COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COM)

College of Arts and Humanities

Courses

COM 100. Internship in Computerized Communication. 1-3 Credits.
Internship for high school seniors to engage in a structural and supervised learning experience in computerized communication.
Repeatable for Credit.

COM 112. Communication Media Practicum. 1-3 Credits.
This course provides students with an opportunity to gain knowledge and skill as they do work at WCU media outlets.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Repeatable for Credit.

COM 200. Communication Careers Planning I. 1 Credit.
This course is designed to introduce the first of a two-phase, career-planning process. Self-assessment and exploration is provided through assigned readings, mini-lectures, reflective exercises, and small group activities.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 203, MDC 203.

COM 204. Interpersonal Communication. 3 Credits.
One-on-one communication to give the student a fundamental understanding of the processes and experiences of the most basic type of human communication.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 212. Mass Communication. 3 Credits.
A survey course designed to identify, analyze, and evaluate the pragmatic, persuasive, creative, and technical dimensions of mass media.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 216. Small Group Communication. 3 Credits.
Introduction to and practice in the structured small group. Emphasis on preparation for, analysis of, and participation in problem-solving oriented groups. COM 216 may no longer be used to fulfill a general education COM requirement.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 217. Introduction to Video Production. 3 Credits.
This course explores the basic television production process. Topics covered include theories of production process, camera operation, lighting, audio recording, editing, visual effects, design, and production staff, as well as the application of these processes to actual production situations.
Typically offered in Fall.
Cross listed courses COM 217, MDC 217.

COM 219. Communication Theory. 3 Credits.
A study of human communication that includes a historical view of the field, examinations of definitions of communication, analyses of the nature of theory and the process of theorizing, assessment of perspectives of communication, and construction of models of communication.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall, Spring & Summer.

COM 224. Communication Research. 3 Credits.
An examination of the nature of inquiry and research in communication. Emphasis on understanding and appreciating the strengths and weaknesses of various methods of research in communication.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall, Spring & Summer.

COM 250. Intercultural Communication. 3 Credits.
A study of factors that contribute to communication breakdowns between diverse cultures and between fragmented segments within the same society.
Gen Ed Attribute: Diversity Requirement.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall, Spring & Summer.
Cross listed courses COM 250, MDC 250.

COM 251. Media Technology. 3 Credits.
This course introduces the students to key technologies used in producing digital messages, as well as professional standards applied in using these technologies. As part of the course, students will also develop basic, practical skills in using current media technology applications.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 251, MDC 251.

COM 252. Writing for Broadcast and Public Relations. 3 Credits.
Students are required to analyze, evaluate, and produce scripts for a variety of mass media formats. The course will focus on writing for radio and TV and will also emphasize public relations writing within those media. The primary course objective is to develop effective writing, critical analysis, and communication skills. This course is designed to help you improve your research and writing skills for each of these media and is geared toward students with a genuine interest in a media career.
Typically offered in Fall.
Cross listed courses COM 252, MDC 252.

COM 253. Media Literacy. 3 Credits.
Media literacy is a way of critically thinking about modern media: a way of analyzing media messages to gain control over them, understanding their commercial, theoretical and ideological influences, mastering control over the psychological tricks embedded throughout modern technologies and creating new messages as a member of our social information society. In this course, we will explore the effects and influences of mass media and communication on us and in society. We will examine the historical and contemporary influences of mass communication and media - music, film, television, advertising the internet, video games, and social media.
Typically offered in Fall.
Cross listed courses COM 253, MDC 253.

COM 254. Media & Culture Theory. 3 Credits.
This is an introductory course designed to explore the connection between media technologies and culture by examining basic theoretical arguments in media studies today. Students will examine key theoretical approaches to understanding the influence of media in contemporary culture, including audience studies, behavior change theories, computer-mediated communication, critical cultural studies, media convergence, and media literacy. By semester’s end, students will be able to understand, apply, and contribute to research in the field of media studies. This knowledge will aid in the process of becoming responsible media producers and critical media consumers in today’s digital world.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 254, MDC 254.

COM 275. Media in Ireland. 3 Credits.
This course introduces students to the past, present and future of media in Ireland by examining the culture, history, law and economic conditions of the nation. It includes visits to the major historic sites and media centers in Dublin.
Typically offered in Summer.

COM 276. Media in London. 3 Credits.
This course explores the past, present and future of British media. Students will study England from a variety of perspectives (cultural, economic, legal, technological) as a way of understanding the evolution of British media, including both print and broadcast. Course includes three weeks in London visiting various media institutions.
Typically offered in Summer.

COM 292. Living in the Digital Age. 3 Credits.
New technologies result in immediate and far reaching changes in our communications systems and in our communication practices. They even effect how we define ourselves. This course examines a broad array of issues from Artificial Intelligence to the WWW.
COM 295. Communication and Disability. 3 Credits.
This course explores how individuals communicate through and about disability. Topics covered include the place of perceptions, identity, language, non-verbal behavior, and assistive technology in interpersonal communicative interactions among and about individuals with disabilities in family, friendship, and professional relationships.
Gen Ed Attribute: American Sign Language Culture Cluster, Foreign Language Culture Cluster. Typically offered in Fall.

COM 304. Organizational Communication. 3 Credits.
An in-depth analysis of the dynamic process of communication as it occurs in organizational networks.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 304 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 216 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 307. Nonverbal Communication. 3 Credits.
A study of the verbal and sensory messages we are constantly receiving. Body language and the uses of space, time, touch, objects, and color inherent in the sensory messages we receive.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 307 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 309. Advanced Public Speaking. 3 Credits.
Designing personal strategies, adapting delivery to large audiences, developing oral use of language, and speaking to live or simulated community groups.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 309 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall.

COM 311. Communication Professions in Sports. 3 Credits.
Course focuses on the communications businesses related to sports in America, including marketing, public relations, journalism, emerging media, etc. Includes sections on media history, communication ethics, race relations, and gender issues in sports media. Guest speakers from major media and local professional teams provide insight into communications-related professions in sports.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 311 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 311, MDC 311.

COM 314. Games Culture and Theory. 3 Credits.
More people are playing video games than ever before, but what does it mean to be a gamer? What does it mean to be part of gaming culture? How does theory help us understand the impact of video games on us? In this class, we will explore video games, both classic and contemporary. You will not only play them, but you will also deconstruct your own relationship with video games themselves as well as humanity's. You will explore the ways people are influenced by games, and the way that games influence culture and society, for better and for worse.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 314 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 314, MDC 314.

COM 316. Mediated Communication: The Internet, Culture & Society. 3 Credits.
We communicate using technology every day. In fact, our digital communication technologies are so pervasive that they seem almost invisible as most of us increasingly rely on some form of media in order to communicate with one another. Technologies such as Facebook, Twitter, SMS, e-mail, and any number of other programs have blurred the lines between interpersonal and mass communication, causing us to rethink how we understand human interaction in this new mediated world. Mediation has challenged some of the most basic assumptions of how we form relationships, both with each other and with ourselves, and how technology can be used to enhance or inhibit these relationships. This course examines the effects that digital mediated communication technologies have on our everyday lives, personal identities as well as our interpersonal, intrapersonal, and organizational relationships.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 316 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 316, MDC 316.

COM 317. Advanced Video Production. 3 Credits.
This course explores advanced television production processes. Topics covered include proposal and budget writing, visualization and storyboarding, composing and staging shots and the advanced use of editing tools in pre-production, production, and post-production.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 317 requires prerequisites of COM 217, COM 219, COM 224 and SPK 208 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 317, MDC 317.

COM 318. Forensics. 3 Credits.
Study in the philosophy and practice of forensics. Initiating, developing, and administering a forensic program. Coaching and judging debate and individual events.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 318 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.

COM 320. Communication on Television and Radio. 3 Credits.
For the student who, by career or circumstance, will be required to be on radio and television. The focus of the course will be on three major areas: interviewer/interviewee techniques; acting for television, including working in commercials; and news reporting, including studio and remote locations.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 320 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 219, COM 224, and THA 103 or MDC 250, MDC 251, and THA 103.
Typically offered in Fall.
Cross listed courses COM 320, MDC 320.

COM 321. Search Engine Optimization Management. 3 Credits.
This course examines the relationship between communication and marketing on the internet, with emphasis on the strategic use of content in the marketing process. Topics include: online communication environments, audience analysis, message design, editorial plan, and the analysis of outcomes.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 321 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 321, MDC 321.

COM 322. Culture and Organizations. 3 Credits.
Organizational dynamics can be understood to operate using deeper assumptions and values, much like national cultures. Different scholarly approaches to culture are used to craft strategic responses to practical organizational challenges using the media. The particular cultures of media organizations are also analyzed using case study examples.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 322 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 322, MDC 322.

COM 323. Media Audiences. 3 Credits.
Media scholars and practitioners have long been interested in understanding and measuring ‘the audience’. Increasing levels of media convergence, fragmentation, and polarization present many new challenges for making sense of media users. The purpose of this course is to explore various assumptions of media audiences and the different methodological attempts to measure them. First, students will explore a ‘push’ media perspective by examining mass communication media effects research. Students will examine pop culture texts of today and learn more about audience reception research and the many ways in which audiences experience and make sense of media technologies. Finally, students will examine how these different approaches inform the concerns, questions, methods, findings, and implications of audience research today.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 323 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 323, MDC 323.
COM 325. Strategic Social Media. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to explore the influence of digital media in the twenty-first century. We will address key concepts in the field of new media, including issues such as media literacy, personal identity, community, globalization, and the convergence culture. It is necessary to question whether there is anything “new” about these new technologies by comparing them with historic media transformations of our past. Once an adequate understanding is gained of the historical and present landscape of new media, we will learn to utilize technologies for personal online reputation management. Finally, we will critically explore how to best market new media by examining various business models and theories in the field, as well as how organizations and businesses utilize new media most effectively. Students will have an opportunity to apply course concepts to a final social media marketing project.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 325 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 325, MDC 325.

COM 335. Introduction to Public Relations. 3 Credits.
An introduction to the role of the public relations practitioner in the formation of public opinion. Communications theory will be combined with specific techniques for working with the press, producing printed material, and conducting special events.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 335 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 335, MDC 335.

COM 340. Political Communication. 3 Credits.
This course explores the functions and effects of political messages in policymaking and in campaigns. Particular attention is paid to the flow of messages between politicians, the media, and the electorate.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 340 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.
Typically offered in Fall.

COM 350. Advanced Intercultural Communication. 3 Credits.
Intercultural communication examines communication across various areas of difference: age, race, gender, class, orientation, region. Graduate Intercultural Communication examines the relationship between communication and culture. Analysis of communication variables as they relate to the communication of difference and the ways in which difference matters in everyday intercultural communication are examined. Emphasis is placed on the influence of culture on the communication process, including differences in values, assumptions, and communication practices/roles.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 350 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 350, MDC 350.

COM 360. African American Culture and Communication. 3 Credits.
African American communication explores the ways messages, verbal and non-verbal, produce, maintain, transform and repair reality for Black community members over the media and in interpersonal contexts. As such, the course explores the significance of discursive identity construction in the media and in human interaction. We aim to develop intercultural communication competency in this subject area. We accomplish this as we examine the ways in which Black/African American identities have been discursively and socially constructed, sustained, problematized, celebrated, and enacted in media, institutional, and societal settings. The dynamic process of acquiring, managing and executing the rhetorical qualities, patterns of thinking, values, assumptions, and concepts which constitute subjective culture are explored.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 360 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall.
Cross listed courses COM 360, MDC 360.

COM 370. Event Production Using Media. 3 Credits.
Producing a large event requires strategic leadership to coordinate multiple stakeholders to achieve concrete goals. The media play a variety of roles in this complex production process. This course considers application of theory to research to the practical problems of envisioning and executing events on a larger scale using a variety of mediated forms in different supporting roles.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 370 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 370, MDC 370.

COM 399. Directed Studies in Communication Studies. 1-6 Credits.
Research, creative projects, reports, and readings in communication studies. Students must apply to advisers one semester in advance of registration. Open to juniors and seniors only.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 399 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224 and approval of department chairperson.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Repeatable for Credit.

COM 400. Internship in Communication Studies. 3-15 Credits.
This course provides a structured and supervised work experience in communication. Credits earned are based on amount of time spent on the job. Students must apply to the department internship coordinator and receive approval to be admitted.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 400 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall, Spring & Summer.
Repeatable for Credit.

COM 403. Persuasion. 3 Credits.
Current theories of attitude and attitude change. Practice in speaking to modify behavior through appeals to the drives and motives of the listener.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 403 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.

COM 404. Rhetorical Theory and Criticism. 3 Credits.
Offers an overview of rhetorical theory from classical to contemporary times. Theory is needed to analyze and assess a variety of texts such as advertisements and specials.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 404 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 405. Argumentation & Debate. 3 Credits.
Functions and principles of argumentation and debate, including analysis, evidence, reasoning, and refutation. Class debates on vital issues.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 405 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis.
Typically offered in Spring.

COM 410. Conflict Resolutions. 3 Credits.
This course explores the means of resolving conflict through argument, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 410 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall.

COM 411. Language, Thought & Behavior. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to help students understand the way language functions in the communication process. To accomplish this purpose, various language systems will be examined and one will be selected for in-depth analysis.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 411 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis.
Typically offered in Summer.

COM 420. Mass Media & Social Protest. 3 Credits.
This course will address multi-disciplinary theory and research that has contributed to our understanding of both the antecedents and consequences of mediated messages as they affect processes related to social protest. Readings will draw from mass communication, political science, sociology, and other disciplines to examine questions about the role of communication media in the dynamics of social protest considering both traditional and new/emerging media.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 420 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 420, MDC 420.
COM 421. Content Strategy. 3 Credits.
This course examines the relationship between communication and marketing on the internet, with emphasis on the strategic use of content in the marketing process. Topics include: online communication environments, audience analysis, message design, editorial plan, and the analysis of outcomes.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 421 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 421, MDC 421.

COM 422. Consulting for Careers in Media and Culture. 3 Credits.
The goal of this course is to explore the links between abilities and perspectives refined by those who study organizational culture and the needs of modern organizations. In this course, students will explore the elements of organizational culture and apply their learning in conducting an in-depth analysis of a specific organization and with the goal of improving organizational effectiveness and creating positive organizational change.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 422 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 422, MDC 422.

COM 423. Media Campaigns. 3 Credits.
This course examines key theories of mass media influence and applies them to the practice of persuasive media campaigns.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 423 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 423, MDC 423.

COM 425. Rhetoric & Popular Culture. 3 Credits.
This course engages the rhetorical tradition as a way of understanding and interrogating popular culture. Unlike other courses in rhetoric, this course is not concerned with the obviously important, rather it regards the everyday, the ordinary, and the mundane as significant sources of persuasion and influence. The over arching concern for the course is not popular culture for its own sake. Instead, the course seeks to understand what popular culture does and how it contributes to the construction of our social reality.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 425 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 219, and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 440. Friendship Communication. 3 Credits.
This course explores communication in friendship relationships. Topics covered include a dialectical perspective of creating and maintaining meaning between friends in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, as well as how friendship communication is affected by gender, culture, school, work, romance, and family.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 440 requires prerequisites of COM 204, COM 219, COM 224 and SPK 208.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis.
Typically offered in Fall.

COM 445. Family Communication. 3 Credits.
This course explores communication in family relationships. Topics covered include interpersonal interaction between family members, societal influences on the family as a whole, and the place of family narratives in these communicative behaviors.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 445 requires prerequisites of COM 204, COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.
Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis.
Typically offered in Spring.

COM 450. Health Communication. 3 Credits.
This course explores communication in health care settings. Topics covered include the changing perceptions of medical encounters, the language of illness and health, the roles of patients and caregivers, and health communication in historical, cultural, organizational, technological and mediated contexts.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 450 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.
Typically offered in Spring.

COM 455. Public Relations Management. 3 Credits.
This course explores the strategic planning and implementation of public relation programs. Topics include the application of management theory to real public relations cases to solve communication problems as well as identifying the values of audiences, and working with the media to develop and distribute messages.

COM 460. Communication and Advertising. 3 Credits.
This course explores the relationship between communication and advertising. Topics covered include the interconnection among advertising, media, and a range of publics, as well as the process and history of advertising, message strategies, media planning, and campaign evaluation, ethical and regulatory issues.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 460 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 460, MDC 460.

COM 470. Intercultural Communication Training. 3 Credits.
Intercultural training is an experiential activity that engages cognitive, behavioral and affective learning to help individuals to bridge cultural differences in their communication. This course teaches students the theory behind intercultural training for the workplace through the experience of workshops and through designing their own workshops. The use of media in training workshops is addressed explicitly using theory and experiential examples.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 470 requires prerequisites of SPK 208, COM 217, COM 219, and COM 224 or MDC 250 and MDC 251.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Cross listed courses COM 470, MDC 470.

COM 480. Communication and Leadership. 3 Credits.
This course explores the relationship between leadership and communication. Topics covered include the definition of the leadership challenge, the major approaches to leadership training, and the study of leadership as a metaphor for self-development.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 480 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, and SPK 208.

COM 490. Capstone: Communication Theory. 3 Credits.
This senior level seminar explores leading communication theories at an advanced level. Students will be expected to read, synthesize and apply original communication research related to key theories across the communication studies field.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 490 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, SPK 208 and any two COM 300 or 400 level courses other than COM 400.

COM 491. Capstone: Rhetoric & Public Communication. 3 Credits.
This senior level seminar explores leading theories of rhetoric and social influence at an advanced level. Students will be expected to read, synthesize and apply original communications research related to theories in these particular areas of emphasis in the communication studies field.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 491 requires prerequisites of COM 219, COM 224, SPK 208, and any two of the following courses: COM 309, COM 340, COM 403, COM 404, COM 405, or COM 480.

COM 492. Capstone: Intercultural & Interpersonal Communication. 3 Credits.
This senior level seminar explores leading theories of intercultural and interpersonal communication at an advanced level. Students will be expected to read, synthesize and apply original communication research related to theories in these particular areas of emphasis in the communication studies field.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 492 requires prerequisites of COM 204, COM 219, COM 224, SPK 208, and any two of the following courses: COM 307, COM 360, COM 410, COM 440, COM 445, COM 470, or COM 480.

COM 493. Capstone: Media & Public Relations. 3 Credits.
This senior level seminar explores leading media and public relations theories at an advanced level. Students will be expected to read, synthesize and apply original communications research related to theories in these particular areas in the communications studies field.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 493 requires prerequisites of COM 212, COM 219, COM 224, SPK 208 and any two of the following courses: COM 317, COM 320, COM 325, COM 355, COM 455, or COM 460.

COM 499. Communication Seminar. 3 Credits.
Intensive examination of a selected area of study in the field of communication studies. Topics will be announced in advance.
Pre / Co requisites: COM 499 requires prerequisites of SPK 208 and COM 219 and COM 224.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
Repeatable for Credit.