

# MASTER 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 graduate program equips individuals with the credentials to teach at community colleges, dual credit high school courses, or serve as adjunct faculty. It also provides a strong foundation for those pursuing professional careers. With flexible electives tailored to diverse professional goals, the program is particularly suited for individuals aiming to advance their careers in fields such as education, management, leadership, corporate training, consulting, human resources, and nonprofit management.

**Additional information:** Reference the Program Landing Page (<https://www.shsu.edu/programs/graduate/communication-studies/>) for additional information, such as cost, delivery format, contact information, or to schedule a visit.

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 (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-admissions/prospective-students.html>):

1. Graduate Application (<http://www.shsu.edu/admissions/apply-texas.html>): 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 (<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-studies/application-fee.html>): An application fee is required for all applications to graduate programs at SHSU.
3. Transcripts documenting all prior degrees.\*
4. Applications with a GPA of 3.25 or higher will be automatically admitted into the program regardless of their major. Applications with a GPA of 3.0-3.24 that have a major in communication studies or related (e.g., sociology, psychology) will be automatically admitted into the program. Applications with a GPA of 2.99 or lower will be required to submit a letter of intent 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, how the applicant's personal and professional experiences have prepared him/her for our graduate program, and 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.

\*Applicants may submit unofficial transcripts for review by the admissions committee. However, under university policy, admission decisions are contingent upon receipt of official transcripts.

Applicants must submit all application materials directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-admissions/transition.html>) by the university deadlines of August 1 for Fall, December 1 for Spring, and May 15 for Summer.

**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 (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-admissions/prospective-students.html>).

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 Communication Studies Methods and Research, COMS 5332 Statistical Methods For Communication, COMS 5335 Advanced Communication Theory, and COMS 5360 Advanced Interpersonal Communication. 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 for academic advisement.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Master of Arts in Communication Studies</b>		
<b>Required courses</b>		
COMS 5331	Communication Studies Methods and Research	3
COMS 5332	Statistical Methods For Communication	3
COMS 5360	Advanced Interpersonal Communication	3
COMS 5335	Advanced Communication Theory	3
<b>Prescribed Electives</b>		

Select an additional 24 hours of COMS 5000 level course work. <sup>1</sup>	24
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>36</b>

<sup>1</sup> COMS Prescribed Elective coursework must be in addition to Required Courses, therefore, excludes the use of COMS 5331, COMS 5332, COMS 5360 or COMS 5335.

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 competencies.
- Conflict management and resolution.
- Interpersonal communication.
- Leadership and teamwork.
- Problem solving.
- Ethical communication