

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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About

The Masters in Communication Studies provides for aspiring students in communication studies, professionals wishing to advance their careers, and educators seeking to teach dual-credit courses. For those who aspire to a PhD, an MA emphasizing interpersonal communication could be a useful stepping stone. Students in the MA program may apply for the Certificate in Communication Studies after successfully completing 18 credit hours and the required courses.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Communication Studies is to provide students with understanding and competency related to human communication as it occurs in a variety of settings and contexts. In the process, faculty are devoted to developing their expertise to the highest level and to developing the potential of students to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to live fulfilled and productive lives.

Highlights

- Graduate assistantships are available on a competitive basis.
- Graduates have gone on to Ph.D. programs at elite universities.
- Faculty provide collaboration opportunities for publication.
- Travel support available for graduate students for professional conference attendance/presentations.
- Master of Arts in Communication Studies
- Graduate Certificate in Communication Studies

COMS 5331. Communication Studies Methods and Research. 3 Hours.

Students examine graduate level research methods, including quantitative and qualitative approaches. Topics may include data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Students develop individual research proposals.

COMS 5332. Statistical Methods For Communication. 3 Hours.

Students focus on various statistical techniques used in communication research. Topics may include univariate and bivariate techniques, hypothesis testing for single and multiple samples, as well as methods used to investigate relationships between two or more variables such as ANOVA, ANCOVA, and multiple regression analysis. Students participate in research activities using statistical techniques.

COMS 5333. Qualitative Communication Research. 3 Hours.

Students examine various qualitative communication research methods and designs. The focus of this course is on the identification and creation of communication research problems, the development of designs, data collection, and analysis procedures to address those problems.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

COMS 5334. Pedagogy of Public Speaking for Novice Instructors. 3 Hours.

Students examine and evaluate theories, techniques, and strategies for teaching public speaking and develop instructional resources for teaching public speaking. Further, students evaluate different course designs and strategies for public speaking classes, including active learning and flipped classroom practices. Topics include public speaking theories, public speaking assessment, and public speaking course design.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing.

COMS 5335. Advanced Communication Theory. 3 Hours.

Students survey and evaluate communication theory from varied empirical and critical perspectives. Students scrutinize the process of theory building in order to evaluate existing theories.

COMS 5350. Computer Mediated Communication. 3 Hours.

Students examine how computers mediate communication in various contexts, such as interpersonal relationships, privacy, cyberbullying, social support, and family dynamics. Students study and conduct empirical research on the topic. Prerequisite: None.

COMS 5360. Advanced Interpersonal Communication. 3 Hours.

Students explore methodological and theoretical issues in relational communication with special attention to building ongoing research projects in support of theory.

COMS 5361. Dark Side of Communication. 3 Hours.

Students explore some of the darker aspects of communication, such as how negative behaviors can impact both the perpetrator and the victim of such behaviors. Topics may include bullying, criticism, complaints, verbal aggression, and revenge.

COMS 5362. Advanced Intercultural Communication. 3 Hours.

Students explore current theories and research in the area of intercultural communication, mainly from an interpersonal perspective. Topics may include self-disclosure, interpersonal trust, mate selection, love, interracial relationships, and arranged marriage.

COMS 5363. Interpersonal Conflict. 3 Hours.

Students explore current theories and research in the area of intercultural communication, mainly from an interpersonal perspective. Topics may include self-disclosure, interpersonal trust, mate selection, love, interracial relationships, and marriage.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

COMS 5364. Contemporary Family Communication. 3 Hours.

Students engage in historical, theoretical, and social research related to families. Students learn how families in the United States are adapting to the current social, economic, and political environments. Students use a comparative approach to family communication, emphasizing diversity, focusing on how social inequity shapes family experiences, and understanding how personal family experiences fit into the larger social, cultural, and historical context.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

COMS 5365. Affectionate Communication in Close Relationships. 3 Hours.

Students examine popular theories and research on affectionate communication. Students also investigate the role of affectionate communication in a variety of relationships (e.g., marital and premarital; long-term and short-term; familial relationships; friendships). Students gain knowledge of important theories of affectionate communication and critique research that examines affectionate communication. Students compose a comprehensive literature review on affectionate communication.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing.

COMS 5366. Sexual Communication. 3 Hours.

Students explore diverse perspectives on sexual communication, investigate different theories and methodologies related to sexual communication, analyze the historical evolution of sexual communication, and critically evaluate existing research in the field. Moreover, students examine sexual communication within various relationship contexts, including marital and premarital, long-term relationships, and casual sexual relationships.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing.

COMS 5367. Nonverbal Comm. In Close Relationships. 3 Hours.

Students explore communication theory and research of nonverbal communication in the contexts of close relationships. Students discuss theoretical contributions, ethical considerations, methodological applications, and practical implications of scholarly work by exploring topics of nonverbal communication in contexts such as attraction, affection, power, conflict, deception, and emotions, etc.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing.

COMS 5370. Advanced Health Communication. 3 Hours.

Students investigate health communication topics that relate to and influence the family and other relationships. Topics may include perspectives and theories in public health, adolescent alcohol and drug abuse, parent-child-physician communication, telemedicine, and rural health concerns.

COMS 5371. Sex & Gender In Communication. 3 Hours.

Students study sex and gender differences and similarities in communication behavior. Students examine the sex and gender scholarship and assess its implications for understanding communication in interpersonal and family relationships.

COMS 5375. Graduate Readings in Communication. 1-3 Hours.

Students study topics that are not covered elsewhere in the graduate curriculum.

COMS 5380. Advanced Family Communication. 3 Hours.

Students examine methodological and theoretical issues in family communication.

COMS 5381. Intergenerational Family Communication. 3 Hours.

Students assess theory and research on family communication as it occurs between members of different generations. Students also examine how the communication between family members of the same generation differs from the communication between family members of another generation.

COMS 5382. Dark Side of Family Communication. 3 Hours.

Students explore the role communication plays in a variety of family problems. Topics may include jealousy, domestic abuse, negligent parenting, and conflict escalation.

COMS 5390. Seminar In Interpersonal Communication. 3 Hours.

Students study advanced topics in interpersonal communication theory and research. Topics rotate from semester to semester. Students may repeat for credit when topics change.

COMS 5391. Seminar In Family Communication. 3 Hours.

Students study advanced topics in family communication theory and research. Topics rotate from semester to semester. Students may repeat for credit when topics change.

COMS 5395. Social Support and Well-Being. 3 Hours.

Students explore theories and research related to the communication of social support and its role in physical, psychological, and social outcomes.

COMS 5396. Advanced Risk Communication. 3 Hours.

Students examine theories and research related to the communication of health, environmental, and technological risks.

COMS 5397. Persuasion & Social Influence. 3 Hours.

Students analyze theories and research related to persuasion and social influence. Topics may include attitudinal and behavioral change.

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