

MASTER OF ARTS WITH A MAJOR IN COMMUNICATION

The Master of Arts with a major in Communication requires 32 semester hours of graduate credit.

What You Can Do with this Degree

The Master of Arts degree with a major in Communication is one of the most versatile advanced degrees available. With two separate, but related, career tracks to choose from, you can tailor this degree program to your specialized interests. The department of Communication is one of the finest graduate programs in the United States and is ranked 15th in the nation. All of its award-winning faculty teach in the Master of Arts program, exposing you to an excellent variety of specialties and subject matter.

Examples of Job Opportunities with this Degree

- Political Analyst
- Advertising Executive
- Government Lobbyist
- Public Information Officer
- Public Relations Director
- Anchorperson
- Politician
- Film Director
- Journalist
- Reporter
- Media Account Executive
- Script Writer
- Media Buyer
- Internet Specialist
- Mediation Specialist
- Training Specialist
- Publications Editor
- Public Relations Officer
- Human Resources Manager
- Business Manager
- Program Coordinator
- Speech Writer
- Labor Relations Consultant
- Business Consultant
- Program Objectives

Department of Communication

Offering master's degrees starting in 1934 and the Ph.D. degree since 1952, the department of Communication views communicative behavior as basic to human activity, to individual development, to interpersonal and social relationships and to the functioning of political, economic, cultural and social institutions. Through research and theory building, we seek to understand how individuals use

symbols to interpret and act within their environment. Our students investigate communication processes as they occur within and among individuals, groups, organizations and societies. In doing so, they learn to communicate more effectively and to facilitate the communication effectiveness of others.

An M.A. degree in Communication prepares individuals for effective participation in an information-based society. Thus, our students come from and are hired into a wide variety of careers in business and industry, government, religion and social services. Our graduates, for example, are active in personnel management, public relations, consulting community leadership and other occupations where an ability to communicate effectively is vital to success.

Degree Requirements

The M.A. in Communication degree requires a minimum of 32 hours of graduate credit. Twenty-four of those hours must be Communication courses offered by OU. This non-thesis program also requires a written comprehensive examination to be successfully completed before the candidate is recommended for a master's degree. In addition, each student is required to have taken an undergraduate course in statistics. If none has been taken, the student must take a course at either the undergraduate or graduate level in statistics. This course will not count toward the M.A. degree.

Students who enter the program with 12 hours of graduate work (beyond the bachelor's degree) must have a GPA of 3.25 instead of the 3.0 required by the OU Graduate College. Students admitted as Conditional Admission (due to low grades) must earn a GPA of 3.25 on the first 12 hours of Conditional Admission, with no letter grades below a B.

Degree Tracks

Two different tracks are available to students seeking an M.A. with a major in Communication. The general track is recommended for those seeking a liberal arts approach to graduate study. The organizational communication track is recommended for those intending to pursue careers in profit/non-profit, entrepreneurial and government organizations.

General Track

General Track Required Courses:

- COMM 5003 Quantitative Methods or 5313 Qualitative Methods
- COMM 5013 Introduction to Graduate Study

General Track Electives:

26 credit hours approved by the advisor.

Organizational Communication Track

Organizational Communication Track Required Courses:

- COMM 5003 Quantitative Methods or 5313 Qualitative Methods
- COMM 5013 Introduction to Graduate Study
- COMM 5333 Organizational Communication

Organizational Communication Track Electives:

20 credit hours approved by the advisor.

Elective Courses

In addition to the core courses, students select coursework from the following list in order to familiarize themselves with communication processes as they operate in different contexts. Course numbers are listed for all courses.

- COMM 4233 Free Speech: Responsible Communication Under Law
- COMM 5113 Nonverbal Communication: Theory and Research
- COMM 5213 Interpersonal Communication
- COMM 5223 Historical Development of Communication Theory
- COMM 5233 Communication and Social Change
- COMM 5243 Language Perspectives of Communication
- COMM 5253 Cross-Cultural Communication: Theory and Research
- COMM 5263 Health Communication
- COMM 5333 Organizational Communication
- COMM 5343 Mass Communication Perspectives
- COMM 5353 Conflict Management
- COMM 5363 Communication and Technology
- COMM 5373 Communication and Leadership
- COMM 5383 Survey of Political Communication
- COMM 5393 Risk Assessment and Communication
- COMM 5453 Social Influence
- COMM 5553 Persuasive Communication Campaigns
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings: Deception Detection
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings: Health Communication
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings: Mass Opinion and Military Conflict
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings: Terror Management Theory and Communication
- COMM 5960 Directed Readings: War, Peace and Media
- COMM 6013 Special Problems in Communication Research
- COMM 6023 Communication Research Task Groups
- COMM 6233 Small Group Processes
- COMM 6323 International Communication
- COMM 6373 Seminar in Mass Communication
- COMM 6410 Instructional Problems in Speech Communication Education
- COMM 6413 Interethnic Communication Seminar
- COMM 6423 Communication in Health Organizations
- COMM 6433 Seminar in Intercultural Communication
- COMM 6453 Seminar in Social Influence
- COMM 6970 Relational Communication
- COMM 6970 Seminar: Special Topics (May be repeated for credit with change in subject matter.)
- CAS 5960 Directed Readings

Special Grade Requirement: The Two Cs Grade Rule

All master's degree students are required to maintain an overall 3.0 grade point average in all graduate courses attempted. One grade of C will put the student on academic probation with the Graduate College. The student will then have a 12 hour probationary period. The student must not earn a grade lower than a B or a grade of U during this time. At the end of the 12 hour probationary period, the student must have raised their overall GPA to 3.0. Failure of either of these two conditions will result in the student being unable to continue enrollment in graduate courses.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

Five years dated from the semester of initial enrollment is the maximum time for degree completion. Extensions beyond this limit will result in disqualification of the overaged credit. This time limit applies to both courses completed through the University of Oklahoma and to courses approved for transfer credit.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination is usually scheduled in mid-October, early March and June. Students should notify the communication advisor approximately one month before planning to take the examination. Students must be enrolled in at least one course for a minimum of two graduate credit hours during the semester they take the general comprehensive exam.

Course Descriptions – Required Core Courses

COMM 5003 - Quantitative Methods

Introduction to social-behavioral science processes of inquiry about human communication phenomena. The course examines the relationship of theory and method. Looks at various research paradigms and designs, and provides an introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics.

COMM 5013 - Introduction to Graduate Study

Traces the development of research and professions in communication, providing an integrative conception of the discipline and an introduction to research and theory formulation. Students are exposed to those skills critical to success in graduate training in communication.

COMM 5313 - Qualitative Methods

Introduces students to the use of qualitative methods in social sciences research. Students will learn how to use participant observation, informal interviewing and other techniques to collect information on social sciences topics.

Course Descriptions – Electives

In addition to the core courses, students select coursework from the following list in order to familiarize themselves with communication processes as they operate in different contexts. Course numbers are listed for each course.

COMM 5043 - Organization Research Practicum

Prerequisite: graduate student major who has completed two-thirds of the communication courses required for graduation, plus permission. Applicants must have an overall grade point average of 3.25 or higher. Provides practical research experience in an organization. Student adviser and organization's sponsor must agree through a written contract about the goals, plan, and activities associated with the research project.

COMM 4233 - Free Speech: Responsible Communication Under Law

Consider the role of communication and the law. A consideration of the role of law as both deterrent and protector of the communicator's efforts. Attempts to provide a better understanding of the pervasiveness of regulation of communication.

COMM 5113 - Nonverbal Communication: Theory and Research

Studies social-psychological and linguistic ethological approaches to nonverbal communication research and theory building. Prerequisite: graduate standing; 5003 or permission.

COMM 5213 – Interpersonal Communication

Studies the research and theories in interpersonal communication with emphasis on dyads and small groups, public address, message analysis and nonverbal communication.

COMM 5223 - Historical Development of Communication Theory

Provides a survey of the historical development of communication theory. Presents the evolution of communication theory from ancient rhetorical traditions of Aristotle and Plato to World War II.

COMM 5233 - Communication and Social Change

Studies alternative theories of social change, both historical and modern, with emphasis on the role played by communication at the interpersonal, group and social levels.

COMM 5243 - Language Perspectives of Communication

Investigates the role of language behavior research, epistemological foundation, linguistics, speech act theory, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and ethnomethodology.

COMM 5253 - Cross-Cultural Communication: Theory and Research

Study of theory of cross-cultural communication with special attention to language, stereotyping, perception, role, power and nonverbal communication as such variables operate in cross-cultural situations.

COMM 5263 - Health Communication

A broad overview of theoretical and applied approaches to health communication. Students are exposed to a variety of health communication topics including doctor/patient communication, health information campaigns, mass media influences on health, role of culture in health and disease, health care organizations and group influences on well-being.

COMM 5333 – Organizational Communication

Focuses on the communication environment of organizations, both internal and external, emphasizing implications of organizational designs for communication, communication principles to motivate employees and the role of communication for productivity and the quality of life.

COMM 5343 - Mass Communication Perspectives

Analyzes the development of modern mass communication theory, discusses the effects of the media on individuals and society and surveys new approaches to research and theory development in the mass communication area.

COMM 5353 - Conflict Management

Examines theory and research about conflict management in various communication contexts. Takes a social scientific approach to conflict management with emphasis on cognitive processes, affective systems, interaction sequences and strategies and tactics related to how people negotiate the meaning and management/resolution of conflict.

COMM 5363 - Communication and Technology

Provides a comprehensive overview of emerging technologies (e.g., teleconferencing, electronic mail, videotext, electronic bulletin boards, telecommuting, distance education, media richness, voice messaging, invisible technologies, etc.) and analyzes some of the social and behavioral effects of these technologies on human interaction in interpersonal, organizational, small group and international contexts.

COMM 5373 - Communication and Leadership

Examines theory and research related to the philosophy and behaviors associated with leadership communication in various contexts. Emphasis placed on unique aspects of messages as individuals enact leadership roles. Scholarship from several areas of the social sciences will be considered, but communication theory will be given primary emphasis.

COMM 5383 - Survey of Political Communication

Surveys communication in the political system. Discusses theory and research on interpersonal, public and mass communication, particularly political campaigns.

COMM 5453 - Social Influence

A social scientific approach to the study of influence (persuasion), emphasizing scholarship drawn from speech communication, mass communication and social psychology

COMM 5553 - Persuasive Communication Campaigns

Theory and research about persuasive communication campaigns which involve conscious sustained communication efforts designed to influence the thinking, feelings and/or behaviors of targeted receiver groups.

COMM 5960 - Directed Readings

1 to 3 hours. Prerequisite: 12 hours of graduate work in communication and permission of instructor. May be repeated; maximum credit, six hours for the master's degree.

Intensive survey of the literature in a selected area of communication under the direction of a graduate faculty member.

COMM 6013 - Special Problems in Communication Research

Explores special issues and problems in communication research which characterize areas of specialty in communication, including social and mass communication, evaluative techniques and rhetorical criticism. Students may repeat enrollments as topic changes.

COMM 6023 - Communication Research Task Groups

Designed to explore numerous topics in communication study, including the development and execution of research in communication. May be repeated; maximum credit 15 hours.

COMM 6233 - Small Group Processes

Considers current status of small group theory and research, emphasizing leadership. Includes both the development of a tentative theory of leadership and the application of small group theory to the process of decision making.

COMM 6283 - Political Advertising

Studies the content and effects of advertising for political policy issues, and international political advertising.

COMM 6323 – International Communication

Studies communication as an essential component of international organizations, nation states, diplomatic relations and other political and social units. Emphasizes the role of communication in international decision making, conflict, resolution and negotiation.

COMM 6373 - Seminar in Mass Communication

Variable content seminar; considers differing topics in contemporary mass communication theory and research.

COMM 6383 - Seminar in Political Communication

Considers current topics in political communication theory and research.

COMM 6410 - Instructional Problems in Speech Communication Education

May be repeated; maximum credit, four hours. Studies educational problems in teaching oral communication in secondary schools and colleges.

COMM 6413 - Interethnic Communication Seminar

An interdisciplinary survey of theory and research pertaining to issues of interethnic/ interracial communication. Specific verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors are examined in conjunction with salient contextual factors of the macro-societal, situational and psychological milieu surrounding the communication process.

COMM 6423 - Communication in Health Organizations

Examines delivery and exchange of messages within health organizations with emphasis on conflict, bargaining and negotiating, communication networks and environments, virtual systems of communication, etc.

COMM 6433 - Seminar in Intercultural Communication

Studies communication across cultural boundaries with emphasis on comparative analysis of communication systems of various cultures, factors involved in predicting intercultural communication patterns and effects and the role of communication in cultural and technological development. Special attention is given to communication problems between subcultures in American society.

COMM 6453 - Seminar in Social Influence

Seminar on specialized topics in social influence. Content focus will vary with instructor. May be repeated with a change in topic. Maximum credit is six hours. COMM 6970 - Seminar: Special Topics May be repeated with change in topic; maximum credit 15 hours. For additional course descriptions please see the University of Oklahoma General Catalog. Please note that degree program requirements are subject to change.