Department of Communication Studies

Why study communication studies?

The Communication Studies undergraduate major equips students with a diversity of skill sets by investigating communication in various cultural contexts, including relational, organizational, intercultural, political, and more.

In an increasingly globalized world, competent communication is crucial for career advancement, interpersonal relationships, and public democratic participation. Here’s what we know: humans rely on communication, and the creation and translation of symbols, language, and messages are integral to daily interactions. In other words, communication connects us.

The major expands on fundamental public speaking principles from the introductory course through emphasizing theories, methods, performances that apply to everyday communication practices.

Undergraduate Programs

In our complex, mediated, global, and pluralistic world, we are awash in messages. Others seek to influence our ideas and our actions, and we seek to influence theirs. Studying human communication in its many forms and contexts enables students to be engaged civic participants, reflective audience analysts, effective communicators at work and in relationships, and reflective consumers of messages. Examining communication through historical and contemporary lenses demonstrates its power to move individuals, to enable the development of groups ranging from families to nations, and to inspire events. The communication studies curriculum prepares students to engage with the world they enter as thoughtful, critical communicators and as agents of community building in a global world.

Graduate Programs

The Department of Communication Studies offers a Graduate Certificate, Master of Arts, and Doctorate of Philosophy. Non-degree seeking students who have completed an undergraduate degree may apply to take graduate-level courses in COMS.

Graduate Certificate Program

The 4-course, 12-hour Professional Workplace Communication certificate is intended to increase communication competencies for effective decision-making, team-building, problem-solving, and crisis-resolution practices with various professional stakeholders.

Lawrence campus M.A. Program

The M.A. program is designed as a 30-hour, 2-year degree program in either Relationships & Social Interaction or Rhetoric & Political Communication. Students will complete a thesis or non-thesis plan of study. The primary mission of the Master of Arts in COMS is to introduce graduate students to the process of conducting original research in human communication. The majority of our MA students go on to pursue a PhD in communication or a related field. Others use the MA as preparation for careers in business, legal consulting, politics, social work, or other related areas of employment.

Edwards campus M.A. Program

The M.A. also is offered on the KU Edwards Campus (http://edwardscampus.ku.edu) in Overland Park. The requirements for the degree at the Edwards Campus are the same as for the program on the Lawrence campus. Edwards Campus classes are taught by the same faculty members who teach regularly in Lawrence. Courses are scheduled during the late afternoons and evenings to accommodate working professionals.

Ph.D. Program

The doctoral program in COMS is designed to as an intensive, 4-year program with content in experimental, qualitative, quantitative, and rhetorical methods. Students may specialize in either Relationships & Social Interaction or Rhetoric & Political Communication. The primary mission of the Doctor of Philosophy in COMS is to train students in the process of conducting original research in human communication. With few exceptions, KU PhD graduates pursue careers doing research and teaching in higher educations.

Dual-title Ph.D. in Communication Studies and Gerontology

This dual-title degree is an option available to students who have first been admitted to the doctoral program. The dual-title degree allows the pursuit of a single degree that incorporates study within a traditional discipline and training in an interdisciplinary field; the student is awarded one degree (Ph.D.) with both titles identified on the diploma (e.g., “Ph.D. in Communication Studies and Gerontology”).

This option is designed to appeal to students who are strong in a traditional discipline but also motivated to study across disciplinary lines. In the course of study, students can avail themselves of disciplinary depth and interdisciplinary breadth. At the post-doctoral stage, dual-title graduates will have enhanced career and employment opportunities, able to claim expertise in one or both titles of their degree when seeking positions in education and research.

More information about this option, its admissions requirements, and plan of study can be found on the department website or the website of the Gerontology program (http://gerontology.ku.edu/dual-title-phd-program-gerontology-0).

Courses

COMS 104. Introduction to Communication Studies. 3 Hours H. Survey of the major areas of the Communication Studies field. Provides an overview of communication theory and research methods, and introduces key topics, approaches, and applications in core areas such as rhetoric, organizational communication, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, and communication technology. LEC.

COMS 130. Speaker-Audience Communication. 3 Hours GE22 / U. Study of rhetorical theory and its application to the preparation, presentation, and criticism of oral discourse in audience situations. Special consideration of listening behavior and of the ethical conduct of speech in a free society. This course fulfills the College argument and reason requirement. LEC.

COMS 131. Speaker-Audience Communication, Honors. 3 Hours GE22 / U. The study of rhetorical theory and its application to the preparation, presentation, and criticism of oral discourse in audience situations. Special consideration of listening behavior and of the ethical conduct of speech in a free society. This course fulfills the College argument and
reason requirement. This is an honors section of COMS 130 open only to students in the Honors Program. LEC.

COMS 132. Speaker-Audience Communication for the Professional Schools. 3 Hours GE22 / H.
This course focuses on the study of oral communication: the application, preparation, presentation and criticism of messages appropriate in the business or organizational setting. Special consideration is given to speaker confidence, working in teams, listening behaviors and application of communication theories to the audience and rhetorical situation. Not open to students with credit in COMS 150. Prerequisite: Open only to students in the professional schools. LEC.

COMS 133. Speaker-Audience Communication for the Professional Schools, Honors. 3 Hours GE22 / H.
This course focuses on the study of oral communication: the application, preparation, presentation and criticism of messages appropriate in the business or organizational setting. Special consideration is given to speaker confidence, working in teams, listening behaviors and application of communication theories to the audience and rhetorical situation. Not open to students with credit in COMS 150. Prerequisite: Open only to students in the professional schools who are members of the University Honors Program. LEC.

COMS 150. Personal Communication. 3 Hours U.
This course is an introduction to communication theory, process, and skill. The course seeks to increase the student's understanding of communication theory, both interpersonal and public, and of his or her own communicative behavior. Class projects and participation urge students to apply this theoretical knowledge to a variety of settings, including interpersonal and addressing groups and audiences. This course does not fulfill the College argument and reason requirement. Not open to those who have credit in COMS 130. LEC.

COMS 177. First Year Seminar: ____, 3 Hours GE11 / U.
A limited-enrollment, seminar course for first-time freshmen, addressing current issues in Communication Studies. Course is designed to meet the critical thinking learning outcome of the KU Core. First-Year Seminar topics are coordinated and approved by the Office of First-Year Experience. Prerequisite: First-time freshman status. LEC.

COMS 207. Introduction to Political Communication. 3 Hours S.
This class addresses the different ways in which the three main players in political communication processes (leaders, the media and citizens) affect the political behavior, attitudes or cognitions of individuals; or have outcomes that influence public policy at different levels. The contents of the course are organized into three areas: Foundations of political communication, central questions and theories in political communication, and political campaigning and advertising. Prerequisite: COMS 130. LEC.

COMS 210. Introduction to Organizational and Professional Communication. 3 Hours S.
Introduces foundational concepts in organizational communication, focusing on topics such as superior-subordinate relationships, information- and feedback-seeking, relationships with stakeholders, and dealing with organizational change. The course emphasizes individual communication practices and responsibilities that contribute to organizational outcomes and personal success in organizations. LEC.

COMS 230. Fundamentals of Debate. 3 Hours GE11 / U.
Introduction to the principles of debating. Emphasis on debating techniques, analysis of the question, methods of using evidence, refutation, and brief making. This course fulfills the College argument and reason requirement. LEC.

COMS 231. Practicum in Forensics. 1 Hour U.
For students selected by faculty supervisor for work on university debate squad. Students to enroll at time of their selection. Recurring enrollments permitted. FLD.

COMS 232. Introduction to Rhetoric. 3 Hours HR GE3H / H.
Historical survey of theories of communication and persuasion, the people who produced them, and the philosophical assumptions upon which they rest. Beginning with the Greeks, especially Plato and Aristotle, and ending with selections from Kenneth Burke and other contemporary figures, the course focuses on changing concepts of rhetoric throughout a time span of some 2000 years. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 235. Introduction to Rhetoric and Social Influence. 3 Hours HL GE11 / H.
This course examines in detail the texts of speeches and essays on controversial issues in order to illustrate the varied forms of rhetorical action and the diverse modes of analysis and evaluation that can be applied to them. Examples are drawn from the rhetorical literature of contemporary U.S. speakers and prose writers. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 238. Cases in Persuasion. 3 Hours H.
An exploration of basic principles that explain the effect and effectiveness of the arts of persuasion currently practiced in American society. Class discussions of incidents leading to the discovery of principles and theories that explain them. Continuing emphasis on issues concerning the ethical character of persuasion in contemporary life. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 244. Introduction to Interpersonal Communication Theory. 3 Hours SI GE3S / S.
Examines basic theoretical perspectives and research on verbal and nonverbal communication elements affecting communication between individuals in a variety of contexts. Topics include communication competence, developmental aspects of interpersonal communication, and interpersonal influence. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 246. Introduction to Intercultural Communication. 3 Hours S.
This course attempts to provide an understanding of communication as it affects culture and as it is affected by culture. Special emphasis will be placed on the principle of similarity and differences as it relates to the roles of verbal and non-verbal symbols, codes, and cues, stereotypes, prejudices and value and thought patterning systems between and among cultures. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 310. Advanced Organizational and Professional Communication. 3 Hours SC GE3S / S.
This course provides a foundation for the study of communication in organizational contexts. It introduces students to various organization theories including classical, human relations, systems, and cultural approaches and examines the role of communication in each. Information flow, communication climate, communication networks, work relationships and managerial communication are discussed as well as organizational symbolism, conflict resolution, rituals and ethics. The course is designed to heighten students' awareness of the role of communication in the organizing process and to develop their abilities to diagnose and prevent communication-related problems. Prerequisite: COMS 130 or COMS 150. LEC.

COMS 320. Communication on the Internet. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces social and communication issues in the context of online interaction. Surveys a range of social internet technologies (e.g., newsgroups, chat, MUDs, etc.). Focus is on the interpersonal topics,
including the establishment and maintenance of individual and cultural identities, personal relationships, the emergence of online communities, power and conflict in online groups, language use in online contexts, and how online groups are used to enhance or alter civic and global cultures.

COMS 322. Audience Centered Public Speaking in the Workplace. 3 Hours GE22 / S.
In this course, students develop and present their ideas by applying communication theories to organizational audiences in various presentation situations. Specifically, this course focuses on presentation development, preparation, presentation and critique of messages appropriate in the business or organization setting. Special attention is given to speaking with confidence, presenting and working effectively in teams, reflecting and improving on presentations skills, and listening and speaking ethically in an increasingly diverse work world. Prerequisite: Not intended for Communication Studies Majors. LEC.

COMS 330. Effective Business Communication. 3 Hours S.
The purpose of this course is to develop the student's written, spoken and electronically mediated business communication skills to prepare to enter a career field. Focus is placed on job search preparation including the development of cover letters, resumes, online applications, and interviewing skills. Students are also engaged with business communication by expanding their current writing skills to meet the needs of a business, exposure to common business writing situations, and developing professional presentations. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 331. Persuasive Speaking, 3 Hours H.
Guided experiences in the preparation and presentation of discourse intended to influence outcomes of human interactions in various speaker-audience situations, including television. Special emphasis on speech styles in influencing thought, attitudes, and behavior. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 335. Mass Media and Politics. 3 Hours H.
The primary goal of this course is to critically examine the role of mass media in U.S. politics. Students learn how information makes it into news coverage, as well as how media content affects individuals, political campaigns, and governing decisions. The course covers media effects theories, news bias and polarization, political entertainment, and other topics. Although the primary focus of the course is politics, students interested in public relations and strategic communication also benefit from learning about U.S. journalism. By the end of the semester, students will be able to critically evaluate political and media systems in the U.S. (Same as POLS 521.) Prerequisite: COMS 130 or COMS 150. LEC.

COMS 342. Problem-Solving in Teams and Groups. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces basic concepts important to leading and/or participating in problem-solving work teams. Problem identification and analysis and leadership are emphasized and practiced. Teamwork variables are discussed and promoted. Lecture, demonstrations, exercises in class are structure for students to analyze groups outside of class. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 344. Relational Communication. 3 Hours S.
This course studies communication issues, theories, research and skills applicable to sustaining and enriching long-term relationships, such as families, friendships and close workplace collaborations. Emphasis is given to applying course concepts to students' own relationships and interaction in class. Prerequisite: COMS 244. LEC.

COMS 356. Introduction to Behavioral Research Methods in Communication. 3 Hours GE12 / S.
An introduction to the nature of theory and theory building in the study of human communication. Research methods include experimentation, survey, content analysis, and field description. An introduction to statistics and statistical tests is included as well. Prerequisite: MATH 101 and admission to the Communication Studies major or consent of instructor. LEC.

COMS 410. Micro-Level Organizational Communication. 3 Hours S.
An examination of dyadic level communication in organizations, with emphasis on contexts of superior-subordinate and peer communication. The course also addresses contexts of organizational entry and exit, perception and judgment, information seeking, feedback, and organizational attachment. Prerequisite: COMS 310. LEC.

COMS 415. Communication, Leadership, and Conflict Management. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces students to theories of conflict management from a variety of academic perspectives and the role leadership plays in managing conflict across multiple contexts. Students will learn how to successfully assess and command situations and effectively resolve interpersonal, organizational, and systemic conflict while doing the work of leadership. (Same as LDST 420.) Prerequisite: LDST 202. LEC.

COMS 420. Communication, Technology and Globalization. 3 Hours H.
Examines the social, cultural, and economic challenges and opportunities advanced communication technologies and globalization pose to processes such as democratic deliberation, urban governance, and environmental sustainability. Prerequisite: COMS 130. LEC.

COMS 425. Communication and the American Presidency. 3 Hours H.
Examination of the ways in which American presidents communicate with the American people and how such communication influences the public. Emphasis is on a number of approaches to better understanding presidential communication, including rhetorical, historical, and content analysis. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 435. Forms and Styles of American Public Discourse. 3 Hours H.
Changing styles of public discourse are examined from the beginning of the nation to contemporary times, and the generic forms of address that have emerged from our national dialogue, such as jeremiads, inaugurals and apologies, are studied from a formistic perspective. Prerequisite: COMS 235. LEC.

COMS 440. Communication and Gender. 3 Hours AE41 / S.
Focuses attention on the relationship between communication and gender, including both physical and psychological dimensions. Topics include: sex role orientations and stereotypes; perceived and actual differences in verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors; the influence of gender on communication in a variety of contexts. (Same as WGSS 440.) Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 447. Intercultural Communication: The Afro-American. 3 Hours AE41 / H/W.
An examination of the barriers to effective communication between black Americans and non-black Americans. (Same as AAAS 420.) Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 450. Ethical Issues in Political Communication. 3 Hours AE51 / H.
Application of ethical standards to the evaluation of political communication. Examination of value questions related to advocacy in modern society (propaganda, demagoguery, credibility). Analysis of First
Amendment rights and other issues pertaining to censorship and freedom of speech (defamation, dissent, incitement, public morals, privacy). Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 454. Rhetoric of Popular Culture. 3 Hours H.
A study of the social and cultural importance of popular culture. Emphasis is on using rhetorical analysis and a number of important theoretical perspectives to help examine popular culture’s often unnoticed influence. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 460. Undergraduate Seminar in: ______. 1-3 Hours S.
Course organized any given semester to study particular subject matter or to take advantage of special competence by an individual faculty member. Topics change as needs and resources develop. Class discussion, readings, and individual projects. (Distribution credit given for two or three hour enrollments only.) LEC.

COMS 485. Communication and Organizational Change. 3 Hours S.
Examines communication processes that support or hinder implementation of organizational change. Topics include stakeholder analysis, individual responses to change, communicating about change, generating support for change, and managing resistance to change. LEC.

COMS 496. Capstone in: ______. 3 Hours AE61 / S.
In the capstone course students synthesize and apply knowledge and skills gained through the major. Capstone coursework requires students to integrate practices and theories learned in their areas of concentration. Topics within each concentration change as needs and resources develop. Prerequisite: Senior standing, COMS 130, and completion of COMS 235 and COMS 356. LEC.

COMS 498. Honors Thesis. 2-6 Hours AE61 / H.
(Six hours maximum credit, which may be distributed through two semesters.) Study should include readings directed toward original research, i.e., an intensive investigation of a specific problem in this field. Prerequisite: Consent of the Department Honors Committee. IND.

COMS 499. Directed Study in Communication Studies. 1-3 Hours H.
(A maximum of six hours of credit may be counted, with not more than four in a single area of study.) Investigation of a special topic or project selected by the student with advice, approval, and supervision of an instructor. Such study may take the form of directed reading, or special research, individual reports and conferences. (Distribution credit given for two-three hours only.) Prerequisite: At least seven hours of credit in the department and consent of instructor. IND.

COMS 503. Post-Soviet Communication. 3 Hours H.
This course is designed to acquaint students with the shifting manner of public discourse in Post-Soviet Russia and help them to explore in some depth cross-cultural communication between America and Russia. In addition to contemporary and historical background on Russian communicative practices, students examine discourse in business development, mass media, marketing, and advertising. All readings in English. (Same as SLAV 503). LEC.

COMS 530. Internship in Communication Studies. 1-3 Hours AE61 / S.
Students do communication-centered fieldwork in an organization related to their career goals. Criteria for the organizations and work assignments suitable for internship credit are in an information brochure available at the COMS Department office and website. The internship plan is developed with field supervisor and internship faculty adviser. Reports and meetings are required. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor, admission to COMS major. FLD.

COMS 535. American Public Address, Puritans to 1900. 3 Hours H.
A history of American public address from the Puritans to about 1900. Using the tools of rhetorical criticism, students describe, analyze, and evaluate select rhetoric from the period. Graduate students are assigned extra reading and a research paper. Prerequisite: COMS 235. LEC.

COMS 536. American Public Address, 1900-Present. 3 Hours H.
A history of American public address from 1900 to the present. Using the tools of rhetorical criticism, students describe, analyze, and evaluate select rhetoric from the period. Graduate students are assigned extra reading and a research paper. Prerequisite: COMS 235. LEC.

COMS 537. Communication in Conflict Resolution. 3 Hours S.
An examination of conflict situations and the manner in which communication can serve as a vehicle for their intensification or resolution. The focus is on the theory of games as it applies to conflict within interpersonal situations; implications will be drawn for larger social systems. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 538. Persuasion Theory and Research. 3 Hours S.
This course focuses on the social scientific study of persuasion. Traditional theories of attitude change and persuasion research are studied along with techniques of measuring attitudes. Attention is also given to the attitude-behavior relationship and the production of compliance-gaining messages. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 539. Argumentation. 3 Hours AE51 / S.
Analysis of the theory and techniques of argumentation in historical and contemporary writings, with special emphasis on the works of Aristotle, John Stuart Mill, Richard Whateley, and Stephen Toulmin. Application of argumentation theory to political and legal discourse. Opportunity for student performances in the preparation and criticism of argument. Prerequisite: Four hours in the department. LEC.

COMS 544. Advanced Interpersonal Communication: Theories and Research. 3 Hours S.
Intensive exploration of contemporary theories and research in the field of interpersonal communication; emphasis on an array of theoretical models and research exemplars; comparative analysis of major theoretical and research paradigms. Prerequisite: COMS 244 or instructor consent. LEC.

COMS 546. Communication Across the Life-span. 3 Hours S.
Examination of the ways in which communication changes across the life-span, and influences human development. Course will include topics such as barriers to communication among elderly populations; communication and mis-communication across generations; the role of language in constructing life-span development (e.g., the mid-life crisis); development of language and social interaction during childhood; peer relationships and communication in adolescence; uses and effects of mass communication across the life-span. Prerequisite: COMS 244 and COMS 356. LEC.

COMS 547. Communication and Culture. 3 Hours S.
A study of the systematic relationship between communication and culture. Emphasis is on culture as a variable in communicative situations: cultural aspects of attitude and cognition, language interchange, cultural differences in extra-verbal behavior, interaction between oral traditions and mass media. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, COMS 230, or an introduction course in anthropology. LEC.

COMS 548. Theories of the Interview. 3 Hours S.
Comprehensive study of communication processes in dyadic, face-to-face situations commonly encountered in organizations and professional environments. Intensive analysis of simulated and real-life interviews. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.
COMS 551. The Rhetoric of Black Americans. 3 Hours H/W.
A study of the rhetoric of black Americans, from their earliest protest efforts to the contemporary scene, with focus on the methods and themes employed to alter their status in American society. (Same as AAAS 534.) Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 552. The Rhetoric of Women's Rights. 3 Hours AE41 / H.
An analysis of the themes and rhetorical strategies of the women's rights movement in America. The course will view the struggle for women's rights from a historical perspective and will conclude with contemporary issues concerning the role of women in society. (Same as WGSS 552.) Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 555. Family Communication. 3 Hours S.
An examination of trends and theory related to the scientific study of the family, with a focus on issues related to family interaction, functioning, relationships, and communication. Research and theories from communication, sociological, and psychological perspectives are employed to examine topics such as family violence, mental health problems, marital satisfaction, divorce, courtship, and the impact of the family on its children (and vice versa). Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 557. East Asian Communication. 3 Hours S.
Explores the major communication theories and research in the East Asian cultural contexts by focusing on the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures. Examines, from a broader perspective, certain cultural values (e.g. harmony, hierarchy, conservatism, and modernism) upheld in East Asian cultures and their influences on people's communicative behaviors in an age of globalization. Students explore issues of history, identity, and non-verbal symbols, stereotypes, prejudice, values and thought patterns existing in the East Asian cultural context from a communicative perspective. This course is designed as a bridge course and meets with a graduate level section of the same title. Prerequisite: COMS 246. LEC.

COMS 560. Seminar in: ____. 3 Hours S.
Course organized any given semester to study particular subject matter or to take advantage of special competence by an individual faculty member. Topics change as needs and resources develop. Class discussion, readings, and individual projects. (May be repeated for credit if content varies). LEC.

COMS 590. Nonverbal Communication. 3 Hours S.
Examination of non-linguistic behavior in human communication, including proxemics (spacing), kinesics (movement and expression), and paralinguistics (voice quality). Includes phylogenetic and developmental perspectives, methods of analysis, applications to interpersonal problems. (Same as PSYC 590.) Prerequisite: COMS 356 or PSYC 210 or PSYC 211. LEC.

COMS 605. Speech Writing. 3 Hours H.
Emphasis is on actual practice in preparing speech manuscripts for oneself and others. Model speeches are examined to better understand language, evidence, and stylistic choices available to speech writers. The ethical dimensions of writing for others in corporate and political positions are stressed. Students are required to prepare a variety of speeches and analyses of others' speeches. Prerequisite: COMS 130, COMS 150, or COMS 230. LEC.

COMS 607. Political Campaigns. 3 Hours H.
This course will examine the communication involved in political campaigns. Students will be exposed to theories and ideas related to campaigns and will apply this knowledge to current political activity. Although the primary focus of the course is politics, students interested in public relations and strategic communication also benefit from learning and practicing media relations strategies. The mediated nature of modern political communication, as well as the communication strategies of campaigns and journalists, will be examined in a semester-long simulated campaign. By the end of the semester, students will become more informed users and consumers of political campaign messages. (Same as POLS 520.) Prerequisite: COMS 130 or COMS 150. LEC.

COMS 620. Communication and New Technology. 3 Hours S.
This course explores the impact of new communication technology on individuals and groups in various contexts. Topics include: The development of computer-mediated communication, social and psychological impacts of new communication technology, the evolution of telework and advances in interactive telecommunications. LEC.

COMS 639. Legal Communication. 3 Hours S.
An analysis of how communication principles and theories operate within the context of the legal system. Topics covered will include the lawyer/client interview, depositions and pre-trial discovery, settlement negotiation, jury selection, opening and closing statements, and witness testimony. Prerequisite: COMS 130 or COMS 150. LEC.

COMS 647. Issues in Intercultural Communication. 3 Hours S.
Examination of the processes and factors affecting communication in an intercultural context, and of methods of training for intercultural communication roles. Prerequisite: COMS 547 and an introductory course in anthropology, or consent of instructor. LEC.

COMS 656. Mass Media: Social Science Applications. 3 Hours S.
This course introduces students to the major theories of and prominent research in mass communication. The aim is to stimulate critical thinking about the content and effects of mass communication, develop critical consumption skills, and enhance awareness of public policy issues relating to the media. Students are required to read a variety of chapters and articles on mass communication, promoting independent investigation into specific areas of interest. This course is a bridge course and meets with a graduate level section of the same title. Prerequisite: COMS 356. LEC.

COMS 667. Interpersonal Communication in Multinational Organizations. 3 Hours.
A study of interpersonal communication in management and professional development in intercultural situations. Focus on preparation of the global manager or professional in the organizational environment. Special attention to the problems and challenges of intercultural interactions in the context of multinational organizations. LEC.

COMS 669. Human Conflict and Peace. 3 Hours H.
Study of religious, cultural, and social traditions toward understanding the nature and purposes of human conflict. Analysis of various meanings of peace, with emphasis on study of nonviolent approaches to management of conflict. Class discussion, readings, and individual research projects. (Same as REL 669.) Prerequisite: Junior standing or above. LEC.

COMS 730. Writing and Speaking for Decision Makers. 3 Hours.
Theory and application of communication strategies for corporate communication. This course presents rhetorical analysis of organizational situations and audiences, focusing on corporate decision-makers. Included are informative and persuasive communications such as board presentations, requests for proposal and responses to RFPs, grant proposals, and persuasive presentations for adoption, implementation, or evaluation of organizational programs. LEC.

COMS 741. Special Topics in Communication Studies: _____. 2-3 Hours.
Examination of special topics in Communication Studies. Prerequisite: Instructor consent. LEC.
COMS 787. Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Gerontology and Aging. 3 Hours.
A seminar coordinated by the Gerontology Program. The seminar explores essential areas of gerontology for researchers and practitioners, providing a multidisciplinary (biology, health services, behavioral and social sciences, human services) perspective on aging. The seminar surveys contemporary basic and applied research, service programs, and policy and management issues in gerontology. (Same as ABSC 787, AMS 767, PSYC 787, and SOC 767.) LEC.

COMS 810. Organizational Communication: Theory and Research. 3 Hours.
This course examines the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of organizational communication research. Course topics cover various analytic traditions and systems theory, as well as cultural, critical, and various interpretive approaches to understanding communication in organizational contexts. Prerequisite: COMS 310 and permission of instructor. LEC.

COMS 811. Applied Organization Communication. 3 Hours.
This survey course addresses key communication processes in organizations, including developing and sustaining workplace relationships, providing and receiving feedback, processes of effective teams, and in leadership situations. Students will apply these concepts to appreciate the dynamics of organizational culture, power, and ethics at work and will identify strategies to enhance workplace success. SEM.

COMS 835. Impression Formation and Interpersonal Behavior. 3 Hours.
Intensive investigation of the processes involved in impression formation and of the effects of established impressions upon interpersonal communication. (Same as PSYC 845.) Prerequisite: COMS 535 or PSYC 670. LEC.

COMS 844. Seminar in Interpersonal Communication. 3 Hours.
This class will address current theory and research in interpersonal communication. Issues addressed may include verbal or nonverbal communication in families, close relationships, initial interactions, and the like. LEC.

COMS 846. Communication and Aging. 3 Hours.
Examination of the interrelationship between communication and the aging process. The course will include current research and theory on such topics as intergenerational communication, language and age identity, age-stereotyping and communication, mass media and aging, age and health communication, and others of current interest in the field. LEC.

COMS 848. Communication Audits in Organizations. 3 Hours.
The principal thrust of this course is a hands-on analysis of the communication in 1-2 organizations. Students work as a consulting group to analyze dimensions of communication, communication channels, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and communication strategies. Experience is gained in organizational research methods, instrument development, organizational analysis, feedback, and organizational development. LEC.

COMS 850. Introduction to Research Methods. 3 Hours.
An introduction to methodological approaches to the study of communication. Approaches considered will include (a) humanistic message analysis and evaluation; (b) ethnographic and observational techniques; (c) survey construction and execution; and (d) experimental design and procedures. Special focus on issues of validity, reliability, and ethics. LEC.

COMS 851. Communication Research: Historical and Descriptive. 3 Hours.
An introduction to types of historical and descriptive research in human communication. Library resources and methods of research will be covered. Emphasis will be placed upon preparing a research prospectus and upon writing the research report. LEC.

COMS 852. Communication Research: Behavioral and Social Science. 3 Hours.
An introduction to the process of research in communication studies, including consideration of basic principles in research design, methods of observation and measurement, and the application of appropriate statistical techniques. LEC.

COMS 855. Qualitative Research Methods in Communication Studies. 3 Hours.
Study of strategies for describing communication behavior in particular contexts, emphasizing ethnography and specific observational and interview data gathering and analysis methods. Prerequisite: COMS 755 or equivalent. LEC.

COMS 856. Communication Research: Quantitative Analysis. 3 Hours.
An intermediate overview of statistical techniques commonly used in communication research. Content will include a review of univariate statistical tests such as t-test, correlation, chi-square, and other nonparametric techniques of data analysis. Additionally, factorial analysis of variance, multiple regression, and factor analysis will be covered, along with the application of appropriate statistical techniques. Prerequisite: COMS 850 and an introductory course in statistics. LEC.

COMS 859. Proseminar in Communication Studies. 3 Hours.
An overview and integration of communication studies based upon an examination of selected basic writings in the discipline. LEC.

COMS 898. Investigation and Conference (For Master’s Candidates). 1-8 Hours.
(Limited to eight hours credit toward the M.A. degree.) Directed research and experimentation for M.A. students in some phase of speech science or the teaching of speech and drama. RSH.

COMS 899. Master’s Thesis. 1-6 Hours.
Thesis Hours. Graded on a satisfactory progress/limited progress/no progress basis. THE.

COMS 907. Seminar in Political Communication. 3 Hours.
This course will focus on contemporary political communication theory and illustrate how such theories are exemplified in modern political contexts: political arguments and developing consensus, communication strategies in Congressional and bureaucratic decision-making, the rhetorical presidency, the dissemination of political information, political narrative, and political campaigns. LEC.

COMS 920. Introduction to Teaching Oral Communication. 3 Hours.
This seminar prepares new graduate teaching assistants for their first teaching experience. Students will develop course materials including lectures, discussion prompts, assignments, exams based on pedagogical best practices. Students will apply theoretical concepts related to teaching, learning and assessment, and apply those theories to their own classrooms. LEC.

COMS 930. Seminar in Speech: ____. 1-4 Hours.
Special problems in speech. LEC.

COMS 932. Theories of Rhetoric: Classical. 3 Hours.
An intensive study of the rhetorical theories of classical writers from 466 B.C. to the decline of Roman oratory. Principal emphasis will be on Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian, Cicero, and Longinus. LEC.
COMS 933. Theories of Rhetoric: Neo-Classical. 2-3 Hours.
A study of the development of rhetorical theory from 325 A.D. to the twentieth century. Notable departures from the classical tradition will be examined. Special concentration on the writings of Augustine and the tradition of medieval preaching. Alcuin, Ramus, Bacon, Campbell, Whately, Blair, John Quincy Adams, and the elocutionary movement. LEC.

COMS 936. Seminar in Language and Discourse. 3 Hours.
This seminar uses interdisciplinary readings to examine central theoretical questions regarding language and communication. The course moves from considering major theoretical positions to current research in communication on discourse. Methodological issues in the study of language and discourse are also addressed. LEC.

COMS 938. Seminar in Persuasion. 2-3 Hours.
Examination of selected topics in persuasion, with emphasis on the application of recent theories and experimental research to the analysis of persuasive discourse. Prerequisite: COMS 538 or equivalent. LEC.

COMS 939. Seminar in Argumentation. 2-3 Hours.
Examination of special problems in argumentation, with emphasis on the relationship of systems of argumentation to their philosophic presuppositions. Discussion of the writings of Toulmin, Natanson, Johnstone, Perelman, Dewey. Prerequisite: COMS 539 or equivalent. LEC.

COMS 945. Seminar in Social Support. 3 Hours.
This course is a survey of the many disciplines of the fundamental form of communication known as social or emotional support or comforting. Emphases include message-, receiver-, and interactionally-oriented approaches, as well as support contexts, dilemmas, structures, features, and positive effects on physical and mental health. SEM.

COMS 946. Seminar in Communication and Intergroup Relations. 3 Hours.
Conceptual and theoretical frameworks for exploring and understanding relations between individuals from different societal groups (e.g., cultural/ethnic, gender, age). Focus on issues of identity, power relations as manifested in interpersonal, mass media, and organizational contexts. The course will include methodological and applied implications for studying different groups, both within the USA and around the world. LEC.

COMS 948. Seminar in Organizational Communication. 2-3 Hours.
Analysis of speech communication functions in the organizational structures of business, industry, labor, military, education, government, and professional agencies. Development of conceptual schemes for conducting research and training programs on speech systems which characterize the operation of organized groups. LEC.

COMS 950. Seminar in Public Address. 3 Hours.
The study of public address by historical periods or by topics. LEC.

COMS 951. Seminar in Movement Theory and Genre Criticism. 3 Hours.
This course examines the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of approaches to rhetorical analysis focusing on social movements and rhetorical genres. It will review existing theory on these topics, develop a methodological approach to both forms of critical analysis, and test each methodological approach via case studies. Prerequisite: COMS 755 or consent of instructor. LEC.

COMS 952. Seminar in Mythic and Narrative Approaches to Rhetorical Criticism. 3 Hours.
This course examines the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of approaches to rhetorical analysis focusing on narrative rhetoric, with a special emphasis on myth as a type of narrative. It will review existing theory on these topics, consider a number of alternative methodological approaches, and test each methodological approach via case studies. Prerequisite: COMS 755 or consent of instructor. LEC.

COMS 953. Seminar in Organizational Rhetoric. 3 Hours.
This course focuses on theoretical and methodological materials related to the use of rhetoric in an organizational setting. It will review existing theory and methodological development on this topic, paying special attention to the distinction between rhetoric used within an organization and rhetoric focused on audiences external to the organization. Multiple case-studies will be considered to illuminate the functioning of both internal and external organizational rhetoric. Prerequisite: COMS 755 or consent of instructor. LEC.

COMS 955. Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism. 3 Hours.
A study of contemporary and historical writings on rhetorical criticism. Emphasis is placed upon the development of critical methodology for future research and writing. Prerequisite: COMS 755. LEC.

COMS 958. Comparative Theories of Speech Communication. 3 Hours.
A descriptive and comparative analysis of theories of communication applicable to speech behavior. Prerequisite: COMS 859 or equivalent. LEC.

COMS 959. Theories of Rhetoric: Contemporary. 3 Hours.
A study of the writings on rhetorical theory in the twentieth century. Principal emphasis will be on the psychological treatment of rhetoric. I.A. Richards and Kenneth Burke, and the relationship in the twentieth century between rhetoric and dialectic, rhetoric and poetic. Prerequisite: COMS 859 or equivalent. LEC.

COMS 997. Research in: _____. 1-6 Hours.
Supervised research under the direction of a faculty member on a topic of mutual interest to the faculty and graduate student. RSH.

COMS 998. Investigation and Conference (For Doctoral Candidates). 1-8 Hours.
(Limited to eight hours credit towards the Ph.D. degree.) Directed research and experimentation for Ph.D. students in some phase of speech science or the teaching of speech and drama. RSH.

COMS 999. Doctoral Dissertation. 1-12 Hours.
Dissertation Hours. Graded on a satisfactory progress/limited progress/no progress basis. THE.