

# Communication Studies

**MAJOR, MINOR**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS:** Vladimir Bratic (chair), Lori J. Joseph

**LECTURER:** Heather Derrick (director of oral communication)

**ADJUNCT FACULTY:** Joseph Staniunas

Communication is the process through which we create and share meaning. In the major, students study this process in a variety of contexts, including relationships, media, organizations, the public sphere, and global cultures. In consultation with an advisor, a communication studies major tailors a program of study to prepare for a career in a field such as media production, journalism, public relations, communication in organizations, or for further study in graduate or professional school. Students who complete the major:

- will understand the centrality of communication to our everyday personal and professional lives;
- develop expertise in traditional academic skills of research, analysis, application, and critical reflection;
- master specific practical and professional communication skills, e.g., writing, public speaking, and digital production;
- gain direct professional experience through internships;
- will be prepared for lives as ethical leaders, professionals, and involved citizens.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES:**

11 courses (44 credits) and one internship

### **CORE COURSES:**

- COMM 101: Introduction to Communication Studies (4)
- COMM 225: Public Speaking (4)
- COMM 205: Research Methods in Communication (4)
- COMM 340: Communication Theory (4)
- COMM 470: Senior Seminar (4)

In addition to the core, majors must take two classes from the 200 level, three classes from the 300 level, and one course of their own choice.

### **200-level courses:**

- COMM 208: Qualitative Research Methods (4)
- COMM 215: Constructing Gender (4)
- COMM 217: Rhetorical Theory - From Ancient Greece to Renaissance (4)
- COMM 222: Video Studio Processes (4)
- COMM 231: Writing for Print Media (4)
- COMM 236: Writing for Broadcast Media (4)
- COMM 238: Argumentation and Advocacy (4)
- COMM 244: Social Marketing and Campaigns (4)
- COMM 248: Click Here for Change: Social Media and Social Activism (4)
- COMM 270: Intercultural Communication (4)

### **300-level courses:**

- COMM 313: Media Criticism (4)
- COMM 316: Contemporary Public Communication (4)
- COMM 322: Public Relations Principles (4)
- COMM 327: Communication and Technology (4)
- COMM 343: Organizational Communication (4)
- COMM 344: Health Communication (4)
- COMM 348: Pop Culture (4)
- COMM 361: Media Law and Policy (4)
- COMM 372: Visual Cult(ure) (4)
- COMM/INTL 380: Global Communication (4)

**INTERNSHIP:**

Students must complete one internship in communication studies.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR A MINOR IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES:**

Students must satisfactorily complete 5 courses (20 credits), including:

- COMM 101: Introduction to Communication Studies (4)
- Two courses (8 credits) from the 200 level
- Two additional courses (8 credits), from the 300 level

**COURSES IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES:****COMM 101: INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION STUDIES (4)****Bratic, Derrick, Joseph**

This course introduces students to the theories and practices of various areas of study in the field of communication. Verbal and nonverbal communication, the mass media, communication technologies, popular culture, and communication in organizations are among the topics covered. No prerequisites. Offered both terms. (*r*, MOD)

**COMM 197F: FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR – IS ANYONE LISTENING? (4)****Derrick**

In school, we're taught to read, write, and speak, but rarely are we taught how to listen. In the workplace, we're encouraged to speak up and are rewarded for voicing our opinion. In our personal lives, technology creates instant and constant opportunities to connect, but people report feeling more alone than ever. If we're always thinking about what we're going to say, are we listening to anyone? Is anyone listening to us? We'll explore the complexities of message reception and perception through the lenses of psychology, neuroscience, and sociology. Together we'll assess and modify our own listening practices and work together to create a podcast sharing our findings. Open to first-year students only. Offered Term 1. Placement to be determined during the summer. (*o*, *r*)

**COMM 197F: FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR - NEW COMMUNICATION REVOLUTION: MIND-READING ROBOTS ARE COMING! (4)****Bratic**

About 30 years ago, starting with the invention of the Internet, we entered the digital era in human communication. Previous communication revolutions like the invention of spoken language, the written word, or mass communication profoundly changed the way we lived our lives. In this class, we will study the consequences of previous communication revolutions and infer the possible outcomes of the new Digital Revolution. We will begin by analyzing the impact of new communication technologies (e.g., computers and cell phones) and new communication platforms (e.g., social networks) on human communication. We will then learn about the new digital inventions like computer algorithms, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. Finally, we will hypothesize whether the new mode of communication such as mind reading can realistically be achieved in the near future. Open to first-year students only. Offered Term 1. Placement to be determined during the summer. (*r*)

**COMM 205: RESEARCH METHODS IN COMMUNICATION (4)****Department**

Research is the basis for the communication discipline and most careers in communication. This course introduces students to various search strategies and research methods that contribute to the study of communication, the collection of information, and the solution of practical problems. Open to first-year students. Prerequisites: *q* and COMM 101 or permission. Not offered in 2022-23. (*r*, *Q*)

**COMM 208: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS (4)****Joseph**

This course introduces students to a variety of qualitative research methods used to study communication in natural settings. Students will learn how to develop research questions and choose appropriate methods to facilitate the collection, analysis, and reporting of qualitative data. Major methods that will be studied include ethnography, individual and group interviewing, and textual analysis. No prerequisite. Offered Term 1.

**COMM 215: CONSTRUCTING GENDER (4)****Joseph**

In this course we examine the constitution of gender identities through communication. We incorporate a variety of readings and exercises to facilitate our exploration of how sex status/gender is made relevant through our everyday communicative patterns. We'll examine the constitutive relationship between communication and gender in a variety of contexts such as family, friendships, romantic relationships, the

workplace, and the media. Also listed as GWS 215. Open to first-year students. No prerequisite. Offered Term 2. (*r*, DIV, MOD)

**COMM 216: METHODS OF RHETORICAL CRITICISM (4)**

**Department**

A survey course of established methods and procedures of rhetorical criticism. Students will learn the basic procedures and theories of describing, analyzing, and evaluating rhetorical texts. Topics include the nature, definition, and functions of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. Offered Term 2. (*w*, *x*)

**COMM 217: RHETORICAL THEORY - FROM ANCIENT GREECE TO THE RENAISSANCE (4)**

**Department**

A survey course on the origins and major developments in rhetorical theory from 5<sup>th</sup>-century B.C.E. Greek society to the Renaissance period. In addition to reading Plato and Aristotle, students explore how women like Aspasia and Sappho transcended the public sphere's gendered boundaries. Discussions consider how categories of sex/gender, race, ethnicity, class, and age both influenced men's and women's power to speak and shaped the rhetorical practices we employ today. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23. (*o*, *r*, PRE)

**COMM 220: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION (4)**

**Department**

The importance of understanding one's style of communication in various relationships is relevant to successful communication. Students will learn the progression of skills necessary in developing and maintaining personal relationships. Topics such as self-concept, perception, verbal/nonverbal messages, listening, and disclosing will be discussed. Open to first-year students. No prerequisite. Offered Term 2.

**COMM 222: VIDEO STUDIO PROCESSES (4)**

**Department**

This course introduces students to basic concepts and creative processes in the video studio. Focus is on three interrelated areas: pre-production, including script writing, visualization, and planning; production, including use of equipment and live multi-camera directing; and critique, including peer critique of completed assignments and critique of professionally produced videos with an eye to developing visualization and writing skills. Class meets four hours per week. Open to first-year students. No prerequisite. Not offered in 2022-23. (CRE)

**COMM 225: PUBLIC SPEAKING (4)**

**Derrick**

The theory and practice of public speaking, including selection of content, organization of ideas, language, and delivery; practice in extemporaneous speaking; training in critical analysis is provided through reading and listening to contemporary speeches. Open to first-year students. No prerequisite. May not be taken for credit by students who have already completed COMM 125. Offered Term 1. (*o*)

**COMM 231: WRITING FOR THE PRINT MEDIA (4)**

**Department**

This course offers special topics in writing for newspapers, magazines, and other print media formats. No prerequisite. Offered Term 2.

**COMM 236: WRITING FOR BROADCAST MEDIA (4)**

**Staniunas**

Social media have revolutionized communication, but also underscore the continued need for precise, accurate information that's readily grasped the first time it's heard. This course, taught by an experienced broadcaster, focuses on news writing for television and radio. You will examine good and bad examples of broadcast writing to determine what makes them so, learn to convert raw information into readable copy, and also learn techniques of effective interviewing, copy editing, and on-camera delivery. No prerequisite. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 238: ARGUMENTATION AND ADVOCACY (4)**

**Derrick**

Students learn and apply principles of reasoned discourse and techniques of argumentation in this course. Logic, appropriate use of evidence, and addressing alternative perspectives are among topics covered. Students prepare and present written and oral arguments on controversial issues. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23. (*o*, *r*)

**COMM 244: SOCIAL MARKETING AND CAMPAIGNS (4)**

**Bratic**

This class will explore the process of mass communication marketing and campaigns in contemporary society. We will examine the major theoretical concepts of social marketing and campaigning and

investigate a variety of public, commercial, and social issues campaigns. When the class is taught in the year prior to the U.S. presidential election, presidential campaigns will be examined as case studies. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. Offered Term 2. (o, MOD)

**COMM 248: CLICK HERE FOR CHANGE: SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM (4) Bratic**

This course explores the history and development of social media activism, focusing on the opportunities and challenges of this new phenomenon. Students will examine case studies of social media activism during the last presidential elections, the Arab Spring, the WikiLeaks affair, the Black Lives Matter movement, and other recent cases. Additionally, each student will complete a research project about a current social activism effort. Not offered in 2022-23. (f, w, x, r)

**COMM 250: SPECIAL TOPIC: TEAMWORK & COMMUNICATION (4) Derrick**

Why do people hate working in groups? Every significant human accomplishment is the result of coordinated behavior - people working together toward common goals. This course examines essential elements of group communication, including leadership, power, culture, cohesiveness, and conflict. Students work within a team to apply the concepts and complete a service-learning project benefitting the Hollins community. Offered Term 2.

**COMM 270: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION (4) Bratic**

This course examines the diverse cultural and sociocultural customs, rules, and communication styles in multicultural interaction. Topics examined are intercultural communication theory, communication styles across different cultures, the impact of cultural difference on human interaction in business, education, and interpersonal interaction, and strategies in cross-cultural training. Not offered in 2022-23. (o, DIV, MOD)

**COMM 290: INDEPENDENT STUDY (2 or 4) Department**

Independent study conducted below the advanced level. Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. Offered any term.

**COMM 313: MEDIA CRITICISM (4) Bratic**

A survey of critical approaches to the mass media and mass culture. The purpose of the course is to develop students' critical viewing skills by increasing awareness of the pervasiveness of the mass media in everyday life, by studying various theories of media criticism, and by doing critical analysis of the media. Offered Term 2. (MOD)

**COMM 316: CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (4) Department**

Students learn about philosophies and realities of communication in a democratic society. Topics covered include the different ways a public realm of debate has been conceptualized historically and the nature of participation and the role of mass media in political processes in modern society. Prerequisite: COMM 101 and junior standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 322: PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLES (4) Joseph**

This course familiarizes students with the principles and functions of public relations. Utilizing hands-on teaching, students will learn about and apply PR principles, persuasive theory, and PR planning through the development of a PR campaign. Also covered are PR history, ethics, and development of tactics, such as press releases, brochures, and special events. Prerequisite: COMM 101 and junior standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 327: COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (4) Department**

Social influences on the emergence of new communication technologies, and the way such technologies impact society, are studied in this course. The course begins with consideration of the history of technologies such as the telegraph, telephone, and broadcasting. Insights from historical study are then applied in critical analysis of current and emergent communication technologies. Prerequisite: COMM 101 and junior standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 340: COMMUNICATION THEORY (4) Joseph**

This course examines various theories that lead to a more thorough knowledge of communication perspectives and processes. It is designed to give students an understanding of the key concepts and

themes that undergird communication research. Active participation from students in class discussions and presentations is emphasized. Offered Term 1.

**COMM 343: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION (4)**

**Joseph**

Students examine communicative approaches to organizing, including classical/scientific management, human relations, human resources, systems, cultural, and critical theories. Specific issues in organizations such as socialization, conflict, work, emotion, and sexual harassment will be considered from a communicative perspective. Prerequisite: COMM 101 and junior standing or permission. Offered Term 2. (MOD)

**COMM 344: HEALTH COMMUNICATION (4)**

**Joseph**

Health communication is an emerging specialty in the field of communication. This course is a survey of some of the concepts and theories in health communication and explores several areas, including the social construction of health and illness, patient-provider interaction, the development of health care promotion messages, and an overview of health care models and organizational structures in the U.S. Also listed as PH 344. Prerequisite: sophomore standing. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 348: POP CULTURE (4)**

**Bratic**

This course examines the relationship of communication media and popular culture. The study of popular culture reveals how people make meaning in everyday communicative interaction. Topics covered include the role of popular culture in society, cultural studies analysis, and a case study of rock and roll as a cultural form. Prerequisite: sophomore standing. Offered Term 1. (DIV, MOD)

**COMM 361: MEDIA LAW AND POLICY (4)**

**Department**

Students gain a basic understanding of the philosophy and practice of government regulation of U.S. media. First Amendment issues, intellectual property, and differences between regulation of print and electronic media are covered. Students prepare in-depth research projects on issues such as regulation of children's television. Prerequisites: COMM 101 and junior standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 372: VISUAL CULT(URE) (4)**

**Department**

Some images go viral. Others do not. Why? Can fear or irony be expressed, or power inequalities between groups be expressed or justified without spoken or written language? If so, how? We address these and related questions in this course, which focuses on the symbolic use of images and objects, especially in current day Western cultural contexts. Specifically, you will learn basic theories of visual communication from Cultural Studies, Rhetoric, and other academic perspectives, apply the theories by analyzing/critiquing images and objects, learn some hands-on techniques for designing persuasive images, and create your own persuasive visuals. Not offered in 2022-23.

**COMM 380: GLOBAL COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA (4)**

**Bratic**

This course deals with the development of various international media systems and international communication. Topics include comparative analysis of U.S., British, Russian, Chinese, and other countries' media systems, the role of commercial, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations in shaping global communication, and critical analysis of documentary films portraying international media issues. Also listed as INTL 380. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. Not offered in 2022-23. (o, GLO, MOD)

**COMM 390: INDEPENDENT STUDY (2 or 4)**

**Department**

Independent study conducted at the advanced level. Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. Offered any term.

**COMM 399: INTERNSHIP (4)**

**Department**

Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. May be proposed in any term.

**COMM 470: SENIOR SEMINAR (4)**

**Bratic**

In this capstone course, students draw on the knowledge and skills developed in the program to write a major research paper in a particular area of communication studies. Prerequisite: COMM 205, COMM 208, or COMM 216, and senior standing. Offered Term 1.

**COMM 490: SENIOR HONORS THESIS (4, 4)**

**Department**

Capstone for honors candidates, by invitation of the department. A three-term project culminating in a thesis. Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. May meet with COMM 470 Term 1.