

# Communication

## Contact Information

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- Communication

The graduate program in Communication has two main objectives:

1. Guide students in an intensive exploration of the structure and function of communication.
2. Educate students in the methods and theory of communication inquiry.

## The Master's Degree

### 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 student's interests.

### Grading Policy

No grade below B- in a Communication course 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.

Courses with a 300-course prefix number that advisors require of graduate students as prerequisites must be passed with a minimum grade of B (grades of B- or lower will not be accepted). Hours earned as prerequisites may not be counted toward the graduate degree.

### NOTE:

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

## Important Course Information

All Communication M.A. candidates are required to complete at least 36 hours of graduate study in communication, including at least three 500-level graduate seminars. Graduate seminars are numbered 514 through 599.

**Course Repetition:** COM 570 and 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.

**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 Communication Department.

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 more assignments (and perhaps differently structured assignments) than undergraduates enrolled in the same courses.

## Program Learning Outcomes

After completing the M.A. in Communication, students will be able to:

1. Find, understand, criticize and perform research as communicators.
2. Demonstrate critical written and oral communication skills at a scholarly and/or professional level.
3. Demonstrate scholarly or creative facility in an area of communication specialization.

## Requirements

### Core Requirements

COM 504	Introduction to Graduate Study in Communication <sup>1,2</sup>	4
COM 506	Research Methods in Communication <sup>1</sup>	4
500-level graduate seminars in Communication		12
Graduate-level COM courses (400- or 500-level)		12
COM 501	Closure Experience (minimum) <sup>1,3</sup>	4
Elective (400- or 500-level) <sup>4</sup>		3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>39</b>

<sup>1</sup> Students must complete department-required courses (COM 501, COM 504, and COM 506) at UIS to graduate. No waivers or substitutions are accepted.

<sup>2</sup> No more than eight semester hours of graduate-level courses may be taken before taking COM 504, which is offered only in the fall semester.

<sup>3</sup> A student may not register for COM 501 until they have registered for COM 506. COM 506 is offered only in the spring semester.

<sup>4</sup> If an elective is outside of Communication, it must be approved by a Student Petition with the Communication Department.

With department approval, additional courses may be required by the advisor to meet deficiencies.

## Master's Closure

In accordance with campus requirements, all graduate students must complete a closure experience (COM 501) consisting of one of the following: a thesis, a project, or comprehensive exams. A faculty committee must approve the proposed thesis or project before it is started. Students must have completed a minimum of 32 (preferably 36) credit hours to be eligible for comprehensive exams. Students write comprehensive exams over five areas during a two-day period. Comprehensive exams will be offered once every semester at a regularly scheduled time. More specific guidelines on any of the three options listed above are available from the Communication Department or from COM faculty.

Students must enroll for a total of four hours of credit in the closure experience; however, they may accrue the total in increments. Campus policy requires that students be enrolled in at least one semester hour of closure experience for each fall and spring semester after they have begun their graduate closure exercise until that exercise is completed. For Communication students, this means that if the closure experience (thesis/project/comprehensive exams) has not been completed by the end of four 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.