COMMUNICATION STUDIES (BA)

Program Director: Mary Beth Fortunato, MA/LMSW

Introduction

The Communication Studies major underscores themes and strengths that align with the Jesuit philosophy of creating ethical, credible, and inclusive communication. The program provides students a deep understanding of traditional communication theories that allow for flexible application to many different fields. Specifically, students study a mix of interpersonal communication and media studies to understand who the audience of a message is and how to most effectively communicate that message.

Communication Studies majors study how and why people communicate the way that they do. Students learn how to communicate clearly and effectively with a diverse range of audiences in a variety of settings. Communication Studies majors learn the ins and outs of relational communication, family communication, conflict management, persuasion, intercultural communication, and more. Additionally, Communication Studies majors learn how media creates and disseminates messages purposefully to influence audiences. Majors will become skilled creators and critical consumers of media content. They will also learn to design and deliver credible, ethical, inclusive, and effective messages through face-to-face and mediated channels.

Communication Studies majors:

- are competent and dynamic writers and speakers
- understand communication theories, models, and concepts
- understand how to conduct and critically evaluate research
- understand how to design and assess media messages
- apply problem solving and critical thinking skills to projects
- understand how to cultivate and maintain relationships
- apply persuasive skills and assess outcomes
- work with a variety of technology formats
- are proficient in the use of various media platforms
- work independently and as part of a team
- evaluate ideas and structures in communication events
- adapt messages to needs of diverse audiences

Qualifications

Majors must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, a minimum grade of C- in the six required courses (COM 201, COM 202, COM 203, COM 204, COM 205, and COM 206), and a minimum overall average of 2.0 in all communication coursework. Performance of majors is subject to review relative to their continuation in the program. Communication Studies majors need at least 36 hrs. of communication courses (33 hrs. for double majors).

Advisement

All students should have an advisor in the major and should contact the department directly to have an advisor assigned if they do not already have one. Meetings with academic advisors are required prior to students receiving their PIN for course registration each semester. All majors should work closely with their advisor in discussing career expectations, choosing their major electives, developing their entire academic program and planning their co-curricular or supplemental academic experiences.

Communication studies majors are assigned an advisor at the beginning of their freshman year. If you are a transfer into the Communication Studies major or you do not have an advisor, please contact the Communication departmental office at 716-888-2115 so that an advisor can be assigned to you.

Major Experiences

Internships (COM 488 , COM 498) awarding up to a maximum of 12 credit hours may be earned by qualified Communication Studies majors at approved locations in Buffalo or other cities. The internships are individually arranged, require department approval and are available only to junior or senior candidates with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 and a communication average of at least 2.7. Internships are taken on a Pass/Fail basis and are counted towards free elective credit. Students are encouraged to plan early to do internships during their junior and senior years. Interested majors should consult with their advisor or see the department chair for more information.

Double Majors

Students who wish to expand their educational opportunities may decide to declare a double major. This decision may be based on career goals, planned graduate studies, and/or other student interests. Before a student declares a double major, it is important to meet with the appropriate academic departments for advisement. In order to declare a double major, the student must complete the Major/Minor Declaration form. This form will be submitted electronically and reviewed and approved by each department chairperson as well as the appropriate associate dean.

Per university policy, each additional major requires a minimum of 15 credits that do not apply to the student's first or subsequent major. Some double major combinations can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in other cases, additional coursework may be required. Please note that students will only receive **one** degree unless completing the dual degree (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/) requirement, including at least 150 undergraduate credit hours, regardless of the number of majors they complete. Both (all) majors appear on a student's transcript.

Double majors with Communication Studies are available with the permission and guidance of both chairs. Students complete a minimum of 33 credit hours of communication courses. Communication Studies double major sequences allow several different choices; among those most frequently involved are digital media arts, journalism, political science, psychology, sociology, English, creative writing, history, marketing and modern languages. Each Communication Studies and double major is assigned a department faculty advisor for the purpose of planning an individual program that will satisfy the department's requirements and the student's personal goals. Course selections develop from Communication Studies major requirements, prerequisites, recommended sequences and communication electives. Communication Studies students who are double majors and successfully complete 3 or more credit hours in Internships (COM 488, COM 498) are required to complete 30 hours of in-class credit in order to complete the Communication Studies major (i.e., not 33 or 36 in-class hours).

Students interested in declaring double majors within the Department of Communication (Communication Studies (p. 1), Digital Media Arts (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/division-business-communication-health-studies/school-communication-marketing-media/

digital-media-arts/), Integrated Marketing Communication (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/division-business-communication-health-studies/school-communication-marketing-media/integrated-marketing-communication/), or Journalism (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/division-business-communication-health-studies/school-communication-marketing-media/journalism/)) will be allowed to share a maximum of 9 credits between the two majors. This requires 24 distinct credits for communication studies, 27 distinct credits for digital media arts, 36 distinct credits for integrated marketing communication, and 24 distinct credits for journalism. Additionally, for students with a double major outside the Department of Communication, students may double count up to 9 credit hours of electives between the two majors. Please note, however, that the second major may not necessarily allow double counting of credits. For more information, please contact the department chair.

Minors in Other Disciplines

Minors provide students the opportunity to pursue additional interests but generally do not require as many courses as a major. Minors generally range from five to eight required courses. To receive a minor, the student must complete at least 9 credit hours of coursework distinct from their other credentials (i.e., majors, other minors). The complete list of minors is available on the Canisius website (https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/?type%5B%5D=17) and in the catalog (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/minors/) and provides links to each minor. Some majors and minors can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in some cases additional coursework may be required. Students must complete the appropriate minor request form.

Curriculum

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All undergraduate students must complete either the Canisius Core Curriculum (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/core-curriculum/) or the All-College Honors Curriculum (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/all-college-honors-program/). Many schools refer to their college-wide undergraduate requirements as "general education" requirements. We believe that the core curriculum and the honors curriculum are more than a series of required classes; they provide the basis for a Jesuit education both with content and with required knowledge and skills attributes that are central to our mission.

Free Electives

Students may graduate with a bachelor's degree with more but not less than 120 credit hours. Free electives are courses in addition to the Canisius Core Curriculum or All-College Honors Curriculum and major requirements sufficient to reach the minimum number of credits required for graduation. The number of credits required to complete a bachelor's degree may vary depending on the student's major(s) and minor(s).

Major Requirements

Major Required Course

Code	Title	Credits
COM 201	Dynamic Presentations	3
COM 202	Communication Theory	3
COM 203	Writing for Contemporary Media	3
COM 204	Relational Communication	3
COM 205	Media Literacy	3
COM 206	Introduction to Research Methods	3
Communication Studies Electives [1]		
Select 6 courses from list below; only 5 courses needed if double major within Department of Communication		18
Total Credits		**36**

[1] Students interested in declaring double majors within the Department of Communication (Communication Studies in combination with Digital Media Arts, Integrated Marketing Communication, or Journalism) will be allowed to share a maximum of 9 credits between the two majors. This requires 24 distinct credits for strategic communication, 27 distinct credits for digital media arts, 36 distinct credits for integrated marketing communication, and 24 distinct credits for journalism. Additionally, for students with a double major outside the Department of Communication, students may double count up to 9 credit hours of electives between the two majors. Double majors in Communications and another social science (e.g., Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, or Criminal Justice) may elect to substitute PSY 202, SOC 375, or EDU 303. Please consult with your advisor or the department chair for details.

Major Electives

Code	Title	Credits
COM 302	Strategic Communication in Teams	3
COM 304	Family Communication	3
COM 308	Social Media Effects	3
COM 311	Principles of Advertising and Mass Media	3
COM 312	Public Relations: Principles and Practices	3
COM 315	Advertising and the Creative Process	3
COM 318	Organizational Communication	3
COM 319	Training and Development	3
COM 320	Advertising Writing	3
COM 327	Representation in Media	3
COM 328	Screenwriting	3
COM 330	PR and Promotional Writing	3
COM 337	Strategic Uses of Humor	3
COM 350	Public Communication Campaigns	3
COM 351	Media Ethics	3
COM 354	Influence and Influencers: Persuasion Theory and Practices	3
COM 367	Producing Multi-Platform Content	3
COM 383	Conflict Strategy and Tactics	3
COM 385	Media & Children	3
COM 411	Advertising Campaigns	3
COM 414	Issues in Integrated Marketing Communications	3
COM 488	Internship I Seminar	3-9
COM 498	Internship II Seminar	3-9
DMA 201	Introduction to Digital Media	3
DMA 216	Digital Media Law	3
DMA 217	Interaction Design	3
DMA 361	TV Studio Production	3
FAS 141	Digital Photography [1]	3
JRN 340	Podcasting and Audio Storytelling	3

Roadmap

Recommended Semester Schedule for Major Course Requirements

Freshman	
Fall	**Spring**
COM 205	COM 204
Sophomore	
Fall	**Spring**
COM 201	COM 202
COM 206 (or COM Elective)	COM 203 (or COM Elective)
Junior	
Fall	**Spring**
COM 206 (or COM Elective)	COM 203 (or COM Elective)
Senior	
Fall	**Spring**
COM Elective	COM Elective
COM Elective	COM Elective

Learning Goals and Objectives

These learning goals and objectives apply to all Strategic Communication majors.

Student Learning Goal 1:

Strategic Communication majors will be critical thinkers who apply communication theories and concepts in life situations.

Students will:

- **Objective 1:** Demonstrate advanced skills in analyzing research.
- **Objective 2:** Apply targeted communication theories and constructs to specific projects or situations.

Student Learning Goal 2:

Strategic Communication majors will design and deliver effective messages.

Students will:

- **Objective 1:** Demonstrate an understanding of the intended audience
- **Objective 2:** Determine appropriate means of communication to reach that audience.
- **Objective 3:** Demonstrate an ability to design and deliver messages.

Minors

- `Strategic Communication Minor (p. 3)`
- Leadership Minor (p. 3)

Minors are an important part of the undergraduate curriculum. If students declare a minor by sophomore year, they can usually complete it in a timely manner. Students should work with their advisor to determine if it is possible that the minor can be completed by graduation.

To receive a minor, a student must complete at least 9 credit hours of coursework distinct from their major(s) and from other minors, and students must complete more than 50% of the coursework required for the minor at Canisius. Please note that "ancillary/supporting" courses required for a major may still count as distinct courses as long as the remaining coursework still meets the 30 credit-hours required for a major. For more information about minor policies, please see the Declaring Majors and Minors (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/student-records/declaring-majors-minors/) page in the catalog.

Strategic Communication Minor

The Communication department offers a general Strategic Communication minor for students wishing to add the study of communication to the their curricula. Students need to complete 18 credit hours of Strategic Communication courses, based on the following requirements:

Code	Title	Credits
Foundation Courses (select 3) [1]		**9**
COM 201	Dynamic Presentations	
COM 202	Communication Theory	
COM 203	Writing for Contemporary Media	
COM 204	Relational Communication	
COM 205	Media Literacy	
COM 206	Introduction to Research Methods	
Strategic Communication Electives		
Select three of the following COM electives:		9
COM 302	Strategic Communication in Teams	
COM 304	Family Communication	
COM 311	Principles of Advertising and Mass Media	
COM 312	Public Relations: Principles and Practices	
COM 315	Advertising and the Creative Process	
COM 318	Organizational Communication	
COM 319	Training and Development	
COM 320	Advertising Writing	
COM 327	Representation in Media	
COM 328	Screenwriting	
COM 330	PR and Promotional Writing	
COM 337	Strategic Uses of Humor	
COM 350	Public Communication Campaigns	
COM 351	Media Ethics	
COM 354	Influence and Influencers: Persuasion Theory and Practices	
COM 367	Producing Multi-Platform Content	
COM 383	Conflict Strategy and Tactics	
COM 385	Media & Children	
COM 411	Advertising Campaigns	
COM 414	Issues in Integrated Marketing Communications	
DMA 361	TV Studio Production	
Total Credits		**18**

[1] **Note:** A section of each foundation course is offered every year. Multiple sections of COM 201 and COM 203 are normally offered each semester.

Leadership Minor

Code	Title	Credits
MLS 101	Introduction to the Army and Critical Thinking	3
Choose one of the following courses focused on communication:		3
COM 201	Dynamic Presentations	
COM 204	Relational Communication	

COM 318	Organizational Communication	
MLS 201	Foundations of Leadership	
Choose one of the following courses focused on organization and management style:		3
MGT 101	Introduction to Management	
MGT 360	Organizational Behavior	
MGT 472	Comparative Management Systems	
Choose two of the following courses focused on ethics and the human dimension:		6
PHI 241	Ethics: Traditions in Moral Reasoning	
SOC 110	Introduction to Sociology	
PSY 323	Motivation and Emotion	
PSY 329	Leadership and Motivation	
RST 340	Moral Issues Today	
COM 319	Training and Development	
Total Credits		**15**

Combined Degree Programs

- 3+3 Communication Studies BA/JD (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/division-business-communication-health-studies/school-communication-marketing-media/communication-studies/3-3-strategic-communication-jd/) (University at Buffalo)

Courses

COM 201 Dynamic Presentations **3 Credits**
Study and practice of concepts, processes, and techniques of dynamic presentations delivered face-to-face and/or online. Apply communication theories, models and constructs to design, deliver, and critically assess presentations. Speeches required.
Fulfills College Core: Oral Communication
Offered: every fall & spring.

COM 202 Communication Theory **3 Credits**
Communication theories, models, and constructs are explored and applied to research in relational, group, organizational, gender, social media, public and mass mediated communication contexts. The role of theory in designing, delivering, and assessing messages for diverse audiences is emphasized.
Offered: every spring.

COM 203 Writing for Contemporary Media **3 Credits**
Intensive writing assignments employing message-design principles provide opportunities to prepare news, features, press releases, advertising copy and opinion pieces.
Fulfills College Core: Advanced Writing-Intensive
Offered: every fall & spring.

COM 204 Relational Communication **3 Credits**
Examines theoretical and pragmatic aspects of relational communication in social contexts to enhance self-awareness and effective self-expression in relationships. Survey of interpersonal/relational theories, models, and constructs associated with competent communication in platonic, romantic, familial, and work relationships.
Fulfills College Core: Field 5 (Social Sciences)
Offered: every fall.

COM 205 Media Literacy **3 Credits**
Focuses on the increasingly complex media environment that we live in and the role the media play in our lives, with the goal of students becoming more critical consumers of media content and more responsible communicators. Examination of various media formats and genres, and the distinctions between entertainment, information and persuasion. Explores news partisanship, algorithmic personalization and social media, media stereotypes, media addiction, advertising and media economics, and the media's influence on personal and social identity.
Fulfills College Core: Field 5 (Social Sciences)
Offered: every fall & spring.

COM 206 Introduction to Research Methods **3 Credits**
Overview and application of qualitative and quantitative research methods in communication. Survey of basic research methods concepts including, among others, identifying credible research, formulating hypotheses/research questions, sampling, reliability/credibility, widely-used qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and data analysis and interpretation.
Offered: every fall.

COM 211 Introduction to Integrated Marketing Communication **3 Credits**
An introduction to the historical, theoretical and practical implications of integrated marketing communication that spans decades and communication channels to affect an array of stakeholders and target publics. Students will learn the basics of how integrated marketing communication has evolved from disparate skill sets (advertising, public relations, marketing, social media, e.g.) into a unified approach to communicating to various market segments. In addition, they will explore the various elements of IMC and learn the advantages of each and their optimal application in the marketplace.
Offered: every fall.

COM 302 Strategic Communication in Teams **3 Credits**
Communication processes and strategic implementation of messages involving task and maintenance messaging, leadership strategies for team building, conformity, shift-to-risk and development. Some emphasis on skill development.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 304 Family Communication **3 Credits**
Examines contemporary family communication theories, concepts, models and research. Special emphasis on improving family communication across the lifespan.
Fulfills College Core: Field 5 (Social Sciences)
Offered: occasionally.

COM 308 Social Media Effects **3 Credits**
Survey of scholarship on the effects of social media on individuals, relationships, communities, and organizations. Course emphasizes creating and evaluating social media content for strategic, ethical, and effective personal and professional use.
Offered: spring of odd-numbered years.

COM 311 Principles of Advertising and Mass Media **3 Credits**
Covers the basic economics of consumerism and mass media, consumers and our broad media options, and ways consumers view media advertising. Includes the strategic impact of advertising, which includes history and development, agencies, audiences, advertising and social media, campaign objectives, budget, creativity and ethics. (DMA elective).
Offered: every fall.

COM 312 Public Relations: Principles and Practices **3 Credits**
Historical antecedents and contemporary strategic practice of public relations are examined in the context of public relations concepts and theories. The course also examines the day-to-day responsibilities and ethical obligations of PR practitioners in a variety of public settings.
Offered: every fall.

COM 315 Advertising and the Creative Process **3 Credits**
Study of techniques, tools and theories for generating innovative concepts and ideas. Emphasize application to strategic advertising context. (DMA elective).
Offered: occasionally.

COM 318 Organizational Communication **3 Credits**
Communication principles and practices, including communicator style variables, communication flow and competent superior-subordinate communication.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 319 Training and Development **3 Credits**
Methods for assessing training needs within organizations, and designing, implementing and assessing outcomes of training. Emphasis on principles of effective training and development of training competencies. Students develop training skills.
Fulfills College Core: Oral Communication
Offered: occasionally.

COM 320 Advertising Writing **3 Credits**
Covers a variety of ways of developing advertising copy (copywriting) and creative concepts, based on strategic goals. Includes workshop writing for print, electronic and social media tactics.
Offered: every other year.

COM 327 Representation in Media **3 Credits**
Examines the impact of culture, race, and gender in social interactions with special emphasis on contemporary theories, concepts, and research on this topic. Understand why communication misunderstandings occur linked to gender, race, and culture and how to communicate competently to remediate and/or eliminate future communication problems.
Fulfills College Core: Diversity
Offered: fall of odd-numbered years.

COM 328 Screenwriting **3 Credits**
The fundamentals of developing an idea into a screenplay or teleplay. Explores characters, story, dialogue, and the business of screenwriting.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 330 PR and Promotional Writing **3 Credits**
Theoretical perspectives on various forms of promotional writing and the applications of each. Writing and editing skills. Students produce a portfolio demonstrating their understanding of public relations and promotional writing tools and techniques based on strategic objectives.
Offered: spring.

COM 337 Strategic Uses of Humor **3 Credits**
Survey of humor theories, concepts, and research emphasizing the benefits of humor in education, medicine, business, and relational contexts. Learn how to enact humor competently in social interactions and create humorous content to promote products, services, people, behavior, and social initiatives.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 350 Public Communication Campaigns **3 Credits**
Survey of effective communication campaign practices targeting public health issues, politics, and social justice. Examine strategic communication theories, research, and models used in communication campaigns. Design, deliver, and assess the effectiveness of a communication campaign.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 351 Media Ethics **3 Credits**
Explores ethics across media disciplines through the work of professional communicators -- journalists, broadcasters, advertising, public relations, marketing communications practitioners. Develop practices of making media-related decisions based on principles and idealism.
Fulfills College Core: Ethics
Offered: every spring.

COM 354 Persuasion Theory and Practices **3 Credits**
Survey of classic and contemporary persuasion and social influence theories, models, and concepts. Understand how to argue effectively without damaging relationships and become a change agent at work or in your community by using effective persuasion and social influence strategies.
Offered: every spring.

COM 367 Producing Multi-Platform Content **3 Credits**
Learn the role of a producer by actually developing and producing episodes of a show for broadcast/streaming media, and then re-shaping that content for alternative media platforms including podcasts and social media. Students will work in groups to develop their ideas for an interview-based series, do research on their topic, conduct interviews, write, and produce several episodes of the series. We'll collaborate with students in COM 361 – Intro to TV Production; students in that class will shoot and edit the series. The episodes and promotional material will be scheduled for distribution throughout the semester. COM and JRN credit.
Offered: every 2-3 years.

COM 383 Conflict Strategy and Tactics **3 Credits**
Conflict occurs in all relationships. This course focuses on analyzing how and why conflict occurs in our personal and professional lives. The focus in on understanding strategic communication strategies for facilitating and resolving conflict. Case studies and simulations are used to emphasize theory and application of conflict resolution strategies, facilitation, negotiation and meditation.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 385 Media & Children **3 Credits**
Learn about the role of television in children's lives. Course explores children's television use, the development and content of children's television programs (both commercial and educational), television and the family, and children's advertising.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 414 Issues in Integrated Marketing Communications **3 Credits**
In this Core Capstone seminar, students explore a range of contemporary issues in advertising, public relations and marketing communications (IMC). They include: consumerism, social effects, privacy and social media, sexual and minority portrayals, political communication, messaging, and more. These are viewed against ethical, justice, global and diversity attributes. Recommend COM/ADV, COM/PR or MKT background.
Restriction: senior standing.
Fulfills College Core: Core Capstone
Offered: fall & spring.

COM 417 Special Topics Course AI in Integrated Marketing **3 Credits**
This seminar examines how artificial intelligence is reshaping integrated marketing and communications. Students will explore applications in content creation, audience engagement, and media strategy while critically evaluating the ethical, professional, and societal implications of AI. Through discussions, case studies, and presentations, students will gain the skills to assess AI's impact on the future of the communication profession.
Offered: occasionally.

COM 422 IMC Campaigns **3 Credits**
Designed as a capstone course for public relations students, this course examines PR campaigns as the concerted efforts of an organization to build socially responsible relationships by achieving research-based goals through the application of communication strategies and the measurement of outcomes. Students produce an actual campaign.
Prerequisite: COM 312 or permission of instructor.
Offered: every spring.

COM 488 Internship I Seminar **1-12 Credits**
Student experientially learns communication functions in compatibly matched professional setting, locally or out-of- town. Faculty and on-site supervision. Seminar required. Pass/fail. May be repeated as COM 498; 12-credit limit for COM 488 and COM 498 combined. Information about the internship application process is available on the Communication Studies Department website.
Prerequisite: junior or senior standing, minimum overall GPA of 2.50, minimum communication studies average of 2.70, & approval by department faculty. **Restriction:** must be COM major.
Offered: every fall, spring, & summer.

COM 495 Integrated Marketing Communication Masterclass **3 Credits**
Similar to a real-life integrated marketing communication (IMC) agency, the IMC Masterclass allows students to develop, create, launch and manage marketing, digital marketing, and communication strategies and tactics for real clients. Working in teams, students assess client goals, develop an IMC campaign based on those goals, launch the campaign, then optimize it for success. In addition to gaining hands-on experience with industry-leading digital marketing and analytics tools, students learn critical career-ready skills such as client management, creative development, budget and deadline management, and cross-functional teamwork--while also upleveling their skills in traditional advertising, social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), paid search, email marketing, landing page development, branding, analytics, and more.
Prerequisite: There is no specific prerequisite, but this course expects that participants will be nearing completion of their IMC major, that means they will have taken most of the required IMC curriculum.
Offered: This may become a two-semester continued course, now it's proposed as a single course/pilot.

COM 498 Internship II Seminar **1-12 Credits**
Sequel to COM 488 for students taking multiple internships. Each student is limited to a combined total of 12 credit hours for COM 488 and COM 498.
Prerequisite: junior or senior standing, minimum overall GPA of 2.50, minimum communication studies average of 2.70, & approval by department faculty. **Restriction:** must be COM major.
Offered: every semester.

COM 499 Independent Study **3 Credits**
Student conducts original project or self-designed course of study under the tutelage of Communication Studies faculty member. Offered only in very specific circumstances. Independent studies require an application and approval by the associate dean.
Prerequisite: junior or senior standing; & permission of instructor, chair, & associate dean. **Restriction:** must be COM major.