Department of Communication

The Department of Communication offers the Master of Arts Degree in Communication.

Master of Arts Degree in Communication

The Master of Arts Degree in Communication offers students the opportunity to pursue advanced study in Communication. This program is grounded in the concept of Integrated Communication and encourages students' development of broad perspectives in applying research, discovery, critical thinking, and creative enterprise to addressing the practical needs of individuals and groups in a variety of settings. The faculty intend to develop students' knowledge and skills in communication that are requisite for success in leadership, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors in business, public sector, and nonprofit environments.

Admission Requirements

In addition to satisfying University-wide admission requirements, applicants must meet the following Communication requirements for unconditional admission:

1. Provide two letters of recommendation from academic sources with the option of an additional letter from either an academic or a professional source (no more than three letters should be submitted). Letters from academic sources are expected, but if the applicant has been out of school for a significant period of time, letters from professional sources who can attest to the applicant's academic potential may be considered.

2. Provide a statement of purpose, 500–750 words in length, describing the applicant's academic and other qualifications to be admitted to this program, areas of interest in the program, and goals related to pursuing the Master’s degree in Communication.

3. Submit transcripts from all undergraduate programs.

The number of students admitted to this program may be limited.

Degree Requirements

The minimum number of semester credit hours required for this degree is 36, exclusive of coursework or other study required to remove admission deficiencies. Any grade lower than "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) in a graduate course will not count toward the 36 semester credit hours of coursework required in Items A through E.

Candidates for the degree must complete the following requirements:

A. 15 semester credit hours of core courses:

- COM 5003 Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication 3
- COM 5013 Communication Theory 3
- COM 5023 Quantitative Research Methods 3
- COM 5033 Qualitative Research Methods 3
- COM 5103 Theories and Applications of Communication 3

B. 9 semester credit hours (for the thesis or project option) or 15 semester credit hours (for the non-thesis/project option) of prescribed electives in Communication in consultation with the Graduate Advisor of Record.

C. 6 semester credit hours of free electives in consultation with the Graduate Advisor of Record.

These courses may be in Communication or outside the program, but courses must relate to the student’s program of study.

D. No more than a total of 6 semester credit hours from the following may be applied to the Master’s degree.

- COM 6933 Directed Readings
- COM 6943 Internship in Communication
- COM 6951 Independent Study
- COM 6953 Independent Study

E. Master’s Thesis or Project

Students pursuing the thesis or project option must complete COM 6983 Master’s Thesis (6 hours) or COM 6993 Master’s Project (6 hours). Students must complete at least 18 hours of coursework and maintain a 3.25 grade point average before they may enroll in COM 6983 Master’s Thesis or COM 6993 Master’s Project.

F. Comprehensive Examination

As per University requirements, all students must complete a comprehensive examination as detailed below.

Total Credit Hours 36

1. COM 5003 Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication must be taken in the student’s first semester of graduate coursework.

As soon as a student completes 12 hours of graduate coursework in Communication, he or she must meet with the Graduate Advisor of Record to devise a program of study.

In addition to the semester credit hours set forth above, candidates for the degree are required to successfully pass a written exam and then an oral defense of the written exam tailored to the student’s program and specialized coursework. The comprehensive examination is offered each Fall and Spring semester. The comprehensive examination is normally taken in the semester in which the candidate is due to complete his or her graduate study. Enrollment in COM 6961 Comprehensive Examination is required each term in which the comprehensive examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. The comprehensive examination can only be taken twice.

Students in the thesis or project option, in addition to passing both a written comprehensive examination and oral defense of the written exam, will present a written prospectus at a meeting for approval by their thesis or project committee and defend the prospectus. Students in the thesis or project option will also orally defend the final thesis or project before the committee.