

# COMMUNICATION

Welcome to the Department of Communication at Fairfield University. We offer undergraduate degrees in Communication, Public Relations, and Sports Media. In addition, we offer minors in all three programs. At the graduate level, we offer a MA in Communication as well as an accelerated BA/MA program.

As students of communication we study messages. Specifically, we examine the verbal and nonverbal messages that people exchange in various settings. These contexts include organizations, families, relationships, healthcare settings, public relations, and the media. Though we have communicated our entire lives, it is less common for us to think about *how* we communicate, *why* we communicate, and the *effects* of our communication. Exploring the *how*, the *why*, and the *effects* of messages will be the main theme of your coursework at Fairfield. Content will be driven by research, and students will leave having formed their own evidence-based recommendations for practice. Ideally, coursework in communication will enhance your personal, professional, and public lives.

Throughout your course of study, our diverse and active faculty will direct you through advanced communication research designed to inform your professional practice. You will be led to recognize the importance of communication and the meaning it gives to ideas, relationships, communities, and identities.

Additionally, you will enhance your oral and written capabilities, critical thinking skills, and analytical reasoning skills, while learning to apply communication theories to your everyday life. Internship programs are offered to help you gain real-world experience in a variety of communication fields, making you more prepared for your future careers. You will also be encouraged to develop a global awareness of the importance of communication in different cultures that could possibly culminate in a study abroad experience.

## Programs

The Department of Communication offers three majors and minors: Communication, Public Relations, and Sports Media.

- Communication Major
- Communication Minor
- Public Relations Major
- Public Relations Minor
- Sports Media Major
- Sports Media Minor

## Double Major and Minor Configurations

- **Communication and Public Relations Double Major:** Students must complete all Public Relations major requirements, plus eight additional Communication courses, including COMM 1100 and COMM 2200. COMM 4980 cannot be repeated. 57 credits total.
- **Communication Major with Public Relations Minor:** Students must complete all Communication major requirements, plus five additional courses. COMM 1102, COMM 2201, and COMM 3324 are required if not taken as part of the Communication major. COMM 4980 cannot be repeated. 45 credits total.
- **Public Relations Major with Communication Minor:** Students must complete all Public Relations major requirements, plus four additional Communication courses. COMM 2200 must be

completed. COMM 4980 does not count toward the four additional Communication courses. 45 credits total.

- **Communication and Public Relations Double Minor:** Classes do not double count between Communication and Public Relations minors. Students who wish to minor in both are recommended to consider adding a major in Communication.
- **Sports Media and Public Relations or Communication double major/minor:** Courses do not double count.

## Independent Study and Internship Policies

The Department of Communication offers credit for independent study, COMM 4990, to highly self-motivated majors in their junior or senior year of studies. Interested students must discuss and document their independent study proposals with a member of the communication faculty before registering for credit.

The Department of Communication also sponsors an active internship program for qualified (2.80 overall GPA) junior and senior majors. Students may earn no more than six internship credits. One three-credit internship course, COMM 4980, can be used in fulfillment of the final elective requirement in their majors. Students interested in applying for an internship complete the departmental internship application form before registering for COMM 4980.

## Accelerated BA/MA Program

The Department of Communication offers an accelerated BA/MA program in Communication. Interested students should speak with the program director during the spring of their junior year to develop a plan of study.

Students will remain at the undergraduate level, but are allowed to register for two graduate classes during their senior year. One class should be COMM 5401, which will replace COMM 4999. The other graduate class can be any graduate-level communication course offered. Since COMM 5401 replaces COMM 4999, students are expected to enroll in an additional undergraduate communication elective as needed to ensure that eleven undergraduate communication courses are taken to complete the major.

During the fall of their senior year, students will formally apply to the program to become a matriculated graduate student upon completion of their undergraduate degree.

## Eligibility Requirements

Full-time, matriculated students in the Department of Communication may apply to the MA in Communication Program if they fulfill the following criteria:

- GPA of 3.20 or higher
- Completion of at least 96 credits prior to the start of their senior year

## Courses

### COMM 1100 Human Communication Theories 3 Credits

This course introduces major theoretical perspectives that inform communication scholarship. This foundational course for the major emphasizes understanding human communication as a symbolic process that creates, maintains, and alters personal, social, and cultural identities. Students critique research literature in the communication field. This course counts in the social and behavioral sciences core curriculum for non-majors.

### COMM 1101 Argument and Advocacy 3 Credits

This introduction to public speaking and the advocacy process includes topic identification; methods of organization, research, selection, and arrangement of support materials; audience analysis and adaptation; patterns and fallacies of reasoning; uses of evidence; logical proof; and refutation. Students practice and critique informative and persuasive presentations in this course, which is a skill required in all upper-level communication courses.

### COMM 1102 Introduction to Public Relations 3 Credits

**Attributes:** SPEL Sports Media Elective

This course introduces public relations as a field of study and as a practice. Through building critical thinking and considering ethical behaviors, this course will not only introduce you to the various types of public relations but will also help you to become a critical consumer of the public relations efforts taking place in the world around you while developing your own public relations tools and strategies.

### COMM 1108 Introduction to Sports Broadcasting 3 Credits

**Attributes:** ENPC Digital Journalism Production Component

This course introduces students to the principles and practice of the world of sports broadcasting. Topics include the history of the industry, its developing techniques, the aesthetic and narrative structure of television sportscasting, its economic impact on the industry, media law and ethics applied to the sports world, and its significant place within the general broadcast world.

### COMM 1130 Mass Media and Society 3 Credits

This media literacy course offers theoretical and practical tools to critically analyze media texts, as well as understand different ways in which audiences interact with them. Students will inquire into how the pervasive mediation of human experience through mass communication channels affects almost every aspect of socialization processes and people's symbolic environment. The interplay between structural constraints conveyed in media's messages and humans' capacity to exercise interpretive agency is addressed through lectures, audiovisual examples, hands-on activities, and a variety of assignments aimed at discerning the elements that intervene in the construction and reception of media texts, beyond their apparent components. This course counts in the social and behavioral sciences core curriculum for non-majors.

### COMM 1232 Television Studio Production 3 Credits

**Attributes:** ENPC Digital Journalism Production Component, SPEL Sports Media Elective

This course offers a theoretical and hands-on introduction to the art and technology of television production within both a studio and field-based context. Students receive instruction on the creative and aesthetic use of the elements and technology of television production; cameras, audio, lighting, editing, set design, and program development; and participate in a series of projects completed individually and as part of a team. Previously FTMA 2232, FTMA 1232.

### COMM 2200 Interpersonal Communication Theories 3 Credits

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100.

An examination of one-to-one relationships from a variety of theoretical perspectives, this course focuses on the centrality of communication in building familial bonds, friendships, and work teams. Students examine factors influencing interpersonal communication such as language, perception, nonverbal behavior, power, status, and gender roles.

### COMM 2201 Persuasion 3 Credits

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102.

This course develops students' understanding of the major theoretical approaches to the study of persuasion as a particular type of social influence, giving specific attention to the processes of interpersonal influence and the media's role in changing social attitudes. Students construct communication campaigns to apply persuasion concepts and skills.

### COMM 2202 Small Group Communication 3 Credits

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102.

This course examines the basic characteristics and consequences of small-group communication processes in various contexts including family, education, and work groups. The course stresses interaction analysis and team-building. Because the course involves examining small groups in process, students do a substantial amount of group work.

### COMM 2205 Nonverbal Communication: Emojis, Emotions, and Employment 3 Credits

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100.

This course explores a wide variety of nonverbal behaviors including: proxemics, haptics, chronemics, kinesics, artifacts, paralinguistic cues, and written communication. The course uses an applied approach to enhance understanding of the impact of nonverbal behaviors on interpersonal, intercultural, and organizational communication contexts and interactions. The role of nonverbal cues in complementing, accenting, substituting, repeating, or contradicting verbal messages will also be examined. The importance of effectively using and interpreting nonverbal behaviors in both personal (platonic and romantic) and professional relationships will be explored using textual analyses and participant-observation exercises.

### COMM 2220 Introduction to Organizational Communication 3 Credits

**Attributes:** BUEL Business Elective, SPEL Sports Media Elective

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102.

Taking a historical and communication-centered approach to understanding how business and professional organizations function, this course addresses the analysis of upward, downward, and lateral communication; communication channels and networks; power and critical theory; organizations as cultures; internal and external public communication; and leadership. The course uses a case study approach.

### COMM 2231 Media Institutions 3 Credits

**Attributes:** ENDE Digital Journalism Elective, SPEL Sports Media Elective

**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

The course concentrates on the economic, political, and legal environment of U.S. mass media. Issues include examination of individual media industries, the economic structure of U.S. media markets, media law and regulation, media watchdogs, advocacy organizations, and media users' forms of collective action. The course's content is approached through an institutional analysis perspective, intended to facilitate students' understanding of institutions as dynamic points of confluence for organizations, norms, and individual agents. As part of the course's requirements, students conduct a research project exploring recent developments and/or decision-making processes within one of the major media institutions covered during the semester.

**COMM 2236 Gender, Sexuality, and Media****3 Credits****Attributes:** SPEL Sports Media Elective, WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course enables students to examine the relationship between the representation of women and the development of personal and social identity. Students explore issues of gender and reception, cultivating consumerism, body image, and developing relevant new images through theoretical readings as well as the analysis of various media, including television, film, magazines, and advertisements. The course also covers the experiences of women in a variety of media professions.

**COMM 2237 Sports, Media, and Culture****3 Credits**

Sports have long played a vital yet complex role in culture and this course examines the intersection of sports, the mass media, and society. Drawing upon Durkheimian theory, we will appraise and debate the ways in which sports are functional or problematic in their impact on and relationship to players, fans, journalists, co-cultural groups, and nations. Students will read both scholarly and journalistic reflections, view popular and documentary films, and analyze fan experiences, mediated presentations, and critical social issues. In short, we will go beyond the box score to understand the importance and deconstruct the hype that accompanies modern sports.

**COMM 2238 Communication and Popular Culture****3 Credits****Attributes:** ASCO American Studies: Communication**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course takes the cultural artifacts that engulf us, from fashion to television and from music to comic books, and removes these practices and texts from simply being "entertainment" or "diversion" and asks what these things mean, how they constitute power, and how they shape and reflect the lived experiences of consumers. This course takes very seriously those things that are typically discarded as lacking substance and instead suggests that the meanings and impact of popular culture have dramatic consequences for political, social, and cultural life in the United States.

**COMM 2239 Consumer Culture****3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course explores how social meanings are constructed through commodities and material society, how consumer goods and practices create categories of social difference. In particular, the course focuses on the intersections of consumer practices and gender/sexuality, race and class, articulating the relationship between communication and consumption practices and social/cultural identities. Theoretical approaches include Marxism, Postmodernism, and other economic and social critiques, and explore research methods to empirically investigate questions of culture. Students reflect on questions of social justice in relation to an increasingly materialistic society as they seek to become citizens prepared to "consume with a conscience."

**COMM 2240 Intercultural Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** INEL International Studies Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102 or INST 1050.

This course deals with challenges to communication between people of different cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the ways communication practices reveal cultural values and the role of communication in creating and sustaining cultural identities. Students discuss how differences in value orientation, perception, thought patterns, and nonverbal behavior cause misunderstanding, tension, and conflict in business, education, and healthcare settings.

**COMM 2241 Communication and Culture: East and West****3 Credits****Attributes:** ANMC Asian Studies Elective, INEL International Studies Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102 or INST 1050.

This course examines the dynamics of culture and communication focusing on the East-West dyad. It helps students gain a better understanding of why and how cultural issues influence our communication. The course explores the East-West cultural similarities and differences in values, communication processes, cognition, and relationships. It will enhance students' intercultural awareness and sensitivity in our increasingly globalized society.

**COMM 2242 Alcohol, Addiction, and Culture****3 Credits****Attributes:** HSSS Health Studies: Social Science**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102.

From the time we are young children through our adult lives we are exposed to countless alcohol advertisements and engage in myriad alcohol-focused conversations with family, friends and coworkers. This course draws on perspectives from the personal to the institutional to critically examine the conversations on alcohol consumption, promotion, education and recovery from a health communication perspective. Through service learning opportunities with local high school seniors, students in the course reflects on the ways in which we talk about alcohol use, abuse, and alcoholism, and how that "talk" cultivates harmful and helpful perceptions and behaviors.

**COMM 2246 Family Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1102 or COMM 1130.

In this course students come to understand how families are constituted through symbolic processes and interaction; explore the verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors that are developed and preferred in different kinds of families; learn various theories for understanding family interactions at the individual, dyadic, group, and systems levels; analyze family communication patterns using established theories and methods; connect family dynamics to social trends and processes including the roles of the mass media and popular culture; and explore ways culture, class, gender, and sexuality affect and are affected by family structures, roles, and communication patterns.

**COMM 2250 Sports Media Industry****3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course critically examines the assemblage of corporations, institutions, and actors that make up the sports media industry, with a focus on the practices, policies, and relationships within and between them. The course will combine academic readings from media studies, media industries studies, and sports studies with readings from popular press and trade publications to examine the sports media industry from differing angles: historical, technological, cultural, economic, and institutional. Further, students will critically engage with pressing issues in the industry including conglomeration, industry changes from technological shifts, discrimination and inequality, and the tensions between entertainment, journalism, and politics.

**COMM 2252 Broadcast Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** ENPC Digital Journalism Production Component, SPEL Sports Media Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100 or COMM 1101.

This course offers an overview of the field of and skills associated with broadcasting on television. The goal is to make you a more effective communicator in a fast paced industry by learning how to think, report, and write like a broadcaster. Students will also learn the importance of powerful storytelling through writing and the use of video and sound.

**COMM 2299 Communication Research Methods****3 Credits**

The primary purpose of this course is to investigate the communication discipline as a social science. We begin by examining the scientific method and how it is used to produce empirical research that either tests communication theories or generates communication theory. We will examine the foundations of quantitative and qualitative research and will review various methodologies including survey, experiment, content analysis, ethnography, field interviews, and focus group. We will also review different areas of research and theory within the communication discipline (i.e., persuasive, interpersonal, organizational, public relations, nonverbal, instructional, mediated, etc.). Rather than focusing exclusively on how communication research is conducted, you will learn how to read, interpret, and use research findings to address communication-related problems in your personal and professional lives. Additionally, it is my hope that you will gain an appreciation for communication research and theory and for how communication knowledge is generated through the scientific method.

**COMM 2333 Public Relations Strategy Development****3 Credits****Attributes:** MWID Magis Core: Writing in the Discipline**Prerequisite:** COMM 1102.

This course provides an overview of the concepts and the strategic process of public relations (research, planning, program, and evaluation) by analyzing the public relations cases. This course introduces primary functions of public relations (e.g., media relations, employee relations, consumer relations, community relations, crisis communication, and social media engagement) in different sectors including corporate, non-profit, and government. Upon the course completion, students will understand the purpose of public relations programs and research and be able to develop an appropriate public relations strategy to solve problems.

**COMM 3233 Information Technologies: Economics, Law, and Policy****3 Credits****Attributes:** ENDE Digital Journalism Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

An in-depth exploration of current issues and trends that shape the institutional environment of information industries and new media, both domestically and globally. By digesting and analyzing a diversity of scholarly sources, news reports, and materials generated by multiple stakeholders, students will gain a critical perspective on major economic, legal, and policy questions that affect the production, access to, circulation, and processing of digital content, such as broadband penetration, regulation of intellectual property, crowdsourcing, privacy, surveillance, net neutrality, emerging revenue models for information goods, and regulation and governance of the Internet.

**COMM 3245 Identities, Discourse, and Social Change****3 Credits**

**Attributes:** BSFC Black Studies Focus Course, BSSS Black Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences, PJST Peace and Justice Studies, WSGC Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Component  
**Prerequisite:** COMM 1100.

Grounded in the premise that identities are inseparable from communication, this course focuses on the negotiation of, and the discursive practices pertaining to, social identities by exploring the intersections of ethnicity-race, gender, sexuality, social class, ability, and age. Given that individual-group differences matter, this course addresses social issues and concerns by concentrating on how structures of power and privilege shape understandings of salient social identities within the United States. Additionally, this course will raise questions about the role of communication research in fostering social change.

**COMM 3248 Health Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** HSSS Health Studies: Social Science, PAPH Public Administration Public Health**Prerequisite:** Sophomore standing.

This course surveys the multidimensional processes used to create, maintain, and transform complex scientific information into everyday healthcare practices. A major emphasis is on the processes and complexities of communicating health information in a variety of settings (in hospitals, families, insurance companies, policy organizations, etc.) and through different channels (face-to-face, in medical records, through the mass media, etc.). We will study the verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors of providers, patients, families, insurers, and others in healthcare contexts, as well as health-related messages in the mass media, in order to understand effective and problematic communication about illness and health.

**COMM 3249 Communicating Inequality in American Healthcare****3 Credits**

This course applies a bifocal social justice-communication lens to the evolution of access and delivery of U.S. health care. The course will examine the communication inequities in American health care co-cultures, including: providers, patients, and insurers, as well as the impact of politics, economics, technology, etc. In addition, the dialectical tensions created by acute care/disease-focused vs. prevention/wellness-centric health care delivery models will be highlighted and examined. The evolving economic burdens of an aging population, uninsured Americans, immigration, expanding technology, provider specialization, and fewer health care gatekeepers on the health care system will also be evaluated.

**COMM 3322 Leadership Communication****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 2220, junior standing.

This course examines the processes and complexities of being a leader in today's dynamic organizational environment. The course explores the leadership styles, traits, and communication skills required of effective leaders. In addition, theories of leadership and the impact of culture and ethics, both historically and currently, will be studied. This course uses a combination of lecture, discussion, individual and group learning opportunities, including interviews of professional and community leaders, as well as a written and oral research projects to aid in students' assimilation of the material.

**COMM 3323 Gender and Organizing****3 Credits****Attributes:** WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused**Prerequisites:** COMM 2220, junior standing.

Gender is central to how we organize our lives. The way we communicate about gender can enhance or undermine all of our relationships. The purpose of this seminar is to augment, or even change, our understanding of the relationship between gender, communication, and organizations. Specifically, the goal for this course is to use a combination of scholarly essays and journal articles as well as popular news media to examine critically topics such as femininity, masculinity, and sexuality within the following contexts: education, sports, politics/government, leadership, the military, and other professions and organizations.



**COMM 3324 Crisis Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** HASM Humanitarian Action Minor Skills/Method Course, SPEL Sports Media Elective**Prerequisites:** COMM 1102, sophomore standing.

This course discusses key concepts, principles, and best practices of crisis communication. Intersections with other areas of the communication field will also be addressed, including public relations and organizational and risk communication. Students will understand the role strategic communication, power, stakeholders, and organizational culture play during a crisis. This course analyzes case studies of previous crises and will ask students to provide their own plans and critical assessments of recent crises.

**COMM 3325 Organizational Communication and Advertising****3 Credits****Attributes:** SPEL Sports Media Elective**Prerequisites:** COMM 2220, junior standing.

This course will highlight how organizations market, promote, and advertise their brands. The importance of advertising for organizations, consumers, and the U.S. economy will also be a central focus of this class. Furthermore, the critical roles of research, audience analysis, persuasion, and effective communication in altering consumers' perceptions will be explored from both theoretical and applied perspectives. The value of deconstructing ads from a consumer, brand manager, and advertiser's viewpoint will be stressed and explored. In addition, the historical and contemporary ethical implications of advertising, especially in health care and for children, will be closely examined.

**COMM 3326 Free Speech: Philosophical Origins to Digital Debates****3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course examines the origins of free speech starting with the Greeks and ending in recent debates about digital speech. It focuses on differing conceptions of free speech, from individual expression to collective amplification and technology. From the perspective of critical theory we take up issues of power such as who gets to speak and be heard with particular attention to media industries. The course critically examines moments in which speech rights have been debated on campuses, such as the Berkeley Free Speech Movement and Black Lives Matter. Contemporary issues such as trolling, hacking, and mob censorship are discussed.

**COMM 3331 American Media / American History****3 Credits****Attributes:** ENDE Digital Journalism Elective**Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course examines the role of communication media in history, as well as the history of the media industries. From the earliest media of symbolic interaction to the newest technologies, the course examines why different media come into being, how they function in various societies, and their impact. Students come to understand how media have been influential in maintaining social order and as agents of change. The course pays attention to a variety of national media and international perspectives, with special emphasis on the evolution of American broadcasting.

**COMM 3333 Public Relations Management and Campaigns****3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1102.

This course is designed to introduce students to the process of campaign development, management, and evaluation, and marks the transition from student to professional. This course builds on the public relations courses you have taken previously, and by the end of this course, you should have synthesized your PR knowledge from various texts and courses. The primary goal of this course is to help you master the elements of a strategic communication campaign through direct experience as a practitioner.

**COMM 3335 Globalization, Media, and Culture****3 Credits****Attributes:** INEL International Studies Elective, IWSS Islamic World Studies: Social Sciences**Prerequisites:** COMM 1130 or INST 1050; junior standing.

Globalization, a complex and transformative process that influences our lives at every level, has produced the increased flow of goods, capital, people, knowledge, images, crime, pollutants, drugs, fashion, viruses, and beliefs across territorial and ideological boundaries of all kinds. This course focuses on the role of communication media (radio, television, film, computers) in the processes of globalization and examines the impact of globalization on cultural representations, cultural identity, and international relations.

**COMM 3336 Media Infrastructures****3 Credits****Attributes:** INEL International Studies Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This course brings together theoretical frameworks from media studies, urban studies, and science and technology studies to consider how, often invisible, infrastructures enable or preclude the mobility of texts, people, and ideas across the globe. Foregrounding critical infrastructure studies, which focuses on the relationship of infrastructures with power, it will take up questions of access, exclusion, breakdown, and agency in relation to urban environments, digital cultures, and global politics.

**COMM 3337 Visual Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** GDCO Graphic Design: Communication**Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course provides a broad introduction to the structure, conventions, and effects of visual communication with a theoretical emphasis on media ecology. The first half is devoted to understanding formal properties including examining the basics of vision, techniques for visual persuasion, and the language of cinematography and editing. The second half surveys more controversial issues like digital manipulation and violence and sex in media. Course material and assignments will be drawn from media domains including advertising, photo/video journalism, and video games. Students will read both theoretical contributions to and empirical investigations of the field.

**COMM 3340 Conflict Communication****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 2200 or COMM 2220; junior standing.

Conflict is a natural part of human life that has a variety of potential consequences. Although conflict can be disruptive and destructive, it can also be constructive and lead to improved adjustment and better decisions. The course is designed to offer you opportunities to enhance and improve your techniques and skills in managing conflict and moving them in a productive direction. The course examines the dynamics of human conflict across a variety of settings from personal relationships to the workplace, with special attention to the communication processes that escalate, manage, and mediate conflict.

**COMM 3342 Technoculture and Information Society 3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course explores phenomena, trends, and theories related to emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs), as well as relationships among those technologies, socio-economic structures, "old" media institutions, media users, and culture. Through a combination of theoretical and practical explorations that emphasize historical, ethical, and critical thinking, the course introduces students to academic and non-academic perspectives on new media.

**COMM 3344 Interracial Communication 3 Credits****Attributes:** BSFC Black Studies Focus Course**Prerequisites:** COMM 2200, junior standing.

This course focuses on the ways in which communication theories and research can improve the existing state of race relations in the United States. Throughout the course, up-to-date issues that surface locally and nationally in the media that illustrate the relevance of improved interracial communication will be addressed through class discussion and linked to course assignments. Using case studies to explore interracial exchanges in close relationships, at the workplace, and reflected in social media, students will link theory with practical applications in an effort to better understand interracial communication.

**COMM 3345 Relational Communication 3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 2200 or COMM 2220; junior standing.

Close relationships can bring us a great deal of joy, happiness, and love, but unfortunately they can also be sources of frustration, pain, and conflict. This course is designed to help us understand the critical role of communication in developing, maintaining, and terminating close relationships with romantic partners, friends, and family members. The course examines the most current research and theory on a variety of topics that are central to understanding and maintaining close relationships, with a focus on attraction, attachment, conflict, power, emotion, transgression, reconciliation, and termination.

**COMM 3347 Communication in Healthcare Organizations 3 Credits****Attributes:** HSSS Health Studies: Social Science**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course explores the organizational communication of modern U.S. healthcare organizations, including: managed care, insurers, healthcare systems, and Medicare/Medicaid. The primary purposes of this course are to provide an understanding of how communication within, and from healthcare corporations impacts the organization, its employees, the health of its customers and U.S. healthcare delivery. This course will evaluate and explore the multidimensional processes involved in healthcare organizations and how communication is critical to their success or failure and to the health and well-being of their customers.

**COMM 3348 Health Risk Communication 3 Credits****Attributes:** EVAP Environmental Studies: Applied Professional Skills, HSSS Health Studies: Social Science, PAPH Public Administration Public Health**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course examines the communication theories and research that underlie the study of risky behaviors and the development of effective responses to perceived risks. This course provides an understanding of how communication impacts our assessment of risk, critical thinking and policy making about risk prevention and response, and the creation of preventive programs and campaigns. Students will evaluate and explore the multidimensional processes involved in researching and responding to sustained risks or emergency situations, utilize communication theory to develop appropriate campaigns, and assess their success or failure. Topics may focus on health and environmental risks, security, or disaster response.

**COMM 3351 Dark Side of Communication 3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1100.

This course will examine aversive and problematic interactions in the interpersonal, organizational, and instructional settings. Sample topics include hurtful messages, stalking, aggression, jealousy, fatal attraction, and conflict. Students will take a research-based approach to understanding these undesirable, yet very common, communicative messages.

**COMM 4318 Lying and Deception 3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 2200.

Deception, defined as "a message knowingly transmitted by a sender to foster a false belief or conclusion by the receiver" (Buller & Burgoon, 1998, p. 381), is relatively common. Despite this, we often assume that others are honest and have negative views of deception. At its core, deception represents a discrepancy between thoughts/feelings and the message withheld/expressed. Therefore, this advanced level Communication course will examine various research approaches to understanding deception, motives for deception, and the implications of communicating deception.

**COMM 4321 Communication Processes in Organizations:****Negotiation****3 Credits****Attributes:** EVAP Environmental Studies: Applied Professional Skills**Prerequisites:** COMM 2220, junior standing.

This course reviews and explores, through simulation and experiential learning, negotiation as a communication process in and among organizations. It focuses on core concepts and approaches to negotiation, and exercises the negotiative process in a contemporary context. In this course, which is open to majors and minors in communication and other disciplines related to the study of humans and their organizations in the work world, participants carry out individual and team work, and contribute on time and proportionately to team preparations and class simulations.

**COMM 4328 Palliative Care Communication: USA & Italy 3 Credits****Attributes:** HSSS Health Studies: Social Science, MSID Magis Core:

Interdisciplinary

**Fee:** \$-855**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This is an interdisciplinary, intercultural course that applies a bifocal (communication and healthcare) lens to the study of palliative care. The course is intended to explore this relatively new area of health care delivery (quality of life vs. cure) and the critical role communication plays in accomplishing the interdependent goals of providers, patients, and families in the United States and Italy. Since palliative care should be for all chronically and/or terminally ill patients across the life cycle, students will critically examine, from both health care and communication perspectives, the differences in palliative care delivery in the United States and Italy. Open to students with majors or minors in communication, health studies, nursing, public health, or public relations, as well as health professions students. Previously COMM 4326.

**COMM 4330 Misinformation in Digital Media****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course critically examines the causes for, and the consequences of, the proliferation of false and misleading information in online spaces. While the ubiquity of false information online is often talked about as if it is random or inevitable, this class will detail the specific mechanisms by which false information is produced, spread, and consumed. More importantly, it will contextualize the practice within larger social, culture, and geopolitical environments and connect it to the larger history of misinformation and media technologies. Finally, the course will prepare students to combat false and misleading information encountered in their own media diets.

**COMM 4332 Children as Media Consumers****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course aims to provide a forum for advanced Communication students to explore the patterns of children's media consumption, focusing primarily on children's use of the so-called "screen media" (television, video games, and the internet), and to investigate the multi-faceted consequences (both positive and negative, social and individual) of children's media consumption. Students will draw upon contemporary theories of communication to assess the content of children's media and its effects on children as a particular segment of the audience. Students will develop an informed understanding of children as media consumers, advocating for the production of "quality" content in children's media.

**COMM 4333 News Media and Democracy****3 Credits****Attributes:** ENDE Digital Journalism Elective**Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

The news media play an essential role in changing America and the world. By bridging theory with practice, this course aims to equip students to become critical news consumers with a skilled understanding of how that works and politically literate about the big issues of our time. Through classic scholarly reflections as well as contemporary punditry, we will tackle the news media "critically" across three dimensions: learning about its indispensable function in mediating politics and democracy throughout history and today; studying and practicing the craft of opining writing and social advocacy; and evaluating and critiquing the performance of the press in these matters.

**COMM 4336 Social Media****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

At the turn of the millennium, social media was still an unknown term; today, it is inescapably altering the landscape of our world and our lives in complex ways. This course examines social media by historicizing what is timeless about it and charting its new frontiers for humankind. Through a mix of scholarly, journalistic, and professional industry readings on social media, we will explore how culture, community, and identity are being reshaped alongside politics, business, and (what was once called) the mass communication industry.

**COMM 4339 Topics in Media Theory and Criticism****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1130, junior standing.

This course provides an opportunity to examine in depth particular media theories or to conduct careful media analysis and criticism. The course emphasizes contemporary theoretical and/or methodological approaches to the close analysis of television, radio, newspaper, the Internet, and/or magazine texts so as to understand the ways meaning is constructed and situated within the larger social context. Topics may include mass media and the public sphere; television criticism; sex, lies, and videos; and children and the media. Students may take this course up to two times with different topics.

**COMM 4341 End of Life Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** HSSS Health Studies: Social Science**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course focuses on the only reality for every human being: death. However, in spite of its certainty, American culture tends to minimize or ignore discussions of death and provides little insight into effective communication strategies for healthcare providers, family members, friends, and lovers. The complexities of this unique communication will be assessed vis-à-vis an applied approach that includes a service-learning opportunity at a 51-bed hospice. In addition, the course will include self-reflection, autoethnography, an exploration of scholarly research in palliative communication, and scholarly interaction between undergraduate students in the classroom and the hospice setting.

**COMM 4343 Ethics and Medical Marketing Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** HSTE Health Studies: Traditions, Delivery, and Ethics**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course will explore the dialectical tensions between the need for safe and effective products/services and the expectations for corporations to generate profits and dividends for their stakeholders. This course will use an applied ethics lens to examine the organizational, marketing, advertising, and corporate communication to clients, consumers, vendors, and investors. The content and ethical implications of marketing communication (from a variety of organizational perspectives: healthcare, economics, cultural, etc.) on expected and unintended outcomes will also be discussed and analyzed.

**COMM 4346 Communication and Spirituality****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 2200, junior standing.

This course engages a critical understanding of the way in which spirituality is constructed through communication. Using the unique perspectives and empirical tools of the communication discipline, the course seeks to familiarize students with the variety of ways in which spirituality has been studied both within and outside of religion. Examining various contexts that engage spiritual discourses, from interpersonal communication settings to organizational, health and mass mediated settings, students reflect on the potential for spiritual discourses to transform individuals and society, and consider their own participation in such discourses.

**COMM 4350 Family Crisis Communication****3 Credits****Attributes:** HSTE Health Studies: Traditions, Delivery, and Ethics**Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

From health to economic and relational crises, this course addresses the complexities of family communication in the context of our increasingly diverse family constructions. The course asks: What is the role of communication in helping families navigate challenging moments? We ask this question while developing our understanding of family as a social construction, exploring the ways in which crisis communication in the family is historically and culturally situated. Through readings and reflections on family life, the course recognizes multiple perspectives on "normal" family interaction in stressful circumstances, with a critical understanding of our own assumptions about the family construct.

**COMM 4352 Global Mediated Activism****3 Credits****Attributes:** INEL International Studies Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

This class critically examines processes by which publics use and are used by media in the quest for social change around the globe. Social movements have frequently objected to their representation by mainstream media industries and sought to either affect coverage or produce their own media platforms and narratives. The possibilities for mediated activism have increased in an era of user-generated content, while also introducing increasing competition for the time, attention and enthusiasm of publics. Through theories of social movements, communication technologies and publics this course will address processes of assembling publics in an increasingly mediated society.

**COMM 4353 Latin American Media and the United States****3 Credits****Attributes:** LCEL LACS Minor: Elective**Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

Since the early twentieth century, Latin American countries have produced media forms and texts that, from a US perspective, we view as "distinct" to the region. This course examines these forms and texts in historical, political, social-cultural, and industrial contexts to ask: what is distinct about Latin American media, how have Latin American media shaped life, what has been the US's role in influencing Latin American cultural production, and how has this informed Latin America's mediated terrain? Students will examine this media and their relationship with the US through discussions, portfolios, and debates to demonstrate expertise in this complex area.

**COMM 4360 Reality, Media, and Society****3 Credits****Prerequisite:** COMM 1130.

"Reality" informs the frameworks and content of our highly-mediated world in immense ways. Upon completion, students will be able to assess the various ways in which reality is constructed and framed in current media industries and contexts, and to witness and challenge the ways reality is changing in modes of presentation in emerging media contexts. The course will equip students with the ability to interrogate and question reality in its various industries, landscapes, and disciplines, including those of philosophy, sociology, politics, and media/cultural studies.

**COMM 4900 Special Topics (Shell)****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 2200, COMM 2220, COMM 2240, junior standing.

This course focuses on a specific context where social identities are negotiated through particular discursive practices, emphasizing the verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that are appropriate in this context and through which people constitute and perform their identities. The course examines symbolic practices and communication norms in families, self-help groups, television talk shows, cyber communities, social movements, and genders/sexualities, using approaches such as symbolic convergence theory, social constructivism, ethnography of communication, and conversational analysis. Students may take this course up to two times with different topics.

**COMM 4980 Internship****1-3 Credits****Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

Communication internships provide students with first-hand knowledge about the field of work, allow them to experience new professional activities and relationships, help them apply conceptual knowledge and skills in communication in the work environment, and allow them to experience the problems and successes of efficiently and effectively communicating within a complex organization. One three-credit internship course can be used toward the major. Students may take an internship twice for credit. Students must have a GPA of 2.8 or higher. Enrollment by permission only.

**COMM 4990 Independent Study****1-3 Credits****Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

This course allows students to thoroughly investigate communication concepts, theories, or issues presented in a previously completed communication course. Independent study does not substitute for any other required course(s) in the communication program and students' investigations must be scholarly in intent. An independent study may be taken no more than twice. Enrollment by permission only.

**COMM 4999 Capstone: Research Projects in Communication****3 Credits****Prerequisites:** COMM 1101, COMM 1130; COMM 2200 or COMM 2220; senior standing.

This course allows students to demonstrate their expertise as communication scholars through discussion and evaluation of contemporary research in communication. The course examines qualitative and quantitative methodologies in understanding the research design process. As members of research teams, students design and conduct research projects related to their areas of concentrated study. This is the required major capstone course.

## Faculty

### Professors

Horan, *chair*

Pagano

Zhang, Q.

### Associate Professors

Brennan

Iddins

Rugg

Zhao

### Assistant Professors

Ryan

SanInnocencio (visiting)

Yook

### Assistant Professor of the Practice

Albright

Barguiarena

### Faculty Emeriti

Nedela

Wills