

COMMUNICATION

Program Website: Communication – Hiram College (<https://www.hiram.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/undergraduate-programs/communication/>)

Introduction

The communication major prepares students for careers in a range of industries and roles, such as health and human services, public relations, sports communication, social media, journalism, advocacy, web and digital media, organizational communication, and advertising. In accordance with the Liberal Arts tradition, the communication curriculum emphasizes a rigorous theoretical base in the discipline and requisite skills including writing, speaking, critical thinking, and ethical problem-solving in every course. These skills make our graduates highly competitive for positions in a wide variety of contemporary organizations.

All majors complete a required apprenticeship experience, either on or off campus, allowing students to test and refine their communication knowledge and skills in a supervised setting.

The Capstone in the major encourages students to focus their career goals, network with alumni, prepare for job search, and engage in academic dialog around contemporary issues for communicators in the marketplace.

Hiram Connect gives majors unique opportunities to extend their communication competencies by completing an extended off-campus internship, study abroad, and/or guided research experience with a faculty member.

Apprenticeship in Communication

The apprenticeship is required for all students who major in communication and strongly encouraged for those who minor in the discipline. The apprenticeship requirement allows communication majors to engage in practical experiences to further develop their oral and written skills in a professional environment that goes beyond the traditional classroom setting. The apprenticeship requirement can be completed with or without having course credit attached to the experience, and it can be tied into or separate from Hiram Connect requirements. The apprenticeship requirement can be fulfilled through a variety of options, either on or off campus. On campus opportunities include working with Student Senate, Kennedy Center Programming Board (KCPB), Intercultural Forum, or campus jobs with the Alumni, Development, Career, or College Relations Offices. The most traditional manner of fulfilling the apprenticeship off campus is through either internships (COMM 49800 INTERNSHIP) or field experiences (COMM 29800 FIELD EXPERIENCE); please refer to the catalog for course descriptions.

Communication Major Grade-Point Average

The communication program calculates the grade-point average by considering all courses taken that are used for the major, but not the correlative. Students must attain a cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 in courses for the communication major and have a C- or better in COMM 10100 FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC COMMUN and COMM 30000 HUMAN COMMUNICATION THEORY.

Faculty

Vanessa G Heeman, (2017) Assistant Professor of Communication

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Xinlu Yu, (2002) Associate Professor of Communication; Chair
B.A., Beijing Foreign Studies University;
B.S., M.S., Ph.D., The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University
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Gail C. Ambuske, (1981) Professor Emerita of Management and Communication

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Course Descriptions

COMM 10100: FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC COMMUN: 4 Hour(s)
FOUNDATIONS OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATION ~ This course is an exploration of the multiple publics and communicative contexts that inform message creation. Students will be challenged to recognize the obligations and opportunities that exist for public communication as it occurs in their personal, professional, and civic lives. Students will analyze case studies and create audience-centered messages designed to influence publics in a variety of communicative contexts.

COMM 18000: WKSP: 1 Hour(s)
WORKSHOP ~ This workshop will provide the opportunity for students to examine a special topic in Communication. Through readings, discussions and written assignments, there will be opportunities to evaluate the topic at issue. Workshops may be taken Pass/No Credit only. Students may take no more than nine workshops for credit toward graduation. Workshops can be used as elective credit only.

COMM 20300: INTRO TO HEALTH COMMUNICATION: 4 Hour(s)
INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH COMMUNICATION ~ This course provides an introduction to the various roles of communication in health. Students will examine the multidimensional and interdisciplinary aspects of the field through the analysis of interpersonal, cultural, social, and organizational issues related to health communication. Course readings and assignments will allow students to explore health communication through the eyes of patients, health care providers, health care leaders, health campaign designers, etc. and to learn how factors like culture, media, personal identity, technology, and social networks can contribute to health, illness, risk behavior, health care, and health promotion. Also listed as IES 20300.

COMM 22000: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:CA: 3 Hour(s)
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:CA ~ The course explores the complex process of communication between persons seeking meaningful and satisfying relationships. Emphasis is on perception, self-concept, verbal and nonverbal messages, conflict resolution, relationships, decision-making as each relates to the communication process. Experiential learning is central to the format of the course.
Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth

COMM 22100: GROUP INTERACTION PROCESSES: 3 Hour(s)

GROUP INTERACTION PROCESSES ~ This course examines the complex dynamics of small group life within the context of organizational systems. Small group theory as it applies to perception, membership, leadership, norms, communication, problem-solving and decision-making is explored. The focus of the course is to develop individual competence in group settings. Through a laboratory approach, students are provided with opportunities to experiment with new behaviors and to improve group effectiveness. Students experience the development of a group through predictable stages and engage in critical analysis of the experiment. A group project is required. Also listed as MGMT 22100.

COMM 22200: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION: 4 Hour(s)

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION ~ The course involves the study of communication theory as it relates to organizations. Topics include communication systems analysis, intergroup communication, team building, goal setting, meetings, and organizational change. The course requires a field research project during which students work with actual organizations to diagnose communication systems. The course contains a significant writing component. Students will develop skill in writing proposals, letters, memos, agendas, progress reports, final reports, and executive summaries as they progress through the field research project. Also listed as MGMT 22200.

Prerequisite: MGMT 11800 or COMM 22000

COMM 22300: FAMILY COMMUNICATION:CA: 4 Hour(s)

FAMILY COMMUNICATION:CA ~ Family Communication is a course dedicated to applying a wide range of communication theories and practices to an experience shared by all persons-family life. Few relationships are more important to people's well-being than their family relationships. Although these relationships often are defined by genes and marriages, they are built, maintained, and destroyed by communication. No two people have the same familial experience, and this course offers students the opportunity to examine how diverse families function and how their specific members interact with each other. Patterns of intimacy, rituals, roles, decision-making, and conflict are included as significant issues forming family interaction patterns. Historical and other cultural familial relationships are also included to open perspectives beyond the students' immediate experiences. Classroom discussions, experiential activities, and field projects are designed to help students gain insight into the people with whom they share their lives, as well as the workings of well-functioning or "normal" family.

Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth

COMM 22400: ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LIT:CM: 4 Hour(s)

ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE:CM ~ Critical approaches to literature to discover meaning and to appreciate the emotional effect of the work is the focal point of this course. Students will use various forms of literature for interpretation and study. Emphasis is placed on principles of reading a work aloud to communicate its intellectual and emotional meaning. Presentations will be required and be an integral aspect of the course. A version of this course for three (3) credit hours is listed as COMM 22410. Also listed as PERF 22400.

Core: Creative Methods

COMM 22410: ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LIT:CM: 3 Hour(s)

ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE:CM ~ Critical approaches to literature to discover meaning and to appreciate the emotional effect of the work is the focal point of this course. Students will use various forms of literature for interpretation and study. Emphasis is placed on principles of reading a work aloud to communicate its intellectual and emotional meaning. Presentations will be required and be an integral aspect of the course. A version of this course for four (4) credit hours is listed as COMM 22400. Also listed as THEA 22410.

Core: Creative Methods

COMM 22500: NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION:CA: 3 Hour(s)

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION:CA ~ This course is devoted to the study of nonverbal communication in our intimate, social, and working relationships. Nonverbal cues found in (a) the communication context, (b) the communicator's physical characteristics, and (c) their body movement and position (gestures, posture, touching, facial expressions, eye and vocal behavior) are explored alone and in conjunction with the total communication system to better understand how nonverbal behavior helps accomplish various communication goals (for example, closeness, identity, and deception). Students will be introduced to contemporary research studies as well as key works from the past to develop a theoretical perspective of the subject. Field experiments, observational studies, and classroom exercises are an integral part of the course and give students an opportunity to increase their sensitivity to messages communicated via nonverbal channels in a variety of natural settings.

Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth

COMM 23000: ARGUMENTATION AND ADVOCACY: 4 Hour(s)

ARGUMENTATION AND ADVOCACY ~ Argumentation and advocacy are examined as reasoned discourse in formal and informal decision-making situations. This includes an examination and evaluation of proofs, types and tests of evidence, proposition analysis, and their uses in the advocacy process. Students will assume the role of advocates and opponents in informal and formal communication contexts.

COMM 23700: MEDIA LAW & ETHICS:ES: 3 Hour(s)

MEDIA LAW AND ETHICS:ES ~ The challenges of our times require civic engagement and careful, thoughtful judgment of our information sources. The agenda-setting and watchdog functions of the media define our experience with the United States capitalist and democratic system. Through intense research and class discussion, we will explore legal and ethical issues in the media. We will read and discuss popular press, peer-reviewed journal articles, and legal documents, to improve media literacy and explore the symbiotic relationship between what is legal and what is ethical. We will cover a variety of legal issues including First Amendment struggles, libel, slander, and invasion of privacy. We will also explore ethical dilemmas in mainstream media including current ethical issues. Course components include: in-class and out-of-class assigned readings, in-class viewing of related videos and films, ongoing class discussion, and in-class and out-of-class group and individual projects.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

COMM 24000: SURVEY OF JOURNALISM: 4 Hour(s)

SURVEY OF JOURNALISM ~ This course examines the contemporary professional journalistic field, particularly the areas of writing for media, design, layout, public relations and advertising. It provides students with practical experience and also an understanding of ethical and legal problems facing contemporary journalism. By examining the way First Amendment principles have translated in different political and social arenas, it also addresses how effectively journalism serves its various constituencies. Also listed as WRIT 24000.

COMM 24100: MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY: 3 Hour(s)

MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY ~ Discussions covering the evolution of print and electronic media systems in general and their impact on different kinds of societies are the central focus of the course. Audience insights will be an important part of this exercise. Press freedom, a key component of many political systems, will also be evaluated. Students will be required to analyze media content and audience responses in research papers that address these issues. Some discussion of research methodology will therefore be conducted.

COMM 24500: PUBLIC RELATIONS: 4 Hour(s)

PUBLIC RELATIONS ~ This course will introduce students to how public relations function in corporations, government, nonprofit organizations, and other institutions and provide an overview of many facets of public relations: its history, development, ethics, practice, and application. We will look at the process of public relations, including research, planning, implementation, and evaluation of public relations campaigns, survey techniques, strategies and tactics used by public relations practitioners, and how to practice public relations effectively and ethically in today's global society. Analysis of case studies gives students the opportunity to apply public relations concepts to a realistic situation and to begin to understand the actual, creative challenges available in the public relations profession. Also listed as MKTG 24500.

COMM 24600: SPORTS JOURNALISM: 4 Hour(s)

SPORTS JOURNALISM ~ This course is a hands-on look at the field of sports journalism. This course examines the various elements necessary to bring a sporting event or story to the public through online storytelling and reporting, video, and social media. Topics include the evolution of media and coverage of sports, the role of sports department personnel, coverage of the sporting event, developing contacts, gaining access to sports figures, and interviewing. The course focuses on developing effective writing skills by approaching sports writing and coverage as a multi-media enterprise. Also listed as WRIT 24600.

COMM 24800: MEDIA AND MULTICULTURALISM:UD: 4 Hour(s)

MEDIA AND MULTICULTURALISM:UD ~ In a world pervaded by communication technologies, many of our perceptions about current affairs, others, and social realities are based on the types of information provided to us by the media. One result of this situation is that we witness the rise of different trends in and out of group consciousness. For the first time in the history of humankind, groups and individuals began to see themselves from outside as well as from inside. This course will initiate a critical exploration of representations and misrepresentations in the media of African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, women, LGBTQ+, and other traditionally under-represented groups, and prepare students to critically evaluate information they receive from the media about these groups.

Core: Understanding Diversity Home

COMM 24900: PRINCIPLES OF ADVERTISING: 3 Hour(s)

PRINCIPLES OF ADVERTISING ~ This course is designed to introduce students to the theory and application of creativity in advertising. Based on the idea that good advertising always starts with an understanding of people and an awareness of their needs, this course moves through the creative process step by step, focusing first on the creative person, then on strategy and problem solving. It covers a range of topics including the nature of creative strategy to various media. Students will also learn how advertising is evolved and regulated and learn about key social issues and consumer problems with advertising. The emphasis throughout the course is on developing good advertising based on solid strategic thinking, and students will be required to write, design and present original advertisements and critique various advertisements. Also listed as MKTG 24900.

COMM 25000: COMMUN BETWEEN CULTURES:EW: 3 Hour(s)

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CULTURES:EW ~ What happens when people from different cultures come together to share ideas, feelings and information? This course addresses the unique relationship between communication and culture as well as the key issues and concerns of intercultural communication. It will define and identify the different cultures at work in our society, explore the problems resulting from poor intercultural communication, and find ways to improve communication between differing cultures.

Core: Experiencing the World

COMM 25200: ENGL LANG: LINGUISTIC INTRO:CA: 3 Hour(s)

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: A LINGUISTIC INTRODUCTION:CA ~ This course traces the historical development of the English language from its Indo-European origins down to present day U.S. speech, with a special emphasis on the various contemporary American dialects. In studying this long evolution of our native tongue, students will be introduced to modern linguistic techniques and terminology. Some fieldwork in local dialects will be required. Also listed as ENGL 25200.

Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth

COMM 26000: DESKTOP PUBLISHING:CM: 4 Hour(s)

DESKTOP PUBLISHING:CM ~ This class will examine various aspects of design for documents that are published online and for other media. Students will learn how contrasts in colors, fonts, graphics, and layout principles impact how a message is received. This will be key as students will learn how to grab the audience's attention and deliver a memorable message depending on what the client desires. This course uses current software for various types of document design.

Core: Creative Methods

COMM 26200: WEB DESIGN: 4 Hour(s)

WEB DESIGN ~ This course presents topics related to basic web design principles. We will explore web usability, webpage design, writing for the web, use of photos and video, and other contemporary issues facing online communication. We will learn how to develop unique, basic, and effective web pages.

COMM 26500: SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION: 4 Hour(s)

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION ~ In this class, we will examine social media communication and its uses and functions, proper and improper, from personal and business standpoint. This course takes a hands-on approach to learning the content which will include designing a social media communication campaign for a local business. A variety of social media platforms will be examined. There are no prerequisites for this class.

COMM 28000: SEM:: 4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~

COMM 28100: INDEPENDENT STUDY: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT STUDY ~

COMM 29800: FIELD EXPERIENCE: 1-4 Hour(s)

FIELD EXPERIENCE ~ Field Experience allows a student the opportunity to examine one or more professional communication fields through observation, interview, and shadowing. This may entail some professional work on behalf of the student, but is determined by the cooperating organization and the faculty supervisor. This is designed for career exploration. Generally, a student would complete 40 hours of professional commitment for each hour of academic credit, along with an analysis paper.

COMM 30000: HUMAN COMMUNICATION THEORY: 4 Hour(s)

HUMAN COMMUNICATION THEORY ~ In this class, we will examine the major body of theories that claim to explain and account for the process of human communication. The course focuses on theories of communication that help you understand the issues affecting the field today and people's daily interactions in various contexts. It emphasizes the application of the theories to your experiences outside the classroom as well as the ethical issues and implications of each theory. A variety of materials including film clips, case studies, application logs, discussion, collaboration, and lecture will be utilized to sustain interest and motivate learning. This is a required course for the communication major and minor.

Prerequisite: COMM 10100

COMM 32400: GENDER COMMUNICATION:CA: 3 Hour(s)

GENDER COMMUNICATION:CA ~ This course is concerned with the communication "about" and "between" men and women. "About" involves how the sexes are discussed, referred to, or depicted both verbally and nonverbally. "Between" is the interpersonal dimension. More specific topics include the social construction of gender and the influence of gender on: self-perceptions, self-disclosure, language usage, nonverbal communication, mass media, intimacy, friendship, and professional relationships. Counts toward the gender studies minor.

Core: Social/Cultural Analysis Meth

COMM 32600: PERSUASION AND ATTITUDE CHANGE: 4 Hour(s)

PERSUASION AND ATTITUDE CHANGE ~ This course focuses on the interaction of attitudes and verbal communication process emphasizing recent experimental studies dealing with source, message, receiver and environmental variables. Additionally, specific persuasive situations such as bargaining, negotiations, trial processes, marketing and political campaigns are examined. A research paper on an aspect of persuasion theory and recent experiments is required. Also listed as MGMT/MKTG 32600.

COMM 35400: INTERCULTURAL HLTHCRE COMM:UD: 4 Hour(s)

INTERCULTURAL HEALTH CARE COMMUNICATION:UD ~ Cultural beliefs about disease and health are closely intertwined with beliefs about religion, life and death, and even gender and child rearing. The intersection between cultural belief systems and communication is the focus of this course. As the United States becomes more culturally diverse, the need for knowledge and sensitivity about different cultures in health care settings becomes more crucial. Whether it is a Muslim woman who refuses to let a male doctor examine her in an emergency room or a Native American who is suspicious of the "white man's" medicine, health care providers are presented with daily challenges. Students will learn culture general and culture specific concepts to achieve the goal of greater knowledge, awareness, and understanding of intercultural health care. Students will examine readings and engage in experiential learning to increase their understanding of the impact of culture on communication and its application to the health care context. Core: Understanding Diversity Home

COMM 38000: SEM:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~

COMM 38100: SPC TPC:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SPECIAL TOPICS IN COMMUNICATION ~ Special topics focusing on specific areas within the broad realm of human communication will be offered each year. Topics will vary depending upon the currency of the subject matter and expertise of the faculty. Offered on a rotating basis, topics in Rhetoric, Communication, and Mass Media will provide an opportunity for students to examine contemporary issues and research methods. A prerequisite and/or permission may be required for some topics.

COMM 39310: CHINA: TRAD & CHG:BACKGROUND: 1 Hour(s)

CHINA: TRADITION AND CHANGE: BACKGROUND ~ As a prerequisite for INTD 39300 and Study Away trip to China in the subsequent term, the course will introduce students to China's history, geography, philosophies, religious traditions, and cultural values. The course will also address issues associated with the process of cultural transition and practical considerations for preparation for the trip abroad. The course will provide the broader context for understanding the readings, sites, and interactions when the students travel to China.

Corequisite: INTD 39300

COMM 40100: RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT: 1 Hour(s)

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT ~ Students in this course will research and develop communication topics in preparation for the Senior Seminar course. Students will also examine recent and historical communication research to become better acquainted with research writing in communication. The course also provides students with opportunities for career exploration, with special attention to resume and cover letter writing. Prerequisite: C- or higher in both COMM 10100 and COMM 30000.

Prerequisite: COMM 10100 and COMM 30000

COMM 48000: SENIOR SEMINAR: 4 Hour(s)

SENIOR SEMINAR ~ A comprehensive examination of the discipline's recent significant or historical exemplary research is undertaken to acquaint all majors with important aspects of each field within the discipline. Major areas include interpersonal, group, organizational, nonverbal communication, rhetoric, public address, mass media and journalism. Ethical issues of the discipline will also be considered, particularly a discussion of the significance of choice, moral obligations, truth, and honesty in communication. During this course, each student will also submit a research proposal and prepare a poster presentation describing their research plan.

Prerequisite: COMM 40100

COMM 48100: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH ~

COMM 49800: INTERNSHIP: 4 Hour(s)

INTERNSHIP ~ An internship can bring a specific focus to the study of communication that is not available in the traditional educational environment of a classroom or library. Students with a junior or senior status and with completion of six courses in communication may apply for an internship at a cooperating communication-related business for professional field-work experience and directed research or project. The student's study-employment is jointly supervised by a faculty member and the employer. Internships can be arranged in professions such as journalism, public relations, and mass media. For each hour of academic credit, a minimum of 40 hours of professional work experience must be completed. Additional requirements include a daily log of professional activities and a research paper connecting the theoretical learning to the practical work experience, and a written evaluation by the cooperating professional supervisor in the communication field.

Academic Offerings

- Communication Major (<https://catalog.hiram.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs/communication/communication-major/>)
- Communication Minor (<https://catalog.hiram.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs/communication/communication-minor/>)