

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.

As an accelerated program, classes are scheduled in 7.5-week sessions during the fall and spring semesters (7A and 7B sessions). Summer courses are 10 weeks.

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.

Students are admitted to the graduate program on a rolling basis throughout the year. Students may be admitted in the Fall, Spring, and Summer. The application deadline for the Fall 7A session is August 1st and for the Fall 7B session is October 1st. The application deadline for the Spring 7A session is December 1st and the Spring 7B session is February 20th. The application deadline for Summer is May 15th. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Admission into the program is based on the listed requirements and faculty/student ratios. Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered only if there is space available in the program. 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. If a non-communication related major applies with a GPA of 3.0-3.24, a letter of intent is required. 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.

Note: Incomplete applications are held in the Office of 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 must complete 30 hours of coursework within the Communication Studies discipline. In lieu of comprehensive exams or a thesis, M.A.-seeking graduate students are required to complete a capstone course at the end of their program. Students must be enrolled in the University the semester in which their capstone course is taken.

Other than COMS 5399, the four required courses for the M.A. program may not be offered every semester. Therefore, students should register for a required course when it is offered; 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 required course. Students should contact the Graduate Director for academic advisement.

Six hours of transfer credits may be applied with prior approval from the Graduate Director, Dean of the academic college, and Dean of Graduate Students.

Code	Title	Hours
Master of Arts in Communication Studies		
Required Courses		
COMS 5331	Communication Studies Methods and Research	3
COMS 5332	Statistical Methods For Communication	3
COMS 5335	Advanced Communication Theory	3

COMS 5360	Advanced Interpersonal Communication	3
COMS 5399	Capstone in Communication: Theory & Research	3
Prescribed Electives		
Select an additional 15 hours of COMS 5000 level course work. ¹		15
Total Hours		30

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

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