



Communication Studies

School of Arts & Communication

A degree in Communication Studies provides an excellent knowledge foundation and general skills for many types of jobs in both the private and public sectors of the economy. The UW-La Crosse Department of Communication Studies provides nearly fifty courses in four curriculum areas: Advocacy and Communication Criticism, Broadcast and Digital Media, Interpersonal Communication, and Organizational and Professional Communication. Each student who elects the 39 credit major in Communication Studies must select one of these areas as an emphasis in the program. Each of these curriculum areas is also available as a 24 credit minor. A minor in Communication Studies is valuable with any major.

Students who select the major in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Interpersonal Communication or the minor in Interpersonal Communication will receive intensive training in one-on-one and small group communication. Courses in this emphasis focus on such topics as communication in relationships, intercultural communication, gender communication, and family communication.

Students who select the major in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Organizational and Professional Communication or the minor in Organizational and Professional Communication will receive intensive training in types of communication that are essential in business, industry, and organizations of all kinds. Courses in this emphasis relate to the fundamentals of effective professional communication and focus on such topics as interviewing, leadership, communication in the health professions, and organizational communication.

Students who select the major in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Advocacy and Communication Criticism or the minor in Advocacy and Communication Criticism will receive intensive training in critical thinking and persuasion. Courses in this emphasis focus on such topics as argumentation and debate, advocacy, social responsibility, and persuasion.

Students who select the major in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Broadcast and Digital Communication or the minor in Broadcast and Digital Communication will receive intensive training in broadcasting and mass communication. Courses in this emphasis focus on such topics as television/video and radio/audio production, writing for telecommunication media, and telecommunication media management.

Communication Studies faculty members help build skills not only in the student's area of program emphasis, but across the communication studies field. Because of the department's focus on academic training and professional skill building, Communication Studies graduates develop outstanding abilities in writing, speaking, organization, and critical thinking.

Undergraduate Programs

Majors:

- Communication Studies
with emphases in:
Advocacy and Communication Criticism
Broadcast and Digital Media
Interpersonal Communication
Organizational and Professional Communication

Minors:

- Advocacy and Communication Criticism
- Broadcast and Digital Media
- Interpersonal Communication
- Organizational and Professional Communication
- Sports Broadcasting

Department Features

The focus of the Communication Studies program is to thoroughly prepare students academically and professionally. This focus is evident inside and outside the classroom. Students are involved in activities outside class that give them a chance to use what they learn in class. The Communication Club and the student-run TV station, WMCM-TV, allow students to become more involved with the department, the campus, and the community. Students in the Communication Club gain professional and social skills by providing peer advising, workshops, and technical training. Hands-on experience is available to students who work with broadcasting facilities at WLSU Public Radio and

WMCM Television, both of which are affiliated with UW-L. The up-to-date television and radio production studio laboratories are located in the newly renovated Wing Technology Center. Students are also able to earn academic course credit for communication intensive extracurricular activities through Participation in Communication Studies Activities courses.

The Communication Studies Department encourages students to include an internship as part of their academic experience. As students near the end of their academic career, many pursue practical applications of their coursework through internships in government, public or social services, public relations, advertising, management, promotions or other related organizations. The Communication Studies

Department typically has one of the highest rates of internship placement at UW-L.

Inside the classroom, writing may be the single most important skill a student can learn. To insure that Communication Studies majors are well prepared as writers, the department has become a writing-in-the-major program. This means the department has developed a comprehensive program that challenges students to develop their ability to write with increasing sophistication as they move through the major. Writing is incorporated into all communication coursework.

Every Communication Studies major completes a senior project in CST 499, the capstone course. Working closely with faculty, each student completes a semester-long investigation of a communication-related topic. The senior project provides an opportunity to gain the educational benefits of undergraduate research. The experience deepens the relationship between faculty mentors and students. It provides firsthand experience with analytical thinking, the development of research questions, and the use of research tools—all valuable in the “real world.”

Sample Courses

- Introduction to Communication Studies
- Theories of Communication
- Research Methods in Communication Studies
- Presentational Speaking
- Computer Mediated Communication
- Professional Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Television Production
- Argumentation and Debate
- Intercultural Communication
- Gender Communication
- Public Relations
- Organizational Communication
- Interviewing: Principles and Processes
- Remote Video Operation

- Telecommunication Media Management
- Influence, Advocacy and Social Responsibility
- Senior Project in Communication Studies

Career Opportunities

Entry Level

- Promotional Specialist
- Customer Service Representative
- Management or Administration Trainee
- Media Production
- Media Sales
- Personnel/Human Resources
- Public Information Officer and Press Secretary
- Public Relations
- Salesperson
- Event Coordinator
- Corporate Trainer
- Residence Hall Director

Long Term Career Development

- Communication Consultant
- Government Lobbyist
- Human Resources/Personnel Manager
- Marketing Communication Manager
- Media or Advertising Account Executive
- Non-profit Organization Director
- Public Affairs Director
- Vice President—Public Relations
- Dean of Student Life
- Certified Counselor
- Development Director

Further Education

Students with a degree in Communication Studies from UW-La Crosse are prepared for graduate study in fields such as organizational communication, media studies, international relations, health communication and college student personnel. The programs also provide a solid foundation for students who aspire to attend law schools or seminaries.

Occupational Outlook

In addition to preparing students for communication related careers, a degree in Communication Studies is an excellent foundation for employment in either the public or private sector of the economy, in any type of business, industry or organization. Communication skills are essential for success in any job that requires working with other people, giving directions and instructions, making presentations, designing messages, persuading co-workers and the public, promoting ideas and products, and helping others resolve problems. As the above lists indicate, career opportunities for students graduating with a degree in Communication Studies are interesting and varied. The minor programs offered by the Department of Communication Studies are valuable adjuncts to other major programs offered by UW-L. Effective communication skills are a major concern of almost every employer.

Job Titles of Graduates

- Account Executive
- Assistant Buyer
- Assistant Television Program Director
- Director of Tourism
- District Sales Manager
- Instructor
- Insurance Representative
- Management Trainee
- Pharmaceutical Sales Person
- Promotions Director
- Public Relations Events Coordinator
- University Recruiter
- Counselor
- Mediator
- Professor
- Talk Show Host
- Health Personnel Educator
- Grant Evaluator
- Community Relations Grants Officer

Professional Associations

The Communications Studies Department and faculty are affiliated with the following professional organizations.

- National Communication Association
- Central States Communication Association
- Wisconsin Communication Association
- Broadcast Education Association
- Radio and Television News Directors' Association
- National Association of Television Programming Directors

**Communications Studies
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