

Communication Studies

A Communication Studies degree provides students with a strong background in verbal and non-verbal communication, and is flexible enough so students can pursue graduate education or enter the work force in a variety of fields.

Graduates of Northern Michigan University's Communication Studies program are employed in a variety of fields. Some find themselves employed in business-related positions such as sales representatives, department store managers, loan officers, realtors, insurance adjusters, and pension fund administrators. Others have pursued university-level teaching, and still others have become admissions counselors, residence hall directors, and assistant alumni directors. Obviously, your options as a Communication Studies major are many, and only depend upon your willingness to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for a certain career field.

Skills and Competencies

Like many liberal arts degrees, a Communication Studies major provides students with a strong background in a variety of skills and competencies. As you can see from the sample list of careers, the skills you may learn as a student are transferable to a great many fields. Communication- written, oral, and interpersonal- is an essential skill, and one that employers desire. Your ability to research and analyze information will also be developed through your studies, as will your problem solving and organizational skills. Your creativity- the ability to design projects, develop programs, and generate ideas- will also be challenged as a Communication Studies major. There is not one "typical" career path for Communication Studies majors, so you may find yourself in a career field that is dictated by your experiences as a student.

Course Work

This degree includes the following courses as part of the program requirements, and specific major requirements along with general education courses and graduation requirements.

Introductory Core

- SP100 Public Address (4 cr.)**
- SP110 Interpersonal Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP120 Small Group Process (4 cr.)**

Critical Thinking

- SP200 Argumentation (4 cr.)**
- SP250 Research Methods & Careers (4 cr.)**

Theoretical Foundation

- SP310 Communication Theory (4 cr.)**
- SP320 New Media Literacy (4 cr.)**

Applications

- SP491 Practicum (1-8 cr.)**
- SP492 Internship (1-8 cr.)**

Assessment

- SP 480 Communication Capstone (2 cr.)**

Upper Division Electives (12 cr.)

Chosen From the Following:

- BC410 The Documentary (4 cr.)**
- BC415 Intercultural Communication (4 cr.)**
- BC 471 Mass Communication and Society (4 cr.)**
- BC480 Media and Politics (4 cr.)**
- PR432 Environmental Campaigns (4 cr.)**
- SP300 Rhetorical Theory (4 cr.)**
- SP401 Persuasion (4 cr.)**
- SP402 Communication Criticism (4 cr.)**
- SP404 Communication and the Arts (4 cr.)**
- SP410 Advanced Interpersonal Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP412 Nonverbal Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP421 Organizational Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP422 Crisis Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP432 Environmental Communication (4 cr.)**
- SP434 Environmental Communication in an International Context: Brazil (4 cr.)**
- SP495 Special Topics in Communication Studies (2-4 cr.)**

**Students may elect to take no more than 1 BC-prefixed course*

Minor (20-24 cr.)

Detailed course descriptions can be found at www.nmu.edu/bulletin.

Career Development

You should begin the resume-building process as soon as you can. The Academic and Career Advisement Center can assist you with career planning, while Career Services will help you fine tune your resume and look for jobs related to your field. In the meantime, the more hands-on experience you have, the better the chances are that you will find a job. Becoming involved in a professional related internship is a way to develop your professional skills and gain experience. Your academic course work is important as well, so be sure to maintain a high grade point average.

Additional Considerations

Strong written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills are essential if pursuing work in these areas. You can gain excellent experience in the government field by finding an internship related to your interests. A business minor or second major may be helpful, and relevant experience beneficial, when looking for positions in the business/industry field. Practical experience in a media-related field will significantly improve your chances of finding employment. A minor in International Studies, Electronic Journalism, Media Production & New Technology, or Media Studies may be beneficial. Remember to take any necessary exams early, it can take six weeks for results to be sent to the schools in which you applied.

Job Outlook

Starting salaries are contingent upon geographic location and the individuals applicant's work experience and initiative, and usually range from \$30,000 to \$55,000. The career field should expand at an average rate of 11% in the coming years. National surveys indicate communication skills are among the main qualifications that employers seek regardless of the profession.

Potential Careers

NMU's Communication Studies prepares students for employment in the following careers:

Campaign Director
Consultant
Copywriter
Editor
Executive Manager
Human Resources Manager
Industrial/Labor Relations Rep.
Legislative Aide
Lobbyist
Market Research Analyst
News Anchor
Personnel Manager
Politician
Press Secretary
Public Affairs Officer
Publisher
Reporter
Research Assistant
Sales Representative
Speech Communication
Speech Writer
University Professor

Additional Resources and Information

For Career Planning and Opportunities:
Academic & Career Advisement Center
3302.1 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2971
www.nmu.edu/acac

Communication and Performance Studies
203 Thomas Fine Arts
906-227-2045
www.nmu.edu/caps

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:
Career Services
3302.3 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2800
www.nmu.edu/careers

For Information about NMU Student Organizations
Associated with this Major Contact:
Center for Student Enrichment
1206 University Center
906-227-2439
www.nmu.edu/cse

Internet Resource Links:
www.careers.org
www.bls.gov

For Career Information with National
Organizations:
www.natcom.org -National Communication Assoc.



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY**

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

The Academic & Career Advisement Center
2018



What to do with
a major in...

Communication Studies

