

Communication

College of Communication & Information

The College of Communications and Information offers programs leading to the Master of Arts (either Plan A or Plan B) and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Communication. The program offers special opportunities for students to apply communication theory and research across many contexts. Students may develop a program of study emphasizing (or combining) research areas such as health communication, information studies, instructional communication, media and mass communication, risk and crisis communication as well as strategic and organizational communication. The program is designed to serve the needs of students whose goals may include teaching and academic research, professional research, or communication careers in the media or other organizations.

Students pursuing work in health communication are encouraged to develop interdisciplinary programs involving the Department of Behavioral Science, the College of Medicine, as well as the Colleges of Dentistry, Health Sciences, Pharmacy, and Nursing. Communication also participates in interdisciplinary research programs with the Center for Prevention Research, the Sanders-Brown Center for Aging, and a variety of other health-related departments and institutes.

Admission Requirements

Students with an undergraduate degree from a fully accredited institution of higher learning and a grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale are admissible to the graduate program. Only students who have previously completed a master's degree may apply for admission into the doctoral program. Master's degree applicants are expected to have had at least twelve hours of appropriate undergraduate work in communication. Students with degrees in areas not directly related to communication are encouraged to apply, but they may be required to take course work without graduate credit. Should the Admissions Committee feel there is a deficiency in the applicant's studies, it may require enrollment in specific undergraduate courses. Courses taken to remove a deficiency cannot be counted towards the master's degree. In some cases, successful professional experience in a communication field will be considered in admitting students to the program.

Applicants must complete the University of Kentucky's Graduate School online-application and pay the application fee. Per the Graduate School's instruction, all applicants are required to submit official scores on the Graduate Record Examination and official transcripts of all work taken at and beyond the college level. Students whose native language is not English must also submit an official score of at least 550 (or 213 on the computer version or 79 on the internet-based version) of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a minimum of 6.5 of the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS). Additionally, all applicants must submit to the College of Communications and Information Studies Graduate Admissions office: (1) transcripts of all work taken at the college level (unofficial or photocopies are acceptable), (2) at least three letters of recommendation focusing on their academic abilities accompanied by the supplied Reference Form and (3) the completed Application Essay indicating why they want to pursue a graduate degree with their reasons for applying to the program. No additional forms are required for financial assistance consideration—all applicants will be considered for funding at the time of review.

The Admissions and Financial Aid Committee will review only completed admission files after January 5 of each year. Applications must have their completed file on record with the Associate Dean for the Graduate Programs in Communication by the deadline in order to be considered for fall admission. New graduate

students are permitted to enroll only during the fall semester.

Exceptions will be made only because of circumstances beyond the control of the applicant. This deadline does not apply to: (1) UK undergraduate students in the College of Communications and Information Studies applying as University Scholars, who may be admitted for summer, fall or spring semesters, and (2) current students in the M.A. Program in Communication or the M.L.S., M.S.L.S or M.S. in ICT.

Master of Arts

The M.A. program requires that every student become familiar with the important theories and concepts and the principal investigation methods used to expand knowledge of communication. All students are required to complete 30 credit hours to complete the Master of Arts degree. Students will be required to take 12 core credit hours consisting of Communication Theory (CJT 651), and Communication Research Methods (CJT 665), plus Statistics 570 (or its equivalent as determined by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies). In addition, all students will be required to take either Interpersonal Communication (CJT 631) or Mass Communication (CJT 608 or CJT 645). Students may choose from either the Plan A (Thesis option) or Plan B (non-thesis) options to complete their Masters degree requirements.

Plan A: Students choosing Plan A will take a minimum of 24 credit hours of actual course work, and write a thesis (Note: the six thesis credits must be taken under CJT 768 - Residence Credit for the Master's degree). All students will also complete an oral examination in defense of the thesis.

Plan B: Students choosing Plan B, will take a minimum of 30 hours of course work, followed by a written and oral examination over the student's program.

At least 21 credit hours of the minimum requirements for the master's degree must be from offerings within the College of Communications and Information studies (both Plan A and Plan B). Plan A students may include six hours of CJT 768 in the 21 hours, since the thesis involves work in an area of communication. Also, at least 15 credit hours of the minimum requirements must be in courses at the 600 and 700 levels (both Plan A and Plan B). Plan A students may include six hours of CJT 768 in the 21 hours. No more than three credit yours in Plan A and 6 credit hours in Plan B (of the minimum requirements) may be earned in directed study, directed reading, or internship courses (e.g., CJT 696, CJT 700, CJT 781, and CJT 790).

Students without previous course work in communication may be required to take undergraduate work that does not count toward graduate credit, as determined by the Admissions Committee. Individuals without significant practical experience are strongly encouraged to take CJT 696 - Internship in Communication, which could include opportunities to work with external agencies and funded projects, both within and outside the university.

Doctor of Philosophy

The Ph.D. program emphasizes communication as a social science. Graduates are prepared for university positions and careers in government, the media and other organizations as researchers, consultants and policy makers. Students must demonstrate general knowledge of communication across various contexts, as well as competence in a core area of specialization. Current core areas include health communication, information studies, instructional communication, media and mass communication, risk and crisis communication as well as strategic and organizational communication.

Students must demonstrate a thorough grasp of communication theory and research methods and must take course work in a cognate area outside of Communication. Proficiency in a foreign language is not required for successful completion of the Ph.D. in Communication. A student's advisory committee may, however, stipulate certain graduate-level courses in another language for the student's program that are consistent with the objectives of the student's program. The required curriculum is as follows:

Fall Semester: Year 1

CJT 651 Communication Theory
CJT 664 Qualitative Methods in Communication Research
STA 570 (or other advanced statistics course)

Spring Semester: Year 1

CJT 631 Proseminar in Interpersonal Communication OR
CJT 645 Proseminar in Mass Communication
CJT 665 Quantitative Methods in Communication Research

Fall Semester: Year 2

CJT 751 Advanced Topics in Communication Theory Construction

All students are also required to complete at least 3 credit hours of CJT 790 (Research Problems in Communication) by the last semester of course work.

The Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, in consultation with the Graduate Review committee, can waive any of the above requirements for a student who has previously taken the same or equivalent course at UK or another university for graduate credit. Each student works with a major professor and an advisory committee to plan course work and complete the dissertation. The committee also administers the qualifying examination and the final oral examination. The qualifying examination consists of a written and oral examination over general communication theory, the core area of specialization, research methods/statistics and the cognate area.

Course Descriptions

COM 525 ADVANCED ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION (Subtitle required). (3)
Examines theory and research relevant to understanding advanced issues in organizational communication. Topics may include strategies of innovation, organizing, networking, decision-making, globalization, technology, power, and diversity. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 535 RISK AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION. (3)
This course examines strategic risk and crisis communication research, theory, and practices. Special emphasis is placed on crisis planning, media relationships, image restoration, ethical responses, and organizational learning. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 553 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION AND PERSUASION IN POPULAR CULTURE. (3)
This course focuses on what and how popular culture entertainment media functions to communicate and persuade. Forms to be examined may include films/movies, television programs, music, cartoons, and/or comics. Ultimately, students will be equipped with tools to make educated decisions as critical consumers of the messages conveyed in popular culture entertainment media. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 571 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN HEALTH CONTEXTS. (3)
Examines theory and research relevant to the role of interpersonal communication in managing mental and physical health. Topics related to interaction in health contexts include: communicating identity in health and illness, health and personal relationships, health care provider/ patient communication, medical decision-making, and interpersonal health education and prevention efforts. Prereq: COM 471, and COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 572 HEALTH COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNITIES. (3)

This course focuses on the role of the mass media in contemporary public health campaigns. Most class sessions focus on the application of theory and research to the design of these campaigns. Earlier studies examining the role of the mass media in health campaigns indicated that the mass media played a small and rather insignificant role in changing health behaviors. However, more recent studies indicate that careful targeting combined with formative research often yield successful behavior change. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 581 TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS. (3)

Examines theory and research on the nature and development of small group communication. Topics include leadership, interpersonal relations and roles, goals, and decision-making in multiple organizational contexts. Communication major or permission of instructor required for enrollment. Prereq: COM 325 AND completion of the major graduation communication and composition in the communication major requirement (COM 326 or COM 351).

COM 584 TEACHING OF COMMUNICATION. (3)

This course uses communication research and theory to develop effective instructors of communication. Topics include instructor identity, course development, teaching communication contexts (e.g., small group, intercultural, persuasion, speech) in diverse settings (e.g., classroom, organizational training), managing learners, and learning assessment. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.

COM 591 SPECIAL TOPICS IN COMMUNICATION (Subtitle required). (1-3)

Intensive study of a specialized topic area in communication. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits under different subtitles. Prereq: COM 326 or COM 351.