

Communication and Digital Media

Contact Information

Email: com@uis.edu

Office Phone: (217) 206-6790

Office Location: UHB 3050

- Communications and Digital Media

The online graduate program in communication and digital media has five main objectives:

1. Guide students in an in-depth exploration of structure and function of communication
2. Educate students in communication theory and methods of inquiry
3. Develop students' ability to critically analyze and evaluate communication strategies and media content
4. Promote an understanding of ethical considerations and responsibilities in communication and media
5. Encourage a global perspective on communication practices, recognizing the impact of cultural diversity

The Master's Degree

All communication and digital media M.A. candidates are required to complete at least 32 hours of graduate study in communication or approved equivalent courses.

Students must complete COM 501, COM 506 (or an approved equivalent), and COM 516 through UIS to graduate.

Advising

Each new graduate student should consult with a faculty advisor before initial registration. Academic advisors work with students to develop a tentative plan of study based on department requirements and the students' interests.

Course Offerings:

Cross-listed courses may be accepted for the major. Students should be careful to register for the course with the appropriate department prefix (COM) to ensure that credit is received. Other courses may be accepted toward the major only through a Student Petition with the School of Communication and Digital Media. Approved equivalent methods courses may also be counted toward the methods course requirement and approved elective course may also be counted toward the additional elective course requirement.

Although 400-level courses are open to both B.A. and M.A. candidates, graduate students enrolled in 400-level courses should expect more stringent grading standards and/or additional or differently structured assignment compared to undergraduates enrolled in the same courses. The specific grading guidelines for each course will be determined as the instructor's discretion.

Course Repetition:

COM 580 may be taken for credit more than once, provided the course topic differs each time. No more than eight semester hours of credit for COM 499 and COM 599 (tutorials) will be accepted for the degree. All other Communication courses may be repeated for grade improvement only once.

Grading Policy

No grade below B- may be applied toward the degree, and students who do not maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA will be placed on academic probation. Communication courses to be counted toward the degree requirements may not be taken on a CR/NC basis except for COM 501.

Students should refer to the campus policy on the Grades Acceptable toward Master's Degrees section of this catalog.

Program Learning Outcomes

After completing the M.A. in the School of Communication and Media, students will be able to:

1. Find, understand, criticize and perform communication research.
2. Cultivate expertise in creating compelling media content.
3. Demonstrate critical written and oral communication skills at a scholarly and/or professional level.
4. Master the ability to analyze and optimize communication strategies.

Requirements

Core Requirements

COM 506	Research Methods in Communication (or a course from the list of approved equivalent research methods courses)	4
COM 516	Communication Theory	4
	500-level graduate seminars in Communication	8
	Graduate-level COM courses (400- or 500-level)	8
Electives		4
Master Closure		
COM 501	Closure Experience	4
Total Hours		32

Approved Equivalent Methods Courses

The following classes have been approved as equivalent courses to COM 506 Research Methods in Communication and can be used to meet the methods course requirements of the Master of Arts in Communication and Digital Media.

EDL 505	Introduction to Research
EDL 541	Educational Research Methods
EDL 542	Action Research for Leadership
PSC 502	Methods Of Inquiry

Approved Additional Elective Courses

The following classes have been approved as additional elective courses and can be used to meet the additional elective requirements of the Master of Arts in Communication and Digital Media.

EDL 509	Organizational Dynamics
EDL 635	Organizational Theory and Leadership
ENG 409	Rhetoric and Composition in Digital Media
HMS 511	Social Policy and Human Services
HMS 588	Grant Writing in Human Services
HMS 591	Fundraising in the Nonprofit Sector
LES 422	ECCE: Politics and Religion: Culture Wars
LES 435	ECCE: American Political Thought
LES 451	Law, Film and Popular Culture
LES 463	Labor Law
LES 587	Public Advocacy
MPH 526	Risk Management and Communication
PAD 412	Public Values and Leadership
PAD 502	Organization Dynamics
PAD 507	Information for Decision Making
PAD 538	Public Service Ethics and Leadership
PAD 543	Marketing for Public and Nonprofit Organizations
PAD 544	Fund Raising for Public and Nonprofit Organizations
PAD 552	Strategic Planning and Management
PSC 407	Campaigns and Elections
PSC 412/ PSY 433	Political Psychology
PSC 423	ECCE: Women and Politics
PSC 462	International Law and Organizations
PSC 532	The Politics of Belonging
PSC 541	Conflict and Intervention
PSY 416	Psychology of Motivation
SOA 431	Sociology of Organizations

Electives

Additional 400-or 500-level Electives COM course or a course from the list of approved additional electives courses.

Master's Closure

In accordance with campus requirements, all graduate students must complete a closure experience COM 501. For the MA in Communication and Digital Media. This involves completing comprehensive exams. Students must have completed a minimum of 24 credit hours to be eligible for comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams will be offered once every semester at a regularly scheduled time. More specific guidelines are available from the School of Communication and Digital Media's Directors and Advisors.

Students must enroll for a total of 4 hours of credit in the closure experience; however, they may accrue the total increments.

Campus policy requires that students be enrolled in at least 1 hour of closure experience for each fall and spring semester after they have begun their graduate closure exercise until that exercise is completed.

For the Communication and Digital Media students, this means that if the comprehensive exams have not been completed by the end of 4 continuous credit hours of enrollment in COM 501. Students must register for COM 502 (zero credit hours, one billable hour) each regular semester (excluding summer terms) until the closure experience is completed.

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