

COMMUNICATION STUDIES, BAC

Overview

The Communication Studies major provides students with an integrated skill set in oral and written communication that prepares them to be competent communicators in their personal, civic, and professional roles.

The BAC in Communication Studies (COM) program offers foundational courses in communication theory and methods, along with emphasis areas in rhetoric and public discourse, interpersonal communication, critical and cultural communication, and organizational leadership.

By teaching students to think critically, to express and advocate ideas effectively, and to understand and appreciate the diversity of human communication practices, the major in Communication Studies prepares graduates to work as communication professionals in a variety of contexts.

Co-Curricular Student Activities

The department supports a diversified program of co-curricular student activities in competitive speaking and individual events, argument, and debate and in peer consulting through The Speaking Studio. Members of the Alabama Forensic Council participate in regional and national intercollegiate competitions. Students in the Alabama Debate Society participate in high school debate outreach as well as exhibitions.

Students in the Public Speaking Program may compete for the Oscar Newton Outstanding Speaker Prize, as well as for the coveted Holle Award for Excellence in Public Speaking.

Majors who meet the requirements for membership in *Lambda Pi Eta* are invited to join the honor society and to participate in its service activities.

Accelerated Masters Program (AMP) in Communication Studies

Open only to eligible UA Communication Studies majors – students admitted into this program are able to earn both the BA and MA in communication studies at The University of Alabama in five years. For the highly motivated and academically gifted student, this program offers several distinct advantages:

- Faster, more economical plan of study than earning the two degrees separately
- Richer undergraduate degree experience, fewer unrelated core courses, and more courses in the communication studies major
- Stronger mentoring relationship with the communication studies faculty
- Greater opportunity to develop understanding of the field in preparation for advanced graduate study

Students may apply for admission into this program, after completing 90 semester hours with a 3.3 GPA or better, through the Graduate School admission process. Admission to the Graduate School will be granted if the student has (a) met all the admission criteria for the graduate program, (b) completed three-fourths of the hours required for the major and the minor, and (c) been recommended for admission by the department. Upon admission to the Graduate School, the student will be allowed to take graduate-level courses and begin a program of study leading to the Master of Arts in communication studies. Once enrolled in AMP, communication studies students may count up to 10 hours of credit dually (toward both degrees).

Core Curriculum and General Education Requirements

Communication Studies majors must complete a total of 120 hours for graduation; no more than 45 hours in Communication Studies (COM) may be counted toward the total 120 hours required for graduation.

Core Curriculum and General Education Requirements for the COM major include a 6-credit sequence in History (HY), not a 6-credit sequence in Literature (L). COM courses with Core designations may also fulfill requirements in Humanities (HU) and/or Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB). The full General Education requirements for the COM major are listed here:

General Education Requirements		Hours
Freshman Composition (FC)		
EN 101	English Composition (or by exam or equivalent)	3
EN 102	English Composition (or by exam or equivalent)	3
Humanities (HU) and Fine Arts (FA)		
Fine Arts (FA)		3
Literature (L)		3
Humanities (HU)		6
May include the following:		
COM 100	Rhetoric And Society ¹	
COM 122	Critical Decision Making ¹	
or		
COM 121 Crit Decisn Makng Honors		
COM 123	Public Speaking ¹	
or		
COM 124 Honors Public Speaking		
COM 210	Oral Interpretn Literatr ¹	
		Credit Hours Subtotal: 18
Natural Science (N) and Mathematics (MA)		
Natural Science (N)		8
Mathematics (MA)		3
		Credit Hours Subtotal: 11
History (HI) and Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB)		
History Sequence (HI)		6
Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB)		6
May include the following:		
COM 101	Principles Human Communication ¹	
COM 220	Interpersonal Communication ¹	
or		
COM 219 Honors Interpersonal Comm		
		Credit Hours Subtotal: 12
Pre-major Requirements		
COM 100 or	Rhetoric And Society	3
COM 101	Principles Human Communication	
Foreign Language (FL) or Computer Science (CS)		6-8
		Credit Hours Subtotal: 9-11
W-designated Courses in the Major		
Select a minimum of six hours of the following: ²		6
COM 300	Human Communication Research	

COM 310	Rhetorical Criticism	
COM 341	Rhetoric & Amer Politics	
COM 342	Rhetoric Social Protest	
COM 380	Influence	
COM 413	Communication & Diversity	
COM 415	African American Rhetoric	
COM 450	Adv Organization Communication	
COM 463	Relational Communication	
COM 465	Intercultural Communication	
Credit Hours Subtotal:		6
Total Hours		56-58

Footnotes

- ¹ These courses are cross-listed as meeting core requirements as well as the major.
- ² Select a minimum of six hours of COM Writing courses (W), at least three hours of which must be either COM 300 Human Communication Research or COM 310 Rhetorical Criticism.

Communication Studies Major

Communication Studies majors must complete a minimum of 36 hours in COM courses, as outlined below. A minimum of 21 of the 36 hours in the major (COM) should be completed in upper division (300 or 400-level) courses.

The program of instruction should be planned in consultation with a professional and faculty advisors and must include COM 499 Capstone Seminar, for a total of 15 hours in requirements and a minimum of 21 hours in elective COM courses.

Requirements for a Major in Communication Studies		Hours
Foundational Requirement - 3 hrs. ¹		
COM 100 or	Rhetoric And Society	3
COM 101	Principles Human Communication	
Foundation in Oral Performance - 3 hrs.		
COM 122 or	Critical Decision Making	3
COM 121	Crit Decisn Makng Honors	
or		
COM 123	Public Speaking	
or		
COM 124	Honors Public Speaking	
or		
COM 104	Forensics	
Additional Oral Performance Requirement - 3 hrs.		
COM 210 or	Oral Interpretn Literatr	3
COM 323	Advanced Public Speaking	
or		
COM 348	Argumentation	
or		
COM 123	Public Speaking	
or		
COM 124	Honors Public Speaking	
or		
COM 122	Critical Decision Making	
or		

COM 121	Crit Decisn Makng Honors	
or		
COM 104	Forensics	
Methods Requirement - 3 hrs.		
COM 300 or	Human Communication Research	3
COM 310	Rhetorical Criticism	
COM Electives - see Suggested Areas of Emphasis below ⁴		21
Capstone Requirement ^{2,3}		
COM 499	Capstone Seminar (may not enroll before completing either COM 300 or COM 310)	3
Total Hours		36

Footnotes

- ¹ **NOTE: Although not required, the department strongly recommends that Communication Studies majors take both COM 100 Rhetoric And Society and COM 101 Principles Human Communication.**
- ² Intended to be taken in the final semester of coursework
- ³ May not be taken prior to the completion of a theory foundation/ method and analysis course combination, either COM 100/COM 310 or COM 101/COM 300
- ⁴ Students need to take their second W-designated course in their COM electives.

COM Elective Emphasis Areas

Through the selection of elective courses, Communication Studies majors may choose to emphasize one of the following focused areas of study: rhetoric and public discourse, communication and culture, interpersonal communication, or organizational leadership. Communication Studies majors do not have to select an area of emphasis for their elective coursework; however, they are encouraged to plan their individual programs of study with the guidance of their academic advisor. The courses listed below for each of these areas are recommendations, not requirements.

Rhetoric and Public Discourse

This emphasis area focuses on argumentation, the effective construction and critical analysis of persuasive public messages, and the role of rhetoric in constructing, sustaining, or changing the political, social, or cultural order. This area also focuses on communication theories and practices evident in public (political, social, cultural) discourse, artifacts, and campaigns. Attention is given to such areas of analysis and practice as public speaking, argumentation and debate, and the role of media in various public contexts. The area is an ideal pre-professional emphasis for students interested in careers in the legal profession, and this emphasis area is one means of helping pre-law students prepare broadly for that career. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include American Studies, Creative Media, Criminal Justice, English, Gender and Race Studies, History, News Media, Philosophy, or Political Science.

Code and Title	Hours	
COM 301	Intro Rhetorical Theory	3
COM 323	Advanced Public Speaking	3
COM 341	Rhetoric & Amer Politics	3
COM 342	Rhetoric Social Protest	3
COM 348	Argumentation	3
COM 380	Influence	3
COM 415	African American Rhetoric	3

COM 421	Political Communication	3
COM 422	Communication and the Law	3
COM 425	Gender & Political Communctn	3
COM 467	Seminar in Public Address	3
COM 480	Propaganda	3

Communication and Culture

This emphasis area explores public communication in a wide variety of contexts and settings. The focus is on the influence of rhetoric and visual communication on individuals, communities, and the larger social world. Students interested in careers involving community or social change or human services (e.g., the ministry), or in postgraduate study in communication studies or media studies should consider this emphasis. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include Anthropology, Advertising and Public Relations, American Studies, Apparel and Textiles, Art History, Creative Media, English/Creative Writing, Gender and Race Studies, International Studies, Modern Languages, News Media, Religious Studies, or Theatre.

Code and Title	Hours	
COM 210	Oral Interpretn Literatr	3
COM 250	Nonverbal Communication	3
COM 270	Discourse of Sport	3
COM 320	Truth, Ethics, and Deception	3
COM 340	Rhetoric & Popular Culture	3
COM 366	Visual Culture & Communication	3
COM 380	Influence	3
COM 413	Communication & Diversity	3
COM 415	African American Rhetoric	3
COM 462	Theories Of Persuasion	3
COM 465	Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469	Communication & Gender	3

Interpersonal Communication

The focus of this area is on knowledge and skills vital to successful interpersonal communication in personal, family or group, and organizational or professional settings. Emphases include social, cognitive, and cultural influences on personal and professional interaction and such skills as conflict resolution, small group problem solving, effective interviewing, and intercultural communication. It is appropriate for students interested in professional and administrative careers in business, educational or human services, and media organizations. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include Advertising and Public Relations, Consumer Sciences, Creative Media, Economics, General Business, Human Development and Family Studies, International Studies, Management, News Media, Psychology, Real Estate, Sociology, Social Welfare or World Business.

Code and Title	Hours	
COM 220	Interpersonal Communication	3
COM 225	Small Group Communicatn	3
COM 250	Nonverbal Communication	3
COM 320	Truth, Ethics, and Deception	3
COM 330	Family Communication	3
COM 413	Communication & Diversity	3
COM 430	Dark Side of Interpersonl Comm	3
COM 460	Group Leadership	3

COM 463	Relational Communication	3
COM 465	Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469	Communication & Gender	3

Organizational Leadership

This emphasis area focuses on the development of communication skills applicable for leading small groups and organizations and strengthening individual professional communication. These elective courses work to combine the application of communication theory with practical skills for those who aspire for leadership roles in educational, professional, corporate, non-profit, or political careers by providing the opportunity to develop those skills with diverse groups of people and in different contexts.

Code and Title	Hours	
COM 225	Small Group Communicatn	3
COM 270	Discourse of Sport	3
COM 350	Organizatnl Communicatn	3
COM 352	Business Prof Communication	3
COM 380	Influence	3
COM 413	Communication & Diversity	3
COM 422	Communication and the Law	3
COM 450	Adv Organization Communication	3
COM 455	Leadership & Strategic Comm	3
COM 460	Group Leadership	3
COM 462	Theories Of Persuasion	3
COM 465	Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469	Communication & Gender	3

What Can I Do With a Degree in Communication Studies?

Alumni of the Communication Studies program have pursued careers in:

- Human Resources Management
- Organizational Training and Development
- Legal Communication
- Political Communication and Campaign Management
- Nonprofit Leadership
- Youth Ministry and Pastoral Work
- Political Reporting
- Sports Production and Promotion
- Public Relations Administration
- Health and Wellness Promotion
- Hospital Administration
- Health Care Advocacy
- Fundraising and Grant Writing
- Event Coordination
- Radio and Television Production
- Hospitality and Leisure Management
- Performing Arts

- Sales
- Social Media Management
- Computing Software Development
- Social Work and Counseling
- Forensics and Debate Coach
- College or University Professor
- College or University Administrator

Dan Mangis

Faculty

Professor

Robin Boylorn

Associate professors

Meredith Bagley

Adam Brooks

Sim Butler

Darrin Griffin

Nikita Harris

Sara Hartley

Leah LeFebvre

Mary Meares

Jessy Ohl

Joshua Pederson

Assistant professors

Noor Ghazal Aswad

Anneliese Bolland

Kaylin Duncan

Peter Jensen

Jeoghyun Oh

Caroline Parsons

Cynthia Peacock

Ben Pyle

Jaclyn Shetterly

Senior Instructor

Angela Billings

Instructor

Brent Mitchell

Interim Department Chair

Darrin Griffin

Professors emeriti

Beth Bennett

Thomas Harris

Mark D. Nelson

Associate professor emeritus

Frank M. Thompson, Jr.

Adjunct assistant professors

Jane S. Baker