MATERIAL OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Communication Studies is an academic discipline that concerns human communication—both verbal and nonverbal. It deals with a variety of issues related to these processes, including the sharing of meaning, the encoding and decoding of messages, and the development of relationships using communication in a variety of contexts. Our department has a strong focus on interpersonal communication across a variety of contexts.

The online graduate program in Communication Studies focuses on advanced topics in the field, including:

- interpersonal conflict
- intercultural communication
- health communication
- computer mediated communication
- risk communication
- persuasion and social influence

These areas of study exemplify common topics in communication research. The Department of Communication Studies offers a useful and innovative offering of courses in its online master's degree.

This program is designed for working professionals wishing to advance their careers. It is also an attractive option for aspiring graduate students who wish to pursue a doctoral degree in Communication Studies. For those who aspire to a PhD in other fields, a Master of Arts emphasizing Interpersonal Communication could be a useful stepping stone.

Applications to the online Communication Studies Master's Program are reviewed on a rolling basis, with priority application deadlines of: March 1st for the fall semester; October 1st for the spring semester. We will accept and continue to review applications until all program slots are filled.

Students seeking admission to the graduate program in Communication Studies must submit the following documents to the Office of Graduate Admissions:

1. Graduate Application: The Graduate Application is an institutional application required by SHSU. Students must provide biographical and educational information and information relevant to determining State of Texas residency.
2. Application fee: An application fee is required for all applications to graduate programs at SHSU.
3. Transcripts documenting all prior degrees.
4. Two letters of recommendation that discuss the applicant's suitability for graduate study.
5. A letter of interest that summarizes the applicant's educational and professional goals, how a Communication Studies degree or certificate will help the applicant obtain his/her professional goals, and how the applicant's personal and professional experiences have prepared him/her for our graduate program.
6. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher is expected. Applicants who do not possess a graduate degree and have an undergraduate GPA below 3.0 may submit additional information as evidence of their academic and professional potential. Additional information may include, but is not limited to: GRE scores, a narrative that provides an explanation for the applicant's low GPA and why the GPA is not indicative of the applicant's academic and professional potential, etc.
7. A résumé.

Note: Incomplete applications are held in the Graduate Admissions until they are complete. If you have any questions about your admission file, please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Students enrolled in the Master's Program in Communication Studies must complete 36 hours of coursework. (Please note that there is, currently, no thesis option available in the program.)

Of these hours, at least 30 must be completed within the Department of Communication Studies at Sam Houston State University.

All graduate students are required to take a written comprehensive examination over all coursework taken for the MA degree. Students must be enrolled in the University the semester or summer session in which the comprehensive exam is administered.

The four required courses for the M.A. program may not be offered every academic year. These courses are COMS 5331 Comm Studies Methods & Resrch, COMS 5332 Statistical Methods For Comm, COMS 5335 Advanced Communication Theory, and COMS 5360 Adv Interpersonal Communicatn.
It is important, therefore, that when students notice any one of these courses being offered in a given semester, they should register to take the course during that semester. Otherwise, the student may not be able to graduate on time, even if he or she takes a full load every semester because he or she is lacking a core course. Students should contact the Graduate Director if they need academic advisement.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMS 5331</td>
<td>Comm Studies Methods &amp; Resrch</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMS 5332</td>
<td>Statistical Methods For Comm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMS 5360</td>
<td>Adv Interpersonal Communicat</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMS 5335</td>
<td>Advanced Communication Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Additional Courses**

Select an additional 24 hours of COMS graduate elective courses from the following:

- COMS 5333 Qualitative Comm Research
- COMS 5350 Computer Mediated Comm
- COMS 5361 Dark Side of Communication
- COMS 5362 Advanced Intercultural Comm
- COMS 5363 Interpersonal Conflict
- COMS 5364 Contemporary Family Comm
- COMS 5370 Health Communication
- COMS 5371 Sex & Gender In Communication
- COMS 5375 Grad Readings in Communication
- COMS 5380 Advanced Family Communication
- COMS 5381 Intergenerational Family Comm
- COMS 5382 Dark Side of Family Comm
- COMS 5390 Seminar In Interpersonal Comm
- COMS 5391 Seminar In Family Communicatn
- COMS 5395 Social Support and Well-Being
- COMS 5396 Risk Communication
- COMS 5397 Persuasion & Social Influence
- COMS 5398 Sexual and Affectionate Comm

**Total Hours**

36

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) marketable skills initiative is part of the state’s 60x30TX plan and was designed to help students articulate their skills to employers. Marketable skills are those skills valued by employers and/or graduate programs that can be applied in a variety of work or education settings and may include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas.

The MA in Communication Studies is designed to provide graduates with the following marketable skills:

- Professional oral and written communication.
- Effective Presentation skills.
- Research and analytical skills.
- Evaluation of sources and information validity.
- Data synthesis.
- Critical thinking and the ability to compare and contrast information.
- Multi-cultural and diversity competencies.
- Conflict management and resolution.
- Interpersonal communication.
- Listening skills.
- Leadership and teamwork.
- Problem solving.
- Ethical communication