



STUDENT LIFE

THE CAREER CENTER

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.

Department of Communication Studies

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

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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
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