic leader. Complete and present the program's capstone project.

COM 610 Corporate Responsibility & Ethical Communication 3 credits

This course explores foundations in personal values and mission statements, decision trees in ethical decision-making, and ethical theories and moral philosophies that relate ethics to organizational, mediated, mass media, and interpersonal communication contexts. The course examines the communication components and hindrances to good ethical decision-making. Students learn how to think critically, gain sensitivity in using appropriate language, express clear ethical reasoning in both written and verbal communication, and research the role of communication in the creation of an ethical corporate culture. Through case studies, readings, and other activities, students are exposed to ethical issues that arise in communication and are required to argue and analyze the ethical dilemmas they will encounter in the working world. Learners will gain skills in assessing ethical risk to organizations in the public sphere and develop insights into their personal philosophies.

COM 695 Capstone 3 credits

The final course provides an opportunity for students to review and reflect upon the courses and experiences in the program. Additional activities add self-confidence in strategic communication management and leadership skills. Students present the completed Action Research Project they have worked on with the project coordinator, and polish their ARP report in an error-free and thorough submission. Students also continue reading and reflection on their course work and experiences as life skill builders. Students receive feedback from their Action Research Project coordinator and share learning with other students in the final presentation.