

COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the largest majors on campus. The Hope College Department of Communication has been recognized by the National Communication Association for its outstanding curriculum and was twice named a "Program of Excellence" by the Central States Communication Association for its curricular program.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The curriculum integrates theory and practice emphasizing various types of communication: rhetoric, relational communication, media studies and production, organizational communication and global communication. Through research, experiential learning and civic engagement, our courses will give you a deep understanding of how communication plays an integral role in social life. The Department of Communication is housed in the state-of-the-art Martha Miller Center for Global Communication, where students can use video production, journalism, speech and research facilities.

Communication knowledge and skills are essential for personal success and for participation in a complex, globalizing society. Communication competence incorporates a number of learning goals often identified as important by employers and graduate schools. These goals include:

- Interacting easily and productively with others;
- Thinking critically and solving problems;
- Communicating ideas clearly and effectively;
- Balancing conflicting viewpoints;
- Interpreting quantitative and qualitative data;
- Working for social justice and change.

SOCIAL SCIENCE REQUIREMENT

Communication 101 (The Communication Process) satisfies the Social Science I and Global Learning-Domestic general education requirements. This course focuses on communication competence – the ability to communicate effectively in relationships and to critically analyze media messages.

Communication 151 (Media & Society) satisfies the Social Science II and Global Learning-International general education requirements. This course is an introduction to the different types of media and the impact of media on society. Emphasis varies with instructor.

MAJORS

Communication majors at Hope often link their academic programs with other disciplines as they prepare for careers in business, ministry, theatre, law and teaching. Professional plans in journalism, broadcasting, public relations, human resource development, film, corporate communication, public speaking, ministry, advertising, global communication, and government often stem from opportunities provided to communication majors. The nationally-recognized Hope communication curriculum also provides a strong and well-regarded foundation for students planning further study in communication at major graduate institutions.

Communication

The communication major curriculum is designed to provide a balanced education emphasizing theoretical understanding and skill development across all significant communication contexts. A student typically enters the program through any one of four introductory courses (101, 140, 151, 160). It is assumed that majors will progress through the course offerings chronologically, from 100-level to 300- and 400-level courses.

A Bachelor of Arts degree with a communication major may be obtained by completing 42 credits in the Department of Communication according to the following criteria:

Credits required:

100 level: 14 credits

- COMM 101 – Introduction to the Communication Process, 4 credits
- COMM 140 – Public Presentations, 4 credits
- COMM 151 – Media & Society, 2 credits
- COMM 160 – Analytic Skills in Communication, 4 credits

200 level: 12 credits with COMM 260 and COMM 280 required

- COMM 210 – Interpersonal Communication, 4 credits
- COMM 220 – Task Group Leadership, 4 credits
- COMM 231 – Communication and Conflict, 4 credits
- COMM 240 – Intergroup Dialogue, 4 credits
- COMM 251 – Media Production I, 4 credits
- COMM 255 – Writing for Media, 4 credits
- COMM 257 – Communication for Public Relations, 4 credits
- COMM 260 – Rhetoric and Public Culture, 4 credits
- COMM 280 – Research Methods, 4 credits
- COMM 290 – Independent Media Project, 1-2 credits*

- COMM 295 – Topics in Media Production (e.g., Web design, video advertising, graphics)

*Does not fulfill 200-level major requirement.

300 level: 12 credits with COMM 399 or study abroad required

- COMM 320 – Family Communication, 4 credits
- COMM 330 – Organizational Communication, 4 credits
- COMM 335 – Leadership Skills and Perspectives, 4 credits
- COMM 340 – Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation Practicum, 4 credits
- COMM 354 – Digital Cinema, 4 credits
- COMM 356 – Advanced Media Writing, 4 credits
- COMM 357 – Documentary: Theory and Practice, 4 credits
- COMM 360 – The Art and Science of Persuasion, 4 credits
- COMM 371 – Intercultural Communication: Communicating Across Differences, 4 credits
- COMM 372 – Gender Communication, 4 credits
- COMM 390 – Independent Study, 1-4 credits
- COMM 395 – Topics in Communication (e.g., Political Communication, Reality TV, Film Criticism), 4 credits
- COMM 399 – Communication Internship, 4 credits

400 level: 4 credits with COMM 451 or COMM 460 or COMM 463 or COMM 470 required

- COMM 451 – Media Theory, 4 credits
- COMM 460 – Communication Theory, 4 credits
- COMM 463 – Rhetorical Theory, 4 credits
- COMM 470 – Cultural Communication Theory, 4 credits
- COMM 480 – Communication Honors, 4 credits**

**Does not fulfill 400 – level major requirement.

MINORS

Communication

The communication minor consists of six regularly offered courses in communication:

- COMM 140: Public Presentations
- COMM 151: Media & Society
- COMM 160: Analytic Skills or COMM 101: The Communication Process

Plus three additional courses at the 200, 300 or 400 level (excluding independent studies and internships), with no more than two courses at any one level for a total of at least 22 credits. Substitutions, waivers, off-campus/study abroad credits, and internships are not allowed in the communication minor.

COURSES

COMMUNICATION

COMM 101 - The Communication Process

This course focuses on communication competence. Readings and exercises explore and develop relational communication skills and media literacy. This course also addresses how filters of self, relationships, culture, gender, race, and ethnicity affect communication processes.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

Attributes: Global Learning Domestic (GLD), Social Science 1 (SS1)

COMM 140 - Public Presentations

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of public speaking. Topics covered include audience analysis, methods of organizing a speech, the types and uses of supporting material, handling audience questions and the effective use of visual aids. Students will learn how to write and deliver effective informative, persuasive and ceremonial speeches using both impromptu and extemporaneous methods of delivery.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 151 - Media and Society

This course explores the impact of media in society. The format and function of different types of contemporary media will be introduced. Emphasis will vary depending on the instructor.

Credits Awarded: 2

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

Attributes: Global Learning International (GLI), Social Science 2 (SS2)

COMM 160 - Analytic Skills in Communication

This course seeks to develop the analytic skills involved in effective reasoning and communication. In developing these skills, the course introduces students to various types of arguments, the tests to which each is susceptible and the characteristics of a reasonable argument: validity, evidence, and linguistic consistency. Analysis of sample arguments is stressed throughout. The course also considers the ethics of advocacy, and the qualities of a reasonable person.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 195 - Studies in Communication

A course offered in response to student and instructor interest. Topics are not generally covered in the regular course listings. Course may be taken multiple times if topics are different.

Credits Awarded: 1-4

Terms Offered: As Needed

COMM 210 - Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is the study of dyadic interaction and the creation of meaningful relationships. This course focuses on the concepts and theories surrounding interpersonal communication competencies, how they are interconnected, and how they influence the particular ways in which we communicate in intimate, familial, and professional contexts. Students will gain insight into their own interpersonal competencies and ways to improve them, implement specific theories and concepts to predict and influence interpersonal communication outcomes, and become more practiced in listening and expressing oneself in interpersonal contexts. An overarching goal is for students to be able to apply this material so they can better manage their communication within their own personal and professional interpersonal relationships.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall

COMM 220 - Task Group Leadership

This course focuses on understanding and developing communication competence in small groups. This involves learning how to function effectively as part of a team, as well as exercising appropriate leadership. Topics include group development, competitive vs. cooperative climates, decision-making and problem-solving, power resources, and conflict management.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall or Spring

COMM 231 - Communication and Conflict

This course adopts a communication perspective to address the theory, research, and practice associated with the issues of conflict and conflict management. Conflict and its related concepts (e.g., power, constructive/destructive conflict behaviors) will be examined on the many levels at which they occur, to include conflict between individuals, groups, organizations, and nations. Conflicts and disputes at any level are always tied to context; thus a broad range of contexts will be examined. Examples include personal friendships, family relationships, business relationships, and political settings.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 240 - Intergroup Dialogue

This course involves learning specific communication skills that guide a group in interaction across cultural identity differences (sex, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, social class, sexual identity, etc.). These skills emphasize understanding over persuasion; dialogue can be understood in contrast to the practices of discussion or debate. This means that group members seek to understand each other without evaluating or judging each other; they learn the process of validating each other without necessarily agreeing with or condoning each other's behavior or beliefs. In addition, participants learn how to communicate their own feelings, experiences and beliefs, without imposing their experience on others. They learn to support each other, yet confront and challenge each others' views. In the process of learning the communication skills of dialogue, participants also learn about the historical and structural inequalities, oppression, privilege and power associated with different social identities. The goal of intergroup dialogue is to increase intergroup understanding, effective collaboration and positive relationships.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

Attribute: Global Learning Domestic (GLD)

COMM 251 - Media Production I

This course introduces students to digital multimedia production from theoretical, aesthetic, and practical perspectives. The course aims to familiarize students with the basic tools and processes of multimedia production so that they can communicate their ideas creatively and effectively using various forms of media. The course is divided into seminar and workshop components. In the seminars, students will discover different theoretical approaches to media representation that inform the practice of media production. In the workshops, students will gain the practical knowledge required for production, including the use of camera, sound recording, lighting, graphics, non-linear editing, and creating video for the web. All students will undertake a series of exercises which demonstrate their understanding, skills, and creativity.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 255 - Writing for Media

Students taking this course will develop the writing and reporting skills needed to be a successful media professional in our converging media environment. Fundamental skills such as researching, editing, and developing content such as news and features for various media platforms will be covered. Students will craft and critique news stories, feature stories, podcasts, and slideshows. In addition, students will learn how to use social media such as Twitter for professional purposes.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 257 - Communication for Public Relations

This course provides an introduction to this profession among a variety of organizations in both the public and private sectors. In addition to studying industry theories, students will examine and use the basic tools through case studies and simulations. Emphasis is placed on the traditional four phases of public relations: research, strategic planning, communication tactics and evaluation.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 260 - Rhetoric and Public Culture

This course explores the rhetorical strategies, argumentative approaches, and definitional techniques embedded in the texts of popular culture. Contrasting current theories of rhetorical analysis and cultural studies with those of the classical period, the course aims to familiarize students with the rhetorical elements in the symbolic world we inhabit, and to sharpen their critical skills as consumers of persuasive messages. The course will also introduce students to some of the basic qualitative research approaches commonly employed in the field of communication studies, including Burkean analysis, culture-centered criticism, and narrative criticism.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 280 - Research Methods

This course is an introduction to the social science research process used to study human communication. It provides students with the skills to read, understand, and perform basic communication research. Such skills include conducting a review of literature, designing both quantitative and qualitative methods, calculating and interpreting results, and addressing the implications and ethical considerations of research.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Prerequisites: Math 210 or equivalent

COMM 290 - Independent Media Project

This course provides an opportunity for communication majors to develop media skills by producing a media project under the supervision of a faculty member. Credit for this course is elective and may not be applied to fulfill the requirements of the major. Students are expected to maintain approximately 4 hours of project work per week for each credit granted. Submission of departmental Independent Media Project Application and final approval of media project proposal by department are required.

Credits Awarded: 1-2
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Prerequisites: Departmental approval of application

COMM 295 - Topics in Media Production

This is a technical course focusing on developing skills in media or new media production.

Credits Awarded: 1-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

COMM 320 - Family Communication

We create families through communication: by sharing meanings with others, socializing children, making decisions, handling conflict, and developing family rituals. This course focuses on the various communication processes that shape families, blending academic and personal perspectives.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 330 - Organizational Communication

This course introduces students to the basic concepts of how communication processes work in organizations. The first section of the course focuses on theories of organizations, including classical theory, humanistic theories, systems theory, cultural theories, and critical theories. The second section focuses on the challenges and misunderstandings that face organizations, such as recruitment and socialization of members, conflict management, and superior-subordinate communication.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 335 - Leadership Skills and Perspectives

This course examines the complex and rich process of leadership in two main ways: 1) by studying the main theories of leadership, including traits, skills, styles, situational and transformational leadership, as well as leadership ethics; and 2) by teaching the essential competencies leaders need to be effective, through personal assessment and group projects. This course helps students develop leadership skills, practice critical thinking, engage the local community and integrate their faith with their understanding of leadership.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall
Prerequisites: Junior standing

COMM 340 - Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation Practicum

This course is the culmination of the intergroup dialogue experience for those students seeking to continue their personal growth in the dialogue process and to enhance their dialogue facilitation skills through practical experience leading intergroup dialogue groups. The course materials are designed to deepen understanding of diversity and social justice in society through reading, dialogue, reflection and practical experience as an intergroup dialogue facilitator. We will explore theory and practice of group dynamics, conflict transformation, consensus-building, restorative justice and peace-building. For six weeks of the semester, students will lead an intergroup dialogue 'course' as part of a regularly offered Hope College course, or for an off-campus organization. The class will guide students in their preparation of weekly dialogue facilitation sessions. Through this hands-on experience, students develop facilitation communication skills, as well as deepen their personal understandings of diversity issues and social processes. The intergroup dialogue facilitation skills developed in this course have many applications in life as a means to promote positive social and personal change among families, friends, and work colleagues, and within communities. This course prepares students to create dialogue in interpersonal situations as well as create formalized dialogue-centered workshops or programs.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisites: Comm 240

COMM 354 - Digital Cinema

This course helps students become familiar with narrative film as a form of art, storytelling, and communication. It provides theoretical and practical foundations of cinema including ontological position, narrative construction, directing and audio-visual aesthetics. Digital film technology will be utilized as students will engage in narrative film projects. Through a broad survey of films and employed aesthetics students will learn to appreciate and practice cinematic expressions of human conditions. Camera and lens technology, cinematography, lighting, sound, compositing, and editing will be practiced at a higher level during production practices. Students can develop their own stories and audio-visual plans to produce short films.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 356 - Advanced Media Writing

Students in this course will create content for digital spaces such as websites and social media and manage audience engagement with these spaces. In order to develop skills necessary for contemporary media professionals, such as managing one's digital identity, creating and curating online content by using a content management system, and facilitating audience engagement, students will create, manage, and promote a topic-focused website. The website will include feature stories, multimedia story packages, infographics, and editorials. This course builds on the basic writing, reporting, and editing skills students learned in Comm 255 by shifting the focus from short news stories to features and emphasizing engagement of online audiences through content and design.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisites: Comm 255

COMM 357 - Documentary: Theory and Practice

This course introduces students to documentary from both theoretical and practical perspectives. By combining theoretical approaches with a series of production exercises, the course encourages students to develop a critical understanding of the analytical, creative, and practical dimensions involved in the representation of human conditions through documentary. Students will learn about different modes and genres of documentary storytelling along with the diverse categories of messages documentary films carry. The course will cover the technical and practical aspects of production to enable students to produce their own projects independently. Students will gain confidence in producing a documentary that is compelling in message, artistic as a visual storytelling, and technologically sound.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

COMM 360 - Persuasion

In this course you will learn to enhance your skills as a producer of ethical persuasive messages, and also as a critical receiver of persuasive messages. This course provides a comprehensive theoretical and research-based view of persuasion, social influence, and compliance gaining by analyzing how these concepts operate at both an interpersonal and a social level. You will improve your communication competencies related to effective persuasion in written, spoken and visual channels. You will also learn to identify and analyze persuasive messages to improve your ability to scrutinize and resist the influence of persuasion. We will study the process of persuasion in many different contexts, including: health care, films, advertising, family and friend interaction, news media, government rhetoric, social movements, public information campaigns, politics, and advocacy.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 371 - Intercultural Communication: Communicating Across Differences

This course addresses the social construction of inequality, specifically focusing on how communication processes are the means by which race, class, nationality, culture and ethnicity are created, and are also the means by which individuals can resist personal participation in perpetuating systems of inequality. Through encountering multicultural experiences, interviewing people in different social positions, and engaging in exercises and simulations, we will learn to broaden our self-identities and our understanding of others by learning about the experiences, feelings, and views of people in social situations different from our own.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

Attribute: Global Learning International (GLI)

COMM 372 - Gender Communication

This course explores communication differences related to identity, power, and social constructions of gender. The impact of gender on communication in various contexts will be explored, including: media, educational settings, workplace cultures, family, and personal relationships. The purpose of this course is to increase our ability to recognize how we construct meanings associated with sex and gender, how culture and social power shape these meanings, and how media and social institutions perpetuate these meanings. In addition, we will explore whether gender affects verbal and non-verbal communication styles and rituals.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Spring

COMM 390 - Independent Study

An independent study is a program providing advanced students in communication an opportunity to conduct research in a communication area of unique interest. Submission of departmental Independent Study Application and final approval of research proposal by department are required.

Credits Awarded: 1-4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

Prerequisites: Departmental approval of application

COMM 395 - Topics in Communication

A seminar in a special topic of the discipline offered for majors in the department and other interested/qualified students. The course will focus on a particular aspect of the discipline and reflect theory, research and application to the extent expected for the course level and credits assigned. Topics occasionally offered include Film Criticism, New Media, Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication. Students may enroll in more than one topics course to fulfill major requirements.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring

COMM 399 - Communication Internship

Students are responsible to secure their own internship. This internship should allow students to observe, assist, and assume regular duties, or engage in special projects under the supervision of skilled professionals. In addition to academic coursework, students are expected to maintain approximately 3 hours on the job per week for each credit hour earned. Students desiring a communication internship must complete the following steps in order: 1) be a declared communication major; 2) carry a minimum overall GPA of 2.0; 3) attend a department specific internship workshop; 4) submit a department specific internship application; 5) seek approval from both the Career Development Center and the department for the internship they have secured.

Credits Awarded: 1-4

Terms Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Prerequisites: Declared communication major, Minimum 2.0 overall GPA, Departmental approval of application

COMM 451 - Media Theory: Social Scientific Perspective

This course is designed to familiarize you with the prominent media theories used in the social sciences. We will address the development of media theories from the early stages to the contemporary models involving digital media. Particular emphasis will be placed on media theories related to human cognition, emotion, and behavior, and reception. Upon completion of the course students will have an extensive understanding of how theories and research can be used to explain how media interacts with individuals and society, and vice versa.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

Prerequisites: Comm 101, Comm 151, Comm 160, Comm 260, Comm 280 or equivalent

COMM 460 - Communication Theory

This seminar considers interpretive and social science theories of communication. These theories concern communication, persuasion, relational development, group processes, media affects, and culture and diversity.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisites: Comm 101, Comm 160, Comm 260, Comm 280 or equivalent

COMM 463 - Rhetorical Theory

This course surveys the history of rhetoric, the oldest of several disciplines making up the field of communication. Public persuasive discourse has exerted an unparalleled influence on the western world's direction and development. Philosophers, politicians, lawyers, theologians, poets -- all have tried to determine what takes place when one person sets out to persuade another by the use of symbols, and in particular by means of rational aesthetic and emotional appeals. The tradition of their thought on the subject makes up the discipline known as "rhetoric," a discipline dating back more than 2,000 years, and a topic of study currently undergoing an important renaissance.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisites: Comm 101, Comm 160, Comm 260, Comm 280 or equivalent

COMM 470 - Cultural Communication Theory

This course looks at culture and everyday life. Although it has roots in older disciplines such as history, sociology, political science, and linguistics, “cultural studies” is a dynamic and young field that examines how power and ideologies shape people’s everyday lives. Drawing on the theories in our readings, our class looks at how culture is constructed and reproduced through (1) larger economic, political, and ideological structures (the nation, identity, gender, social class, language, race, and ethnicity) that influence (2) people’s everyday signifying practices that include (among many others) shopping, food, and use of mediated texts such as television, films, magazines, the Internet, and music.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

Prerequisites: Comm 101, Comm 160, Comm 260, Comm 280 or equivalent

COMM 480 - Communication Honors Course

This course is designed to give advanced students an opportunity to explore an area of communication studies in more depth, to gain research experience, and to explore and prepare for possible graduate study. It will provide an opportunity to engage in a discussion seminar with a small group of students to address a particular communication topic in depth. The topic will change each fall. Honors students, as part of this course, will develop an individual research project and submit an abstract of their project to the National Conference for Undergraduate Research or similar undergraduate research venue. Submission of application by deadline required. Note: This course does not fulfill the 400-level major requirement. A 3.5+ major GPA is highly recommended prior to this course.

Credits Awarded: 4

Terms Offered: Fall

Prerequisites: Comm 260, Comm 280 or equivalent, Declared Communication major, Junior status, Departmental approval of application

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Professor of Communication (2003)

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