

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

College of Arts and Humanities

512 Main Hall
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383
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Department of Communication Studies (<http://www.wcupa.edu/communicationStudies>)

Dr. Polk (dpolk@wcupa.edu), *Chairperson*

Dr. Boyle (mboyle@wcupa.edu), *Assistant Chairperson*

Dr. Munz (emunz@wcupa.edu), *Assistant Chairperson and Graduate Coordinator*

Programs of Study

The Master of Arts in Communication Studies is a comprehensive program that focuses on the broad field of communication. Given the breadth of the field of communication, the program seeks to build students' understanding and abilities across a broad array of communication contexts (including organizational, interpersonal, small group, mass media, and public relations). The program is designed to provide a theory-based approach to a variety of communicative phenomena while simultaneously stressing the value of research. Together, theory and research provide students with the proper foundation for making solid persuasive arguments in their professional and academic pursuits. By acquiring theoretical knowledge and research skills, students and graduates can best apply their education in their chosen fields.

The M.A. in Communication Studies is designed as both an academic and a professional development degree with thesis and non-thesis track options. Many students complete the program and pursue additional graduate work at the Ph.D. level. The program offers a thesis option for students interested in pursuing a large-scale research project in preparation for future Ph.D. work. In terms of professional development, all courses explore pragmatic issues of communication. The program offers tremendous flexibility enabling students to further their chosen career goals, and perhaps future success, by exploring up to 15 credits outside the Department of Communication Studies. For example, students interested in administrative work can take elective courses in the Master of Public Administration program (M.P.A.). The department faculty also are ideally suited to help with students' professional development goals because they serve as communication consultants to groups and organizations outside of the University.

Since the program is designed to enhance students' communication skills, courses within the program require extensive speaking and writing. Courses are generally taught as small discussion-oriented seminars, and most course grading centers on students' papers and presentations.

Philadelphia Campus

The M.A. in Communication Studies has also been offered at the Philadelphia Campus. At this time, new students are no longer being admitted into the program there.

Curriculums for programs offered at the alternative PASSHE Center City (<http://wcupa.edu/philly>) satellite campus in Philadelphia are equivalent to those found on WCU's main campus. With state-of-the-art classrooms, the Center City location serves the needs of degree completers and/or adult learners who are balancing work and family obligations.

Programs

Master's Program in Communication Studies

- M.A. in Communication Studies (<http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/arts-humanities/communication-studies/communication-studies-ma>)

Admissions

All applicants to one of West Chester University's graduate programs will be held to the graduate admissions requirements (<http://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/admissions-enrollment/graduate-admissions>). When applicable, additional requirements for admission into specific department program(s) may be listed below.

Admission to the program is contingent on satisfactory review of the following data. No single deficit will preclude a student from gaining admission. Analysis and consideration of all the material to document the following will be evaluated:

- The cumulative undergraduate GPA should be a 3.0 or above.
- The Graduate Record Exam should show a verbal score ranking in the 50th percentile or above. No test scores are required for students with an undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or above. Test scores may also be waived (by discretion of the graduate coordinator) for students who have successfully completed graduate-level courses.
- Undergraduate major preparation. Students in majors other than communication or its related areas (e.g., English, psychology, sociology, political science) may need to complete remedial undergraduate course work prior to starting in the program.
- Writing sample of work submitted by the student in response to past assignments, job activity, or creative endeavor
- Two letters of recommendation
- A goals statement written on the topic, "How Does Communication Knowledge Bridge My Past Experience With My Future Plans?"

Three additional items may be used to support an application for admission:

1. Work experience that indicates communication skill
2. Extra or co-curricular activities
3. Interview with the graduate coordinator and/or the graduate committee

Policies

All graduate students are held to the academic policies and procedures (<http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/academic-policies-procedures>) outlined in the graduate catalog. Students are encouraged to review departmental handbooks for program tips, suggested course sequences, and explanations of procedures. When applicable, additional policies for specific department programs may be listed below.

Maintenance in Good Standing

To remain in good standing, a student must maintain a minimum, overall graduate GPA of 3.0 or above.

Admission to Degree Candidacy

At the completion of 12 semester hours (at least nine of which are within the department), a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or better must be earned for candidacy to be achieved. At candidacy, a major advisor is selected.

Comprehensive Examination

After the completion of all course work, nonthesis and thesis students will take a comprehensive written examination. Thesis students will defend their theses orally.

Faculty

Professors

Michael Boyle (mboyle@wcupa.edu) (2006)

Assistant Chairperson

B.A., East Stroudsburg University; M.A., University of Delaware;
Ph.D., University of Wisconsin at Madison

Timothy J. Brown (tbrown@wcupa.edu) (2002)

B.A., M.A., West Chester University; Ph.D., Ohio University

Kevin W. Dean (kdean@wcupa.edu) (1991)

Director, Honors College

B.S., Bowling Green University; M.A., Miami University of Ohio;
Ph.D., University of Maryland

Anita K. Foeman (afoeman@wcupa.edu) (1991)

B.H., Defiance College; M.A., Ph.D., Temple University

Elaine B. Jenks (ejenks@wcupa.edu) (1992)

B.A., University of Maryland; M.A., Gannon University; Ph.D.,
Pennsylvania State University

David G. Levasseur (dlevasseur@wcupa.edu) (1997)

B.A., M.A., University of Maryland-College Park; Ph.D., University of
Kansas

Edward J. Lordan (elordan@wcupa.edu) (2001)

B.A., West Chester University; M.A., Temple University; Ph.D.,
Syracuse University

Lisa Millhous (lmillhous@wcupa.edu) (1999)

B.A., Macalester College; M.A., Ph.D., University of Minnesota

Denise M. Polk (dpolk@wcupa.edu) (2005)

Chairperson, Communication Studies

B.A., Baldwin-Wallace College; M.A., Miami University; Ph.D., Kent
State University

Martin S. Remland (mremland@wcupa.edu) (1991)

B.A., Western Illinois University; M.A., Central Michigan University;
Ph.D., Southern Illinois University

Philip A. Thompsen (pthompsen@wcupa.edu) (1997)

B.S., Northern Arizona University; M.S., University of Southwestern
Louisiana; Ph.D., University of Utah

Associate Professors

Maria Kopacz (mkopacz@wcupa.edu) (2007)

M.A., Warsaw University (Poland); Ph.D., University of Arizona

Bessie Lee Lawton (blawton@wcupa.edu) (2008)

B.A., M.A., University of the Philippines; Ph.D., University of
Pennsylvania

Michael V. Pearson (mpearson@wcupa.edu) (1988)

B.A., Iona College; M.A., William Patterson College; Ph.D., Temple
University

L. Meghan Peirce (mmahoney@wcupa.edu) (2011)

B.A., York College of Pennsylvania; M.A., West Chester University;
Ph.D., Ohio University

Kanan Sawyer (ksawyer@wcupa.edu) (2004)

B.S., California Polytechnic State University; M.A., University of
Washington; Ph.D., University of Texas

Assistant Professors

Roger Gatchet (rgatchet@wcupa.edu) (2015)

B.A., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo; M.A., University of Texas at Austin;
Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin

Maxine Gesualdi (mgesualdi@wcupa.edu) (2016)

B.S., West Virginia University; M.A., West Chester University

Mark Hickman (mhickman@wcupa.edu) (2009)

B.A., Marshall University; M.A., Miami University of Ohio

Matthew Meier (mmeier@wcupa.edu) (2015)

B.A., Capital University; M.A., Purdue University Calumet; Ph.D.,
Bowling Green State University

Elizabeth Ann Munz (emunz@wcupa.edu) (2013)

Graduate Coordinator, Communication Studies

Assistant Chairperson, Communication Studies

B.A., University of Richmond; M.A., Ph.D., Purdue University

Rajvee Subramanian (rsubramani@wcupa.edu) (2015)

B.A., Loyola College, University of Madras, India; M.A., University of
Madras, India; Ph.D., Southern Illinois University - Carbondale

Julia Waddell (jwaddell@wcupa.edu) (2016)

B.A., B.S., University of Florida; M.S., University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill; Ph.D., University of Michigan

Courses

COM

COM 500. Communication And Leadership. 3 Credits.

Exploration of the interconnections between communication principles and the theory and
practice of leadership.

COM 501. Theoretic Perspectives On Human Communication. 3 Credits.

A comprehensive examination of major theoretical perspectives on human communication
ranging from classical to contemporary.

Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 502. Communication Research Methods. 3 Credits.

An examination of the major issues pertaining to inquiry in human communication,
including the nature of inquiry; qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches to
communication research; moral and ethical standards for human research; the role of the
researcher; and comparisons of academic research. Students will be required to design and
execute a research project.

Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

COM 503. Communication & Persuasive Influence. 3 Credits.

An analysis of major conceptual approaches to persuasion and their implications for
understanding influence contexts and designing pragmatic strategies.

COM 505. Rhetoric And Leadership. 3 Credits.

The criticism and history of influence will be explored to focus on examples of persuasion
through public discourse.

COM 506. Communications In Small Groups. 3 Credits.

An examination of traditional and contemporary research which pertains to various
dimensions of small group communication including, but not limited to, the following topics:
structure, size, tasks, goals, roles, systems, and leadership.

COM 508. Special Topics Seminar. 3 Credits.

An intensive examination of a selected area within communication study. Topics will vary and
will be announced in advance of each semester.

Repeatable for Credit.

COM 509. Communication & Conflict Resolution. 3 Credits.

Using both theoretical and activity-centered learning, the student will explore the options
available to resolve conflict through communication.

COM 510. Culture, Media And Representation. 3 Credits.

Course examines how the media constructs ideologies and images of various cultural groups
for mass consumption.

COM 511. Understanding Close Relationships. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to introduce and discuss basic theories, themes, concepts, and
controversies in relationships from a communication standpoint. Students will be better
equipped to apply theoretical knowledge to repair, maintain, and enhance their own personal
relationships.

Distance education offering may be available.

Typically offered in Fall.

COM 520. Political Communication. 3 Credits.

Examines the role communication plays in the political system with a specific focus on
campaign communication, political advertising, and media coverage of politics.

COM 525. American Public Address. 3 Credits.

Critical and theoretical examination of significant speeches in American history (from early American history to contemporary times).

COM 530. Advances In Nonverbal Communication. 3 Credits.

This course investigates recent advances and controversies in nonverbal communication theory and research.

COM 535. Communication Competence. 3 Credits.

Course examines what it means to be a highly competent communicator. Communication competence will be explored across a multitude of communication contexts including interpersonal, organizational, intercultural and leadership contexts.

COM 550. Listening: Verbal & Nonverbal Perception. 3 Credits.

A survey of research in listening behavior and related nonverbal variables. Identification of important characteristics of effective listeners. Application to communication activities in the classroom.

COM 551. Public Relations Research And Writing. 3 Credits.

Familiarizes student with the skills needed to work as a public relations writer and editor. Explores applicable media theories as well as ethical and legal issues.

COM 570. Conc Foundations Comm Train & Devel. 3 Credits.

This course examines major schools of thought in organizational training and development. Each viewpoint is explored for its diagnostic guidance, learning implications, and training technologies.

COM 571. Practicum In Com Training & Development. 3 Credits.

Participants will review and practice the leading training technologies in communication and organizational development. Each participant will design and deliver a training workshop.

COM 575. Seminar On Speech Pedagogy. 3 Credits.

An examination of pedagogical research on the development of effective public speakers. Provides opportunities to both train speakers and critique public presentations.

COM 598. Grad Internship in Speech Communication. 3-6 Credits.

Supervised professional training in approved communication placements.

Consent: Permission of the Department required to add.

Repeatable for Credit.

COM 599. Directed Graduate Studies. 3 Credits.

Research projects, reports, readings in speech communication.

Consent: Permission of the Department required to add.

Repeatable for Credit.

COM 601. Communication Studies Thesis I. 3 Credits.

Original research, supervised through topic selection, investigation, and oral defense.

Consent: Permission of the Department required to add.

COM 602. Communication Studies Thesis II. 3 Credits.

Original research, supervised through: IRB approval (if necessary), data collection, analysis, writing results, writing thesis chapters, and defense.

Pre / Co requisites: COM 602 requires a prerequisite of COM 601.