

# Communication Studies

## Welcome to the World of the Media

Communication is as old as cave paintings, smoke signals and drum beats. But the study of communication is new. And the field of communication itself is rapidly changing — from the dotcom universe to the World Wide Web and digital editing systems in sound and in video. Welcome to the Age of Information and the SSU Communication Studies Department!

## Careers in Communication

In the booming economy at the start of the 21st century, there are more jobs and careers available in the continually-expanding field of global communication than ever before. Moreover, the media industry is rapidly expanding in Northern California, especially in Sonoma County, and there are more jobs available in the area, especially in the field of telecommunications, every year. Students who graduate from the department find employment in public relations and business firms, at newspapers, TV and radio stations, and in film and video.

## Campus Media

The department is home to KSUN, the campus radio station, Detour Sonoma, the campus video magazine, and *The Star*, the weekly campus newspaper. All three media outlets offer hands-on experience in a wide variety of activities: editing, engineering, broadcasting, managing, promoting, advertising, marketing, reporting, filming, recording, as well as in design, layout and production. The campus media provide students with the opportunity to develop their own creative skills and to work on group projects with others, which is essential in all aspects of the communication industry.

## “Real World” Experience

The Internship Program provides students with the opportunity to gain “real world” experience off-campus in the field of communications. Many students take two or three different internships to gain insight into different fields of the industry. Internships often lead to jobs; they also provide students with the opportunity to network, and to learn negotiating skills and practical workplace communication skills.

## B.A. Degree in Communication Studies

In addition to the hands-on courses which provide practical experience, there are courses in the history and the theory of communication, and courses about media ethics and media law. There are also courses in media criticism and media literacy that enable students to be active citizens and savvy consumers. Small classes provide the opportunity to learn small group communication skills and speaking in public. Students who enter as freshmen and who take a full load of courses every semester can graduate in four years.

## Advising

Faculty members advise students about courses, careers, internships and advanced degrees. New students benefit greatly from meeting faculty members early on in their college life. Get to know your teachers! The core faculty members all have advanced degrees as well as practical experience in video, TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, and film.

## Active Participation

What you get out of the program depends a lot on what you put into the program. The faculty encourages you to take part in shaping your own education, to participate actively in the campus media, and to express ideas and opinions in classroom discussion and debate. After all, you are the message!



## Course Requirements for the Communication Studies Major

The Communication Studies course requirements are divided into 2 groups: core (25 units) and major electives (21 units). All students are required to take the 7 prescribed core courses which total 21 units. In addition, every student must earn 4 additional units either as a media intern (COMS 499) or by completing an extensive senior project (COMS 498) for a total of 25 core course units.

### Major Core Requirements.....Units

COMS 200	Principles of Mass Communication .....	3
COMS 201	Introduction to Media Arts (3)	
	or	
COMS 210	Writing for the Media (3)	
	or	
COMS 240	Introduction to Public Relations (3)	
	or	
COMS 265	Introduction to Radio Broadcasting (3) .....	3
COMS 202	Methods of Media Criticism .....	3
COMS 300	Public Relations .....	3
COMS 301	Mass Communications Theory and Research .....	3
COMS 315	Media and the Law .....	3
COMS 402	Advanced Media Criticism .....	3
COMS 498	Senior Project (1-4)	
	or	
COMS 499	Internship in the Media (1-4) .....	4

**Total Units in the Major Core .....** 25

### Major Electives .....Units

Students declare an elective concentration and take 21 units within that concentration. Elective concentrations include radio/music, journalism, video, public relations, general, and Spanish. Students also take the appropriate beginning skill course for their concentration from the communication studies core classes. A completed minor can be substituted as a concentration. Substitutions and individually-designed concentrations will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

**Total Units in Major Electives .....** 21

**Total Units in the Major .....** 46

*Note: Communications Studies majors may not use their COMS electives to also meet GE requirements.*

## Minor in Communication Studies

The Communication Studies Minor is designed for students who recognize the need to understand the pervasive role the media play in society. Students who minor in Communication Studies must register with the department to be allowed into courses. Students with a Minor in Communication Studies bring to their employer important skills. The Minor provides background in the history and theory of communication, insight into the economic, sociological, and political dimensions of the media, and a hands-on introduction to the audio/visual and electronic tools of the trade. All students are required to take COMS 200 (Principles of Mass Communication). In addition, students choose 18 units from the COMS core and concentration courses. Acceptance to the minor is based upon GPA of 3.00 and at least three remaining semesters.

**COMS 200 required for all minors .....** 3

**Total elective units. ....** 18

**Total units in the minor. ....** 21

## Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies

### Degree Requirements.....Units

General Education..... 51

Major Requirements..... 46

General Electives .....

**Total Units Needed for Graduation .....** 124

