

# COMMUNICATION STUDIES, BA

Courses in this discipline offer the knowledge and skills that are essential to becoming a leader in a complex world. Students learn to analyze, evaluate, and critique human communication practices in a variety of contexts. They also develop the intellectual resources needed to articulate their own ideas and to communicate them effectively with others.

## Co-Curricular Student Activities

The department supports a diversified program of co-curricular student activities in competitive speaking and individual events, argument, and debate and in peer consulting through the *Speaking Studio*. Members of the **Alabama Forensic Council** participate in regional and national intercollegiate competitions. Students in the **Alabama Debate Society** participate in high school debate outreach as well as exhibitions. Students in the Public Speaking Program may compete for the *Oscar Newton Outstanding Speaker Prize*, as well as for the coveted *Holle Award for Excellence in Public Speaking*. Majors who meet the requirements for membership in *Lambda Pi Eta* are invited to join the honor society and to participate in its service activities.

## Accelerated Masters Program (AMP) in Communication Studies

Open to eligible communication studies majors, students admitted into this program are able to earn both the BA and MA in communication studies at The University of Alabama in five years. For the highly motivated and academically gifted student, this program offers several distinct advantages:

- Faster, more economical plan of study than earning the two degrees separately
- Richer undergraduate degree experience, fewer unrelated core courses, and more courses in the communication studies major
- Stronger mentoring relationship with the communication studies faculty
- Greater opportunity to develop understanding of the field in preparation for advanced graduate study

Students may apply for admission into this program, after completing 91 semester hours with a 3.3 GPA or better, through the Graduate School admission process. Admission to the Graduate School will be granted if the student has (a) met all the admission criteria for the graduate program, (b) completed three-fourths of the hours required for the major and the minor, and (c) been recommended for admission by the department. Upon admission to the Graduate School, the student will be allowed to take graduate-level courses and begin a program of study leading to the Master of Arts in communication studies. Once enrolled in AMP, communication studies students may count up to 10 hours of credit dually (toward both degrees).

## Core Curriculum and General Education Requirements

A total of 120 hours is required for graduation, 33 hours of which must be in upper-division courses (at the 300- or 400-level). The College requires that 12 of these upper-division hours be outside of the major (COM). This College requirement may be met with upper-division courses in the minor.

Code and Title	Hours
<b>Freshman Composition (FC)</b>	
EN 101 English Composition (or by exam or equivalent)	3
EN 102 English Composition (or by exam or equivalent)	3
<b>Humanities (HU) and Fine Arts (FA)</b>	
Fine Arts (FA)	3
Literature (L)	3
Humanities (HU)	6
May include the following:	
COM 100 Rhetoric And Society <sup>1</sup>	
COM 122 Critical Decision Making <sup>1</sup>	
or	
COM 121 Crit Decisn Makng Honors	
COM 123 Public Speaking <sup>1</sup>	
or	
COM 124 Honors Public Speaking	
COM 210 Oral Interpretn Literatr <sup>1</sup>	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	18
<b>Natural Science (N) and Mathematics (MA)</b>	
Natural Science (N)	8
Mathematics (MA)	3
Credit Hours Subtotal:	11
<b>History (HI) and Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB)</b>	
History Sequence (HI)	6
Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB)	6
May include the following:	
COM 101 Principles Human Communication <sup>1</sup>	
COM 220 Interpersonal Communication <sup>1</sup>	
or	
COM 219 Honors Interpersonal Comm	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	12
<b>Pre-major Requirements</b>	
COM 100 or Rhetoric And Society	3
COM 101 Principles Human Communication	
Foreign Language (FL) or Computer Science (CS)	6-8
Credit Hours Subtotal:	9-11
<b>W-designated Courses in the Major</b>	
Select a minimum of six hours of the following: <sup>2</sup>	6
COM 300 Human Communication Research	
COM 310 Rhetorical Criticism	
COM 342 Rhetoric Social Protest	
COM 380 Influence	
COM 413 Communication & Diversity	
COM 415 African American Rhetoric	
COM 450 Adv Organization Communication	
COM 463 Relational Communication	
COM 465 Intercultural Communication	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	6
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>56-58</b>

**Footnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> These courses are cross-listed as meeting core requirements as well as the major.
- <sup>2</sup> Select a minimum of six hours of Writing courses (W), at least three hours of which must be in the major (COM) as COM 300 Human Communication Research or COM 310 Rhetorical Criticism.

## Communication Studies Major

Overall, a total of 33 hours are required in upper-division courses (at the 300-400 level), including a minimum of 21 hours in the major (COM) and of 12 hours outside the major, which may be fulfilled by courses in the minor. No more than 45 hours in Communication Studies (COM) may be counted toward the total number of hours required for graduation (120).

To major in Communication Studies, a minimum of 36 hours of courses in Communication Studies is required. The program of instruction should be planned in consultation with a faculty advisor and must include COM 499 Capstone Seminar, for a total of 21 hours in requirements and a minimum of 15 hours in elective COM courses:

Code and Title	Hours
<b>Theoretical Foundations (3 hours)</b>	<b>3</b>
Select at least one of the following: <sup>1</sup>	
COM 100 Rhetoric And Society	
COM 101 Principles Human Communication	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	3
<b>Oral Performance Skills (6 hours)</b>	<b>6</b>
Select at least one of the following Oral Performance courses:	
COM 104 Forensics (this course may be repeated for up to 6 hours credit)	
COM 121 Crit Decisn Makng Honors or COM 122Critical Decision Making	
COM 123 Public Speaking or COM 124Honors Public Speaking	
May also select an Advanced Oral Performance course from the following:	
COM 210 Oral Interpretn Literatr	
COM 323 Advanced Public Speaking	
COM 348 Argumentation	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	6
<b>Methods and Analysis W Course (3 hours)</b>	<b>3</b>
Select at least one of the following W courses, after completion of designated prerequisite:	
COM 300 Human Communication Research	
COM 310 Rhetorical Criticism	
<b>Writing Skills in Communication Studies</b>	<b>3</b>
Select an additional W-designated COM course to complete Gen Ed requirement:	
COM 342 Rhetoric Social Protest	
COM 380 Influence	
COM 413 Communication & Diversity	
COM 415 African American Rhetoric	
COM 450 Adv Organization Communication	
COM 463 Relational Communication	

COM 465 Intercultural Communication		
Credit Hours Subtotal:		6
<b>Capstone Experience (3 hours)</b>		
COM 499 Capstone Seminar <sup>2,3</sup>		3
Credit Hours Subtotal:		3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>18</b>

**Footnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> **NOTE: Although not required, the department strongly recommends that Communication Studies majors take both COM 100 Rhetoric And Society and COM 101 Principles Human Communication.**
- <sup>2</sup> Intended to be taken in the final semester of coursework
- <sup>3</sup> May not be taken prior to the completion of a theory foundation/ method and analysis course combination, either COM 100/COM 310 or COM 101/COM 300

## COM Elective Courses

Through the selection of elective courses, Communication Studies majors may choose to emphasize one of the following focused areas of study: rhetoric and public discourse, communication and culture, interpersonal communication, or organizational leadership. Communication Studies majors do not have to select an area of emphasis for their elective coursework; however, they are encouraged to plan their individual programs of study with the guidance of their departmental faculty adviser. The courses listed below for each of these areas are recommendations, not requirements.

### Rhetoric and Public Discourse

This emphasis area focuses on argumentation, the effective construction and critical analysis of persuasive public messages, and the role of rhetoric in constructing, sustaining, or changing the political, social, or cultural order. This area also focuses on communication theories and practices evident in public (political, social, cultural) discourse, artifacts, and campaigns. Attention is given to such areas of analysis and practice as public speaking, argumentation and debate, and the role of media in various public contexts. The area is an ideal pre-professional emphasis for students interested in careers in the legal profession, and this emphasis area is one means of helping pre-law students prepare broadly for that career. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include American Studies, Criminal Justice, English, Gender and Race Studies, History, Journalism and Creative Media, Philosophy, or Political Science.

Code and Title	Hours
COM 301 Intro Rhetorical Theory	3
COM 323 Advanced Public Speaking	3
COM 342 Rhetoric Social Protest	3
COM 348 Argumentation	3
COM 380 Influence	3
COM 415 African American Rhetoric	3
COM 421 Political Communication	3
COM 422 Communication and the Law	3
COM 425 Gender & Political Communctn	3
COM 467 Seminar in Public Address	3
COM 480 Propaganda	3

### Communication and Culture

This emphasis area explores public communication in a wide variety of contexts and settings. The focus is on the influence of rhetoric and

visual communication on individuals, communities, and the larger social world. Students interested in careers involving community or social change or human services (e.g., the ministry), or in postgraduate study in communication studies or media studies should consider this emphasis. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include Anthropology, Advertising, American Studies, Apparel and Textiles, Art History, English/Creative Writing, Gender and Race Studies, International Studies, Journalism and Creative Media, Modern Languages, Public Relations, Religious Studies, or Theatre.

Code and Title	Hours
COM 210 Oral Interpretn Literatr	3
COM 250 Nonverbal Communication	3
COM 270 Discourse of Sport	3
COM 320 Truth, Ethics, and Deception	3
COM 340 Rhetoric & Popular Culture	3
COM 366 Visual Culture & Communication	3
COM 380 Influence	3
COM 413 Communication & Diversity	3
COM 415 African American Rhetoric	3
COM 462 Theories Of Persuasion	3
COM 465 Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469 Communication & Gender	3

## Interpersonal Communication

The focus of this area is on knowledge and skills vital to successful interpersonal communication in personal, family or group, and organizational or professional settings. Emphases include social, cognitive, and cultural influences on personal and professional interaction and such skills as conflict resolution, small group problem solving, effective interviewing, and intercultural communication. It is appropriate for students interested in professional and administrative careers in business, educational or human services, and media organizations. Recommended minors for students who choose this emphasis area include Advertising, Consumer Sciences, Economics, General Business, Human Development and Family Studies, International Studies, Journalism and Creative Media, Management, Psychology, Public Relations, Real Estate, Sociology, Social Welfare or World Business.

Code and Title	Hours
COM 220 Interpersonal Communication	3
COM 225 Small Group Communicatn	3
COM 250 Nonverbal Communication	3
COM 320 Truth, Ethics, and Deception	3
COM 330 Family Communication	3
COM 413 Communication & Diversity	3
COM 430 Dark Side of Interpersonl Comm	3
COM 460 Group Leadership	3
COM 463 Relational Communication	3
COM 465 Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469 Communication & Gender	3

## Organizational Leadership

This emphasis area focuses on the development of communication skills applicable for leading small groups and organizations and strengthening individual professional communication. These elective courses work to combine the application of communication theory with practical skills for those who aspire for leadership roles in educational, professional, corporate, non-profit, or political careers by providing the opportunity

to develop those skills with diverse groups of people and in different contexts.

Code and Title	Hours
COM 225 Small Group Communicatn	3
COM 270 Discourse of Sport	3
COM 350 Organizatnl Communicatn	3
COM 352 Business Prof Communication	3
COM 380 Influence	3
COM 413 Communication & Diversity	3
COM 422 Communication and the Law	3
COM 450 Adv Organization Communication	3
COM 455 Leadership & Strategic Comm	3
COM 460 Group Leadership	3
COM 462 Theories Of Persuasion	3
COM 465 Intercultural Communication	3
COM 469 Communication & Gender	3

The mission of the communication studies program is to prepare students to be competent communicators in their personal, civic, and professional roles. Learning outcomes of the program aim to foster their abilities to think critically, to express and to advocate ideas effectively, and to understand and to appreciate the diversity of human communication practices. The major emphasizes the connections between thought, action, and public participation, studying theory and practice in the areas of rhetoric, persuasion, political communication, interpersonal communication, organizational leadership, and culture.

Majoring in communication studies, therefore, prepares students for a variety of professions that value knowledge and skills in human communication. Students who graduate with degrees in communication studies are equipped with both theoretical and practical knowledge of human communication and can enter a new career confident in their ability to communicate ideas with clarity and effectiveness to others, a skill that opens doors in any professional field.

## Types of Jobs Accepted

Career opportunities most frequently sought by communication studies majors are in law, education, politics, public relations, management, ministry, sales, training, and development.

Learn more about opportunities in this field at the Career Center

## Faculty

### Professors

Beth S. Bennett

Margaret U. D'Silva

Robert N. Gaines

Mark D. Nelson

### Associate professors

Meredith Bagley

Robin Boylorn

Heather Carmack

Alexa S. Chilcutt

Darrin Griffin

Sara Hartley

Mary M. Meares

Joshua R. Pederson

**Assistant professors**

Jennifer Becker

Anneliese Bolland

Adam Sharples Brooks

Sim Butler

Nikita Y. Harris

Peter R. Jensen

Leah LeFebvre

Jessy Ohl

Caroline S. Parsons

Cynthia Peacock

Ben Pyle

**Senior Instructor**

Angela Billings

**Instructor**

Cory Paul Harrison

**Chair**

Margaret U. D'Silva

**Professor emeritus**

Thomas Harris

**Associate professor emeritus**

Frank M. Thompson, Jr.

**Adjunct assistant professors**

Jane S. Baker

Brandon Chicotsky

Dan Mangis