

Communication Studies, B.A.

Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Arts

Nature of the Program

The Department of Communication Studies offers a curriculum to meet the needs of liberal arts and pre-professional students oriented toward communication-related careers such as marketing, sales, recruiting, management, and market research, among many others. The undergraduate curriculum focuses on the application of theory and research in human communication to a variety of personal, social, and organizational settings.

Majors must select one of five areas of emphasis (health, integrated, interpersonal, social media and communication technology, or organizational communication). All majors complete COMM 491, an internship, and COMM 403, the capstone course. These two courses allow students to integrate academic content with real-world experience. For more information about this program, please go to <http://communicationstudies.wvu.edu>.

SELECTING AN AREA OF EMPHASIS:

Each Area of Emphasis will allow students to hone different skills.

• Health Communication

- Design and evaluate effective health messages to be communicated interpersonally, organizationally, and culturally.
- Explore contemporary issues in the U.S. health care system and develop the skills necessary for navigating diverse populations.
- Prepare for careers in health care management, advocacy, and campaigns.

• Integrated Communication

- Create and deliver messages for diverse audiences across communication contexts and relational partners.
- Customize coursework across the health, interpersonal, social media and technology, and organizational communication areas of emphasis.
- Prepare for careers across a variety of for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

• Interpersonal Communication

- Develop and demonstrate the ability to relate to others across personal and professional relationships, including romantic relationships, friendships, family, small groups, and workplace colleagues.
- Explore the behaviors and events that affect the development, maintenance, and termination of these relationships.
- Prepare for careers in community relations, public service, and nonprofit management.

• Social Media & Communication Technology

- Construct and deliver appropriate, effective, and ethical messages necessary for meeting the communication goals associated with social media and technology.
- Analyze the role that social media and technology plays in shaping people's perceptions, behaviors, and social interactions.
- Prepare for careers in media planning, social media coordination, and marketing.

• Organizational Communication

- Create and implement messages designed to strategically navigate workplace interactions with superiors, subordinates, peers, and stakeholders.
- Acquire ways to recruit, retain, and socialize organizational employees as well as develop leadership, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.
- Prepare for careers in management, human resources, and training and development.

Students who earn a degree in the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences must complete the University requirements, the College requirements for their specific degree program, and their major requirements.

Minors

All students have the possibility of earning one or more minors; follow the link for a list of all available minors and their requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/minors/>). Please note that students may not earn a minor in their major field.

FACULTY

CHAIR

- Lindsay Morris-Neuberger - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
Health and Risk Communication, Campaigns

PROFESSORS

- Alan K. Goodboy - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Instructional, Interpersonal, Quantitative Methods
- Christine Kunkle - Ph.D. (University of Nebraska)
Family, Life-span, Interpersonal
- Matthew M. Martin - Ph.D. (Kent State University)
Instructional, Interpersonal, Communication Traits
- Lindsay Morris-Neuberger - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
Health and Risk Communication, Campaigns
- Scott A. Myers - Ph.D. (Kent State University)
Instructional, Family, Organizational

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Elizabeth L. Cohen - Ph.D. (Georgia State University)
Media Psychology, Entertainment Education, New Media, Health and Risk Communication
- Megan R. Dillow - Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University)
Interpersonal, Communication Theory, Relational Communication
- Brian R. Patterson - Ph.D. (University of Oklahoma)
Developmental Communication, Communication Theory

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Katie K. Kang - Ph.D. (Rutgers University)
Organizational, Group
- Daniel Totzkay - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
Health Communication, Mass Communication
- Megan Vendemia - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Communication Technology

TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- John G. Cole - M.A. (West Virginia University)
Instructional, Organizational, Computer Technology
- Carrie D. Kennedy-Lightsey - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Communication Theory, Student Internships, Interpersonal

TEACHING INSTRUCTORS

- Nikki Loy - M.S.J. (West Virginia University)
Group, Public Speaking, Social Media
- Ryan V. Thompson - Ed.D. (St. Thomas University)
Professional Life Skills, Business & Professional Communication, Public Speaking, Interpersonal

PROFESSORS EMERITA

- Melanie Booth-Butterfield - Ph.D. (University of Missouri)
- Virginia P. Richmond - Ph.D. (University of Nebraska)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS EMERITA

- Enid J. Portnoy - Ed.D. (West Virginia University)
- John Shibley - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)

Admissions

- First-Time Freshmen are admitted directly into the major.
- Students transferring from within WVU must have a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 and a 2.0 in Communication Studies courses or have taken at least one COMM course with a minimum grade of C-.
- Students transferring from another institution must have a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 and a 2.0 in Communication Studies courses or have taken at least one COMM course with a minimum grade of C-.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS 2024-2025

The Admission Requirements above will be the same for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

Major Code: 1474

[Click here to view the Suggested Plan of Study \(p. 5\)](#)

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Degree Requirements

Students must complete WVU General Education Foundations requirements, College B.A. requirements, major requirements, and electives to total a minimum of 120 hours. For complete details on these requirements, visit the B.A. Degrees tab on the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/eberlycollegeofartsandsciences/#bachelorofartstext>) page.

Departmental Requirements for the B.A. in Communication Studies

Completion of the major requires students to earn a minimum of 36 credit hours in Communication Studies courses. All students wishing to obtain a degree in Communication Studies must comply with the following:

- **Capstone Requirement:** The university requires the successful completion of a Capstone course: COMM 403.
- **Writing and Communication Requirement:** The Communication Studies Bachelor of Arts is a **SpeakWrite Certified Program™**. SpeakWrite Certified programs incorporate and develop students' written, verbal, visual, and mediated communication skills across the curriculum.
- **Calculation of the GPA in the Major:** A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in all courses applied to major requirements. If a course is repeated, all attempts will be included in the calculation of the GPA unless the course is eligible for a D/F repeat.
- **Area of Emphasis:** Students must complete both COMM 201 and COMM 203 with a grade of C- or better before selecting one of five areas of emphasis in Communication Studies in consultation with their adviser (i.e., Health Communication, Integrated Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Social Media and Communication Technology, or Organizational Communication). All COMM courses applied to the Area of Emphasis must be completed with a grade of C- or better.
- **Experiential Learning:** All students must complete a minimum of 3 credits internship (COMM 491 Professional Field Experience).

- **Benchmark Expectations:** For details, go to the Communication Studies Degree Progress tab (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/eberlycollegeofartsandsciences/communicationstudies/#degreeprogress>).

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	University Requirements	72
	ECAS B.A. Requirements	12
	Communication Studies Major Requirements	36
Total Hours		120

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)	
Outstanding GEF Requirements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8		34
COMM 191	First-Year Seminar	1
	General Electives	37
Total Hours		72

ECAS Bachelor of Arts Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
ECAS B.A. Requirements		12
	Foreign Language	
	Fine Arts Requirement	
	Global Studies and Diversity Requirement	
Total Hours		12

Communication Studies Major Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
CORE COURSES		12
COMM 173	Fundamentals of Communication Studies	
COMM 201	Communication Research Methods	
COMM 203	Communication Theory	
COMM 491	Professional Field Experience *	
AREA OF EMPHASIS:		18
Please select from the list below:		
	Health Communication	
	Integrated Communication	
	Interpersonal Communication	
	Organizational Communication	
	Social Media and Communication Technology	
UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE:		3
Select one additional Communication Studies courses at the 300 level, excluding COMM 490		
CAPSTONE:		3
COMM 403	Capstone Seminar	
Total Hours		36

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COMM 491 must be taken for a minimum of 3 credits.

Suggested Plan of Study

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
COMM 191		1 ENGL 101 (GEF 1)	3
COMM 173		3 GEF 5	3
Foreign Language 101		3 ECAS Fine Arts Requirement (GEF 6)	3
GEF 2		4 GEF 3	3
General Elective		4 Foreign Language 102	3
		15	15

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
GEF 4		3 ENGL 102 (GEF 1)	3
ECAS Global Studies and Diversity Requirement (GEF 7)		3 GEF 8*	3
Foreign Language 203		3 Foreign Language 204	3
COMM 203		3 COMM 201	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
		15	15

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
GEF 8*		3 COMM Elective 1	3
GEF 8*		3 COMM 491	3
Area of Emphasis Course 1		3 Area of Emphasis Course 3	3
Area of Emphasis Course 2		3 Area of Emphasis Course 4	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
		15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
Area of Emphasis Course 5		3 COMM 403 (Capstone)	3
General Elective		3 Area of Emphasis Course 6	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
		15	15

Total credit hours: 120

*

Courses taken to satisfy the F8 requirement may overlap with major courses. Students who complete a minor, a second major or a dual degree already meet F8.

Areas of Emphasis Offered:

- Health Communication (p. 5)
- Integrated Communication (p. 6)
- Interpersonal Communication (p. 6)
- Social Media and Communication Technology (p. 7)
- Organizational Communication (p. 7)

HEALTH COMMUNICATION AREA OF EMPHASIS REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Core courses in Health Communication		12
COMM 307	Life-Span Communication	
COMM 309	Health Communication	

COMM 404	Persuasion	
COMM 409	Advanced Health Communication	
Health Communication Electives		6
Select two of the following:		
COMM 300	Interpersonal Communication Theory	
COMM 303	Business and Professional Communication	
COMM 304	Argumentation	
COMM 306	Organizational Communication	
COMM 317	Communication and Aging	
COMM 401	Advanced Communication Research Methods	
COMM 424	Communication Ethics	
Total Hours		18

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION AREA OF EMPHASIS REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Select 6 classes from the following:		
COMM 300	Interpersonal Communication Theory	
COMM 303	Business and Professional Communication	
COMM 304	Argumentation	
COMM 305	Appreciation of the Motion Picture	
COMM 306	Organizational Communication	
COMM 307	Life-Span Communication	
COMM 308	Nonverbal Communication	
COMM 309	Health Communication	
COMM 315	American Diversity in Film	
COMM 317	Communication and Aging	
COMM 322	Dark Side of Communication	
COMM 332	Family Communication	
COMM 335	Social Media in the Workplace	
COMM 342	Interpersonal Relationships & Technology	
COMM 401	Advanced Communication Research Methods	
COMM 404	Persuasion	
COMM 405	Effects of Mediated Communication	
COMM 406	Advanced Organizational Communication	
COMM 408	Advanced Nonverbal Communication	
COMM 409	Advanced Health Communication	
COMM 424	Communication Ethics	
COMM 425	Computer Mediated Communication	
COMM 426	Organizational Culture	
COMM 435	Advanced Social Media	
Total Hours		18

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AREA OF EMPHASIS REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		
COMM 300	Interpersonal Communication Theory	
COMM 302	Interpersonal Communication	
COMM 322	Dark Side of Communication	
COMM 332	Family Communication	
Electives		6
Select two of the following classes:		

COMM 307	Life-Span Communication	
COMM 317	Communication and Aging	
COMM 342	Interpersonal Relationships & Technology	
COMM 401	Advanced Communication Research Methods	
COMM 404	Persuasion	
COMM 408	Advanced Nonverbal Communication	
COMM 424	Communication Ethics	
Total Hours		18

SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AREA OF EMPHASIS REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		12
COMM 335	Social Media in the Workplace	
COMM 405	Effects of Mediated Communication	
COMM 425	Computer Mediated Communication	
COMM 435	Advanced Social Media	
Electives		6
Select two of the following:		
COMM 303	Business and Professional Communication	
COMM 304	Argumentation	
COMM 306	Organizational Communication	
COMM 342	Interpersonal Relationships & Technology	
COMM 401	Advanced Communication Research Methods	
COMM 404	Persuasion	
COMM 424	Communication Ethics	
Total Hours		18

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AREA OF EMPHASIS REQUIREMENTS

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		12
COMM 306	Organizational Communication	
COMM 404	Persuasion	
COMM 406	Advanced Organizational Communication	
COMM 426	Organizational Culture	
Electives		6
Select two of the following classes:		
COMM 303	Business and Professional Communication	
COMM 304	Argumentation	
COMM 335	Social Media in the Workplace	
COMM 401	Advanced Communication Research Methods	
COMM 424	Communication Ethics	
COMM 425	Computer Mediated Communication	
COMM 435	Advanced Social Media	
Total Hours		18

Degree Progress

- At the end of the fourth semester in the major, students should have completed COMM 201 and COMM 203 with a minimum grade of C- in each.
- After completion of COMM 201 and COMM 203, students must declare an Area of Emphasis within two semesters or be removed from the major, as they are required to complete an AoE to graduate from the Communication Studies major.
- All majors must meet with a COMM adviser each semester.

Students who do not meet these expectations may be removed from their major.

Major Learning Outcomes

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Upon successful completion of the B.A. degree, **Communication Studies** majors will be able to:

1. Identify and explain the primary communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts associated with their area of emphasis;
2. Analyze and critique messages using communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts;
3. Interpret, design, and conduct original communication-based research;
4. Create and deliver effective communication messages across oral, written, and mediated channels appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.