

Areas of Emphasis in the Communication Major

Hugh Downs School of Human Communication

At the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, we explore the complex role of human communication in everyday life. As a student in our school, you will learn how to communicate effectively whether with one person or large and diverse groups. Our communication courses will provide you with the tools to understand, analyze, and respond to communication problems and opportunities, including interpersonal relationships, workplace teams, and community, civic and cultural groups.

These emphasis areas are designed to help you as an undergraduate Communication major effectively choose communication courses that fit your interests and career goals. The description of each area of emphasis also focuses on the career opportunities available within each case. In addition, the emphasis areas can help you develop a narrative describing what it is you are studying and what it can do for you.

Select two of the five Areas of Emphasis and complete both of the **Required Core Courses** in each:

- Communication and Healthy Relating
- Workplace, Organizational, and Leadership Communication
- Civility, Advocacy, and Engaging Publics
- Communication, Creativity, and Performance
- Communication Across Cultures

Communication and Healthy Relating

Healthy and sustained relationships require effective communication. Therefore, this area of emphasis focuses on the many ways that communication creates, maintains, and transforms, effective and nourishing relationships across many contexts (e.g., family, romantic, friendship, work). This focus should allow students to be more aware and more effective relational partners, both personally and professionally. This emphasis can prepare students for careers in social services, human resource management, counseling, non-profit organizations, management, and many others.

A. Required Core Courses:

COM 110 OR COM 310	Elements of Interpersonal Communication OR Relational Communication
COM 410	Interpersonal Communication Theory and Research

B. Recommended Elective Courses:

COM 310	Relational Communication
COM 312	Communication, Conflict, and Negotiation
COM 316	Gender and Communication
COM 317	Nonverbal Communication
COM 411	Communication in the Family
COM 452	Communication and the Art of Happiness
COM 394 or COM 494	Relevant Special Topic Courses

Workplace, Organizational, and Leadership Communication

Organizations are constituted by, and transformed through, communication. Effective workplace communication and leadership are crucial elements of success in all types of organizations, businesses, and teams. This area of emphasis provides insight and training on the many ways that communication and leadership can build effective, just, and responsive workplaces. This area of emphasis will prepare students who plan to pursue graduate school and/or careers in business, consulting, sports management, social media, marketing, technology, human resources, civil service, research/development, conflict management, and leadership. Such careers could occur within small businesses, sports teams, multinational corporations, consulting firms, governmental agencies, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations.

A. Required Core Courses:

COM 250	Communication in the Workplace
COM 450	Organizational Communication

B. Recommended Elective Courses:

COM 230	Small Group Communication
COM 312	Communication, Conflict, and Negotiation
COM 377	Communication, Terrorism, and National Security
COM 414	Crisis Communication
COM 430	Leadership and Group Communication
COM 452	Communication and the Art of Happiness
COM 453	Communication Training and Development
COM 394 or COM 494	Relevant Special Topics Courses

Civility, Advocacy, and Engaging Publics

The very nature of our culture and institutions (e.g., values, structures, ideas, and practices) are created, challenged, changed, and maintained through communication. Every new idea, product, and practice was initially created and instituted through communication. Therefore, this area of emphasis focuses students on the processes through which ideas are developed, disseminated, advocated, and adopted. This focus should effectively prepare students for law school and/or a number of professions in public service such as legislative positions, lobbyist for organizations (profit or nonprofit), foreign or civil service or working internationally, event planning, professional speaking, public information officers, community organizing, non-profit leadership, advertising, public relations, and so on. **Students interested in this Area of Emphasis should also consider enrolling in the Certificate in Civil Communication.**

A. Required Core Courses:

COM 321	Rhetorical Theory and Research
COM 421	Rhetoric of Social Issues

B. Recommended Elective Courses:

COM 222	Argumentation
COM 316	Gender and Communication
COM 320	Communication and Consumerism
COM 323	Communication and Popular Culture
COM 325	Advanced Public Speaking
COM 326	Court Room Oratory
COM 327	Civil Communication
COM 426	Political Communication
COM 394 or COM 494	Relevant Special Topics Courses

Communication, Creativity, and Performance

Communication, at its very core, is a creative enterprise. People must be able to adjust to ever-changing social conditions and diverse audiences to better advance inclusion and social engagement. To meet this challenge, this area of emphasis focuses on the performative nature of communication and the use of creative responses and aesthetic messages. This focus should effectively prepare students for careers in performing arts, event planning, teaching (pre-school, children, or adults), advertising, public relations, training and development, marketing, consulting, non-profit leadership, community organizing.

A. Required Core Courses:

COM 241	Introduction to Oral Interpretation
COM 442	Identity, Performance, and Human Communication

B. Recommended Elective Courses:

COM 194	Special Topics: Creativity and Communication
COM 281	Communication Activities
COM 341	Social Contexts for Performance
COM 441	Performance Studies
COM 445	Narrative Performance
COM 446	Performance of Literature Written by Women
COM 394 or COM 494	Relevant Special Topics Courses

Communication Across Cultures

Understanding how culture and communication intertwine is important to understanding and influencing events (both local and global) that shape our world. This emphasis promotes personal community involvement that can constructively respond to challenges in, and appreciate the advantages, of an increasingly diverse society and world. This emphasis will prepare students who plan to pursue graduate school and/or careers in workplaces (large or small, for-profit or nonprofit) that involve, and/or deal with, diverse groups. Specific careers might include consulting, social media, marketing, technology, human resources, civil service, conflict management, and leadership.

A. Required Core Courses:

COM 263	Elements of Intercultural Communication
COM 463	Intercultural Communication in a Global Context

B. Recommended Elective Courses:

COM 317	Nonverbal Communication
COM 327	Civil Communication
COM 394	Communication, Culture, and New Media
COM 442	Identity, Performance, and Human Communication
COM 465	Intercultural Communication Workshop
COM 494*	Conflict and Intercultural Dialogue
COM 494*	Communication and Multicultural Organizations
COM 394 or COM 494	Relevant Special Topics Courses