COMMUNICATION (COM)

Courses

COM 551. Graduate Writing Workshop. 1 Credit Hour.
This course is a self-paced, hybrid class designed to teach students the basics of good writing, with special attention to scholarly writing.

COM 590. Introduction to Research Methods. 1 Credit Hour.
This online, self-paced course is intended as an introduction to the area of communication research methods for those students whose undergraduate study did not provide this background. It provides students with some of the concepts and ideas important to understanding and conducting research in Communication.

COM 591. Studies in Communication Theory. 1 Credit Hour.
This is a self-paced, online course designed to introduce students with little or no coursework in Communication to the major theories used in the study of mass and human communication and to provide them with an understanding of the process of generating theory and knowledge about communication.

COM 601. Communication Theory. 3 Credit Hours.
This course provides students with an in-depth examination of the subfields of Mass and Interpersonal Communication. Major epistemological and theoretical approaches will be examined. Students will become conversant in the discipline’s intellectual roots and they will develop the ability to use communication theory in their own research or chosen profession.

COM 602. Communication Research Methods and Statistics. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is designed to acquaint students with the basic concepts and issues involved in quantitative research methods and statistics. Students will become familiar with the scientific method, learning the proper terminology/concepts used in quantitative research. They will also be introduced to the tools and techniques of data analysis in social science research. These will consist of a variety of statistical procedures and tests of statistical inference. The end result of this course should be an improvement in students’ ability to conduct sound research and analyze the work of others. Throughout the course, the ethics of quantitative research design and analysis will be emphasized.

Session Cycle: Spring
Yearly Cycle: Annual.

COM 603. Health Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
The overall goal of this class is to provide a foundation of relevant theories, research, practices, campaign processes, and current issues related to Health Communication. Health Communication, as a sub-discipline of Communication, generates new insights about communication as a process and health as a state of being. Health communicators, as translators, depend upon existing policy and knowledge about health and health-care to guide activities, and identify gaps between policy and practice.

COM 604. Organizational Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is designed to introduce students to concepts in the study of professional communication in organizations. Students will examine major theoretical approaches including classical theories, system theories, cultural theories, and critical theories. Students will also examine organizational and relational challenges confronting organizations with an emphasis on the application of these principles in organizational settings.

COM 605. Communication, Persuasion, and Social Influence. 3 Credit Hours.
This course introduces graduate students to the study of social influence in communication. We will examine theoretical developments in social influence, considering their implications for message design, and source and channel selection. Special attention will be paid to understanding the validity of social influence theory for understanding persuasion outcomes in a variety of contexts. The theories addressed in this class posit important relationships about cognitive and societal processes. For communication scholars, these theories help to explain, predict, describe, and may be used to contribute to the outcomes associated with the design of various messages, the use of particular sources, and the selection of different channels to disseminate the messages. These will be the overarching areas of study in this course.

COM 606. Organizational Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course presents theories of Public Relations and its practice by business (both profit and non-profit), government, and any other type of organization, large or small. The emphasis is on learning the processes of developing, disseminating and measuring situation-specific, effective, and ethical informational pieces and/or campaigns targeted to the right audiences. The challenges and opportunities offered by traditional media, social and other ‘new’ media will be addressed.
COM 615. Culture, Diversity, and Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
As Martin and Nakayama (2009) note, ‘We live in a rapidly changing world in which multicultural contact will continue to increase, creating a heightened potential for both conflict and cooperation.’ This class is designed to explore the theory and research explicating the challenges and benefits of living in a multicultural world. In particular, it is concerned with cultural diversity and with understanding and identifying the problems that occur when persons from different cultures engage in face-to-face communication. Cross-cultural communication and cultural competence are becoming important skills not only in interacting with others, but also in helping to define individual identities. This course will focus on how Culture and context impact a variety of individual, relational and societal issues.

COM 618. Risk and Crisis Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
The need to assess, understand and implement an effective communication strategy following a risk or crisis event is becoming increasingly important in our society. Whether it is responding to and dealing with the fallout from an environmental disaster, determining how to warn the public about a potential health hazard, or addressing a crisis in an organization, the need for an effective communication plan and its successful implementation is high. This course will examine the many intricate parts in the process of risk and crisis communication and explore key factors that impact this process.

COM 619. Global Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines the major issues in global communication through analyses of international news and information flows, media imports/exports, privatization and globalization within communication industries and the various models of global media systems. Students will evaluate the social and economic impacts of ICTs, the shifting relationships between developed and developing countries, and the socio-economic trends associated with globalization of media, and explore concepts such as nationalism, regionalism, globalization, and cultural identity.

COM 620. Computer-Mediated Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course offers a critical survey of the relationship between computer-mediated communication (CMC) and the various forms and functions of human activity. The way humans use computers to create specific realities and relationships as well as use this medium as a source of knowledge and political participation will be explored. Utilizing different social scientific theories we will identify, explain, and understand the interrelationship between CMC, society, language, and identities.

COM 631. Community-Based Campaigns and Public Health. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is designed to introduce theoretical and pragmatic views for the conduct of health campaigns that use a community-based approach. Students will examine theories linked to agenda-setting, uncertainty management, norms, and authority and control as frameworks to consider values that guide health communication. The ethical dilemmas that arise in decisions about planning, implementing, and evaluating communication in community-based health campaigns will be introduced and applied to our review of health communication theory, research, and practice. Community-based health campaigns target multiple audiences, use multiple communication channels, and target multiple health-related outcomes. A community-based approach to health campaigns demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of Health Communication and illustrates why it has come to be viewed as an integral component of health promotion and health-care activities.

COM 680. Graduate Seminar in Nonverbal Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course will expose students to the research and theory about nonverbal communication. Students will learn research about facial expressions, gestures, vocalics, physical attributes, environment, deception detection, and the use of nonverbal communication in specific contexts such as workplace, education, media, and politics. This class will allow students to explore one or more nonverbal communication topics in depth, examining scholarly research on the topic and contributing knowledge to the discipline. There will also be a focus of application of the scholarship to life, career, and society.

COM 690. Graduate Practicum. 3 Credit Hours.
Graduate education is enhanced by practical application of its learned material. Thus, this course is designed to provide practical experience in some communication-related setting, scholarly or professional. That experience can be in either a for-profit or a not-for-profit organization. The Practicum is intended to provide the student with an opportunity to acquire in-field knowledge and experience. Because academic credit is awarded for this experience, the student must gain academic knowledge as well as practical experience. The Graduate Practicum must be approved by the instructor, the Graduate Advisor, and the Department Chair.

COM 696. Comprehensive Exam. 0 Credit Hours.
The Comprehensive Exam consists of a series of written questions to be completed over three days in four hour sessions to be scheduled by the student’s Advisor. It is suggested (though not required) that six of the twelve hours should be devoted to the student’s declared concentration or track, three should be devoted to the required courses, and three should focus on a secondary area of study. After consultation with the student, the student’s Advisor will select two additional faculty members to determine if the questions or topics will be provided to the student in advance. The student is strongly encouraged to meet with each member of his/her Comprehensive Exam Committee to gain guidance for study preparation. The Comprehensive Exam is given three times a year, once each semester (usually around the eighth or ninth week of the semester) and during the summer term (the date of which will be determined by the student and his/her Committee members). Typically, students will have one to two hours to write an answer to a question (specific time limits to be determined by the faculty). The exams are graded pass/fail. Students will usually receive their exam results within two weeks. All students must schedule an oral defense of their Comprehensive Exam. If the student fails one area of the Comprehensive Exam only, he/she can study and re-take that area as soon as possible. If the student fails two or more areas, he/she must wait until the next time the Comprehensive Exam is offered. Students may take comprehensive exams twice. No academic credit will be awarded for completion of the Comprehensive Examination.

COM 697. Directed Study in Communication. 3 Credit Hours.
This course permits the student to pursue a communication area of interest and relevancy. The work will be performed under the supervision of a faculty member who will help design the program of study and the requirements to be met by the student. All directed studies must be approved by the Graduate Director and the Chair of the Department, who will be supplied with a title for and description of the course, its requirements and grading criteria, and a preliminary list of readings.
COM 698. Culminating Project. 3 Credit Hours.
The Culminating Project is a written product of a systematic addressing of a problem or need of an organization that has real-world application. It identifies the problem, states the major elements involved, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth solutions to the problem, details their implementation, and assess their effectiveness. The completed project evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.

COM 699. Thesis. 3 Credit Hours.
The thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished project (product) evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.