Communication Studies

FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. The concentration in Communication Studies focuses on the history, content and impact of mass media, and new emerging media. Four reasons for studying mass media include:

- Media’s influence on culture in the USA and around the world
- Media’s role in shaping our individual and collective identities and attitudes towards others
- Media’s centrality to everyday life, politics, the economy, and public policy
- Media’s impact on democratic institutions

Communication Studies concentrators develop a broad range of analytical and communication skills, which provide the groundwork for numerous career paths in business, education, and public affairs.

Related fields include Screen Arts and Cultures, English Language and Literature, History, Political Science, Business, Sociology, and Psychology.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Communication Skills
Writing clearly
Speaking effectively
Synthesizing information
Presenting different viewpoints
Explaining processes, plans, and concepts
Creating entertaining and persuasive messages
Demonstrating creativity and artistic expression

Research/Analytical Skills
Defining hypotheses
Evaluating ideas and their presentation
Gathering information and data
Comparing/contrasting evidence
Evaluating information and sources
Thinking critically/interpreting
Developing market research
Measuring media effects

Organizational Skills
Planning and managing
Working within deadlines
Working independently
Attending to details
Organizing teams and small groups

Interpersonal Skills
Identifying the different needs of individuals, groups, and mass audiences
Understanding institutional and cultural values
Working as a team member
Rewriting or editing with others
Interviewing people

BUILDING YOUR SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Employers seek out individuals who can demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic. Student organizations and campus employment offer valuable opportunities to add to the skills you are developing in your classes. Most concentrations sponsor specific student groups like an undergraduate organization or an honor society. Other options include study abroad, off-campus employment or volunteering in the community. Finally, a summer internship may be the best way of all to test out a career field and develop marketable skills.
FROM SKILLS TO CAREER

Communication Studies concentrators develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers. For example, effective communication skills may be equally useful whether working as a sales representative, a lobbyist, or a freelance journalist. Many concentrators go on to graduate or professional school. The list below is a sample of careers undertaken by Communication Studies graduates.

Communication Skills
- Reporter
- Copy editor
- Correspondent
- Travel writer
- Photojournalist
- Reviewer or critic
- Sports/news announcer
- Newscaster/narrator
- Writer (film, documentaries, news, web)
- Film editor
- Audio/visual technician
- Advertising copywriter

Research/Analytical Skills
- Data communications analyst
- Researcher
- College instructor
- Web content provider
- Information architect
- New media marketer
- Traffic manager
- Lawyer
- Public affairs analyst
- Media consultant
- Public opinion pollster

Organizational Skills
- Editorial project manager
- Managing editor
- Publisher
- Corporate communications director
- Account coordinator
- Advertising coordinator
- Digital media manager
- News director
- Producer
- Community affairs director
- Special events promoter

Interpersonal Skills
- Sales associate
- Customer representative
- Media fundraiser
- Director
- Social networking coordinator
- Lobbyist
- Public relations coordinator
- Legislative press secretary
- K-12 teacher

= Further Study Required

For more career information, see O*Net at online.onetcenter.org

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

The major in Communication Studies includes 16 credit hours of prerequisite courses, 8 credits of 200-level core communication studies classes, 4 credits of communication studies ULWR course (350-399 level); nine credits of advanced communication studies courses (300-400 level) and 3 credits of communication studies senior capstone seminar (450-499 level) for a total of 40 credit hours.

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5370 North Quad, 105 South State Street
734-764-0420
lsa.umich.edu/comm

Newnan Advising Center
1255 Angell Hall
734-764-0332
lsa.umich.edu/advising

NEXT STEPS/RESOURCES

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedin

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3

On-campus jobs (work-study and non work-study jobs) are listed at: studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx

Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: maizepages.umich.edu

Connect to Community lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: connect2community.umich.edu

The Career Center
3200 Student Activities Building
734-764-7460
careercenter.umich.edu
facebook.com/careercenter.umich
twitter.com/careercenter
linkedin.com/company/the-career-center-at-the-university-of-michigan

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