

# COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COMS)

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## COMS Courses

### COMS 100. Introduction to the Communication Studies Major. 2 units

Term Typically Offered: F, W  
CR/NC

Preparation for the Communication Studies major. Overview of areas of study and key terms. Planning for fulfilling major requirements and choosing courses. Background on potential careers. Promotion of a learning community and resources for student success. Credit/No Credit grading only. 2 lectures.

### COMS 101. Public Speaking. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F,W,SP,SU  
2020-21 or later catalog: GE Area A1  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area A2

Introduction to the principles of oral communication and the tradition of public speaking in political and social life. Practical experience in the development, presentation, and critical analysis of speeches to inform and to persuade. Not open to students with credit in COMS 102. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 4 lectures. Crosslisted as COMS/HNRS 101. Fulfills GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

### COMS 102. Principles of Oral Communication. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
2020-21 or later catalog: GE Area A1  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area A2

Introduction to the fundamentals and principles which underlie effective oral communication. Practical experience in various types of speaking situations: informative speaking, persuasive speaking, and panel discussion. Not open to students with credit in COMS 101. 4 lectures. Crosslisted as COMS/HNRS 102. Fulfills GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

### COMS 126. Argument and Advocacy. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F  
2020-21 or later catalog: GE Area A3  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area A3  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A1 for student on the 2019-20 or an earlier catalog). Recommended: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for student on the 2019-20 or an earlier catalog).

The nature of critical thinking as applied in oral and written argument. Study of inductive and deductive reasoning. Analysis of reasoning, argument, forms of support and fallacies of argument and language. Instruction in and practical experience in crafting sound persuasive arguments and engaging in oral argumentation. Course may be offered in classroom-based or hybrid format. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Area A3 with a grade of C- or better.

### COMS 145. Reasoning, Argumentation, and Writing. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: W, SP  
2020-21 or later catalog: GE Area A3  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area A3  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A1 for student on the 2019-20 or an earlier catalog). Recommended: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for student on the 2019-20 or an earlier catalog).

The principles of reasoning in argumentation. Examination of rhetorical principles and responsible rhetorical behavior. Application of these principles to oral and written communications. Effective use of research methods and sources. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Area A3 with a grade of C- or better.

### COMS 201. Advanced Public Speaking. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Further consideration of the principles of public address. Advanced practice in manuscript, extemporaneous, and impromptu speaking. 4 lectures.

### COMS 205. Rhetorical Studies. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.  
Recommended: COMS 100.

Introduction to rhetorical theory from classical to contemporary works. Explores the role of rhetoric in shaping reality and motivating human action. Students consider the ethics and effects of rhetoric and apply theories to critically analyze everyday discourses. 4 lectures.

### COMS 206. Communication Theory. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Survey of human communication theories including interpersonal, small group, organizational, persuasion, nonverbal, intercultural, and media. Philosophical foundations for understanding communication from social science perspectives. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 4 lectures. Formerly COMS 311.

### COMS 208. Performance, Literature, and Culture. 4 units

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
2020-21 or later catalog: GE Area C1  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area C3  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Concepts and skills related to the performance of literature and performance as a theoretical and analytical method. Emphasis placed on understanding culture and the importance of diversity in human communication. Students develop and apply critical, analytical, performative, and communicative skills. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Area C1 (GE Area C3 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 211. Interpersonal Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
2019-20 or later catalog: GE Area E  
2017-19 or earlier catalog: GE Area D4  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Introduction to the interaction process in two-person (dyadic) communication settings. Emphasis on the functions of varying messages in the initiation, development, maintenance and termination of personal and professional relationships. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Area E (GE Area D4 for students on the 2017-19 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 213. Organizational Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A2 with a grade of C- or better.

Introduction to communication within the organization and between the organization and its environment. Effects of networks, superior/subordinate message patterns, team building, climate, message flow patterns and distortion on organizational effectiveness. 4 lectures.

**COMS 215. Media Studies. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W, SP  
Prerequisites: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.  
Recommended: COMS 100.

Foundational content on one of the largest sub-disciplines in the field of Communication Studies. Combines social scientific and critical cultural approaches. Topics include mass communication history, media's role within modern society, media effects, and media literacy. 4 lectures.

**COMS 217. Small Group Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Theories, principles and skills for small group communication and teamwork. Topics include creativity, failure, problem-solving, (dis)functional decision-making, group development, leadership, power, norms, conflict management, and group presentation. 4 lectures.

**COMS 226. Applied Argumentation. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Intermediate level course in the theory and practice of everyday argument. Select theories of argumentation, and practical experience arguing in a wide variety of contexts. 4 lectures.

**COMS 250. Forensic Activity. 2 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Introduction to competitive debate activities. Research, analysis, and debating about contemporary issues. Any student who wishes to receive academic credit for participation in such activities during the quarter should enroll. Total credit limited to 6 units. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 2 laboratories.

**COMS 270. Selected Topics. 1-4 units**

Term Typically Offered: TBD  
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed group study of selected topics. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1 to 4 lectures.

**COMS 301. Business and Professional Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W, SP  
Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Communication skills and functions for all levels of organizational employees. Interviewing, oral briefings, motivational and conference speaking. 4 lectures.

**COMS 308. Group Performance of Literature. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W  
2020-21 or later: Upper-Div GE Area C  
2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area C4  
Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; one course in GE Area B4 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and completion of GE Area C1 (GE Area C3 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

Examination and experience in the various modes of group performance of literature: Readers Theatre, Chamber Theatre, Story Theatre. Scripting; directing; performing and critiquing of group performance of literature. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division C (GE Area C4 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 312. Quantitative Research Methods in Communication Studies. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisites: Junior standing; COMS 206; STAT 217 or STAT 218; and Communication Studies major.

Exploration of communication research strategies and methodologies. Basic methods of designing quantitative research in communication studies. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 4 lectures.

**COMS 313. Qualitative Research Methods in Communication Studies. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP  
Prerequisites: Junior standing; COMS 206; STAT 217 or STAT 218; and Communication Studies major only.

Exploration of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and representation inherent to qualitative inquiry. Emphasis on the following approaches: case study, grounded theory, (auto)ethnography, phenomenology, focus groups, narrative, participatory action research. 4 lectures.

**COMS 316. Intercultural Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F,W,SP,SU

2020-21 or later: Upper-Div GE Area D

2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area D5

USCP

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; one course in GE Area B4 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and one lower-division course in GE Area D.

Cultural aspects of communication within and among diverse groups. Particular focus on U.S. culture and history and the diversity of ethnic, subcultural, and co-cultural groups. Development of nuanced understanding of the role of culture and communication in human thought, behavior, and interaction. Not open to students with credit in COMS 416. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division D (GE Area D5 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and USCP.

**COMS 317. Technology and Human Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Impact of technological change upon human communication. Past, present, and future technological developments that have affected how humans communicate. Emphasis on new communication technologies. 4 lectures.

**COMS 319. Critical Cultural Studies and Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Analysis and integration of theories and methods of Cultural Studies as an interdisciplinary mode of critical qualitative inquiry. Emphasis on the role of communication in differential power relations, particularly on issues of identity, struggle, and representation in a diverse culture. 4 lectures.

**COMS 320. Intergroup Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F,W,SP,SU

2020-21 or later: Upper-Div GE Area D

2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area D5

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; one course in GE Area B4 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and one lower-division course in GE Area D.

Theoretical and practical communication issues regarding socially constructed aspects of identity; concentrating on gender, race, sexuality, social class, ability, age, and language through the lens of social constructionism. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division D (GE Area D5 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 322. Persuasion. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of a C- or better.

Theory of persuasion with particular emphasis upon social psychological principles of influence. Analysis of various forms of persuasion, social influence and propaganda. 4 lectures.

**COMS 330. Classical Rhetorical Theory. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of a C- or better.

Early development of rhetorical theory in Greco-Roman civilization. Analysis of the canons of rhetoric. Rhetorical thought of Sophists, Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian. 4 lectures.

**COMS 331. Contemporary Rhetorical Theory. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Rhetoric's role in contemporary culture. Issues: political advocacy; science, technology and mass persuasion; ethics and rhetoric. Representative theorists: Burke, Weaver, Richards, Toulmin and McLuhan. 4 lectures.

**COMS 332. Rhetorical Criticism. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisites: Junior standing; and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better. Recommended: COMS 205 and COMS 330.

Theory and method used in the analysis and evaluation of rhetorical discourse. Study of critical essays. Practice in interpreting and evaluating persuasive discourse. 4 lectures.

**COMS 350. Advanced Forensic Activity. 2 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: COMS 250.

Advanced development of argumentation and debate skills. Focus on preparation and presentation of intramural exhibition debates. Optional participation in intercollegiate debates. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 2 laboratories.

**COMS 351. Speech and Debate Team. 2 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. Recommended: Previous competitive debate experience. Completion of GE Area A1 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area A2 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and completion of GE Area A3 with a grade of C- or better; and COMS 250.

Advanced participation in competitive intercollegiate speech activities. Intercollegiate tournament competition, judging speech competition and other communication-related public service on campus and in the community. Field trip may be required. Total credit limited to 8 units. Course offered in hybrid format with classroom-based and online learning. 2 laboratories. Crosslisted as COMS/HNRS 351.

**COMS 384. Media Effects. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W, SP, SU

2020-21 or later: Upper-Div GE Area D

2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area D5

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; one course in GE Area B4 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and one lower-division course in GE Area D. Recommended: COMS 206 and COMS 215.

Effects of media on individuals and society. Influence of mass media message producers and content on perceptions of social norms, violence, sexuality, gender, race, and ethnicity. Empirical approaches in media studies and literacy development. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division D (GE Area D5 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 385. Media Criticism. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better. Recommended: COMS 205 and COMS 215.

Theory and method used in analyzing media from critical, rhetorical, and cultural perspectives. Practice in interpreting and evaluating news, advertising, prime-time television, the Internet, and other mass-mediated texts, with special attention to relationships among media, identity, and political action. 4 lectures.

**COMS 386. Communication, Media, and Politics. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

2020-21 or later: Upper-Div GE Area D

2019-20 or earlier catalog: GE Area D5

Prerequisite: Junior standing; completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; one course in GE Area B4 with a grade of C- or better (GE Area B1 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs); and one lower-division course in GE Area D. Recommended: COMS 218 or POLS 112.

Political communication and the U.S. mass media system, including role of the media in democratic society; news norms, government regulation of media, and media ownership; the changing media landscape and implications for news construction, polarization, and selective exposure; and incivility and bias. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE Upper-Division D (GE Area D5 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs).

**COMS 387. Sports Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, SP

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Examination of the interrelationship between sports and community including participant, sports organization, sports media, and sports fan. Explores how these interrelationships reinforce social values, challenge social norms, and social identities relevant to sports and cultural values. 4 lectures. Crosslisted as COMS/JOUR 387.

**COMS 390. Environmental Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Sustainability Focused

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better. Recommended: Completion of GE Area B1 (GE Area B3 for students on the 2019-20 or earlier catalogs) or GE Area B2.

Recent developments in the field of environmental communication, including how and with what effect environmental messages are transmitted among scientists, policymakers, and the public. Critical/rhetorical and mediated perspectives that inform contemporary understandings of the human-nature relationship are addressed. 4 lectures.

**COMS 395. Science Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Sustainability Related

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better and completion of one GE Area B course.

Examination of science communication in a variety of contexts. Issues covered may include: scientific journal articles, boundary-work, information deficit models, public understanding/awareness of science, accommodated science, mediated science, popular science. 4 lectures. Crosslisted as COMS/ISLA 395.

**COMS 400. Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates. 1-2 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor and junior standing.

Individual investigation, research, studies, or surveys of selected problems. Total credit limited to 4 units.

**COMS 404. Video Games & Society. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisites: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Influence of video games on individuals and society. Emphasis on why people play video games, how games influence players, and broader cultural impacts of gaming. Examines franchises, characters, gamers, avatars, gamification, and digital interactions. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 4 lectures.

**COMS 413. Advanced Organizational Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W

Prerequisite: Junior standing. Recommended: COMS 213 or COMS 301.

Describing and measuring the organization's human message system. Planning and implementing communication training and development for the organization. New functions, careers and opportunities for the communication professional. 4 lectures.

**COMS 418. Health Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Communication in health contexts. Topics include interpersonal communication (e.g., health professional/patient), group and organizational communication (e.g., health-related groups), and mass communication (e.g., persuasive health campaigns). Open to all majors and valuable to laypersons who are consumers of health care, and pre-health professionals. 4 lectures.

**COMS 420. Nonverbal Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Influence of kinesic, proxemic, artifactual, olfactory, paralinguistic and environmental factors in human communication. Theory, research and practice in nonverbal communication. 4 lectures.

**COMS 421. Gender and Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Explores the theory and practice of how gender is created, maintained, and transformed through communication; examines how gender roles are enacted and interpreted in various public and private contexts. 4 lectures.

**COMS 422. Rhetorics of Science, Technology, and Medicine. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Examination of rhetorical strategies and persuasive techniques used within scientific, technical, and medical discourses. Topics include genre features of scientific articles, rhetorical topoi in scientific discourse, pop-culture depictions of science, the scientific ethos, and risk communication. 4 lectures.

**COMS 428. Family Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: W

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; and COMS/PSY 212.

Communication theory and practice within family structures. Examination of relationship communication in marital/partnership, parent/child, intergenerational, and sibling relationships. Topics include family communication regarding identity, attachment, conflict, relational dialectics, storytelling/narratives, family transitions, cultural influences, and family support. 4 lectures.

**COMS 430. The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: SP

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better; and COMS 211.

In-depth exploration of concepts, theories, and research associated with interpersonal communication traditionally considered negative and destructive (e.g., jealousy, infidelity, stalking, gossip, revenge, bullying) to understand the potentially (dys)functional aspects of interpersonal communication behaviors and processes. Course may be offered in classroom-based or online format. 4 lectures.

**COMS 435. American Political Rhetoric. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W

Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Role of oratory in American political and social history since Lincoln. Historical and rhetorical analyses of important political speeches delivered by presidents, activists, demagogues, and leaders of social movements. 4 lectures.

**COMS 450. Internship: Communication Studies. 2-4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

CR/NC

Prerequisite: Junior standing, 2.5 GPA, and consent of instructor.

Supervised practicum and application of principles and theories of communication in organizational settings. Total credit limited to 8 units. Credit/No Credit grading only.

**COMS 458. Solving Big World Challenges. 4 units**

Term Typically Offered: F

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Apply human-centered design practices to address a social or an environmental challenge, specific to a local community. Achieve revenue-generating social impact through innovative business models. Practice team competencies including problem-solving, interviewing, brainstorming, prototyping, and written, visual, and oral communication. 4 lectures. Crosslisted as BUS/COMS 458.

**COMS 460. Undergraduate Seminar. 1 unit**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

CR/NC

Prerequisite: Junior standing; COMS 312 or COMS 313; COMS 332 or COMS 385; and Communication Studies major.

Preparation and design for senior project; exploration of scholarship related to project ideas. Credit/No Credit grading only. Course may be offered in classroom-based, online, or hybrid format. 1 seminar.

**COMS 461. Senior Project. 3 units**

Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP

Prerequisite: COMS 460; for COMS majors only.

Completion of approved project under faculty supervision. Project results are presented in a formal written report. Minimum 90 hours total time.

**COMS 470. Selected Advanced Topics. 1-4 units**

Term Typically Offered: TBD

Prerequisite: Junior standing and completion of GE Area A with grades of C- or better.

Directed group study of selected topics for advanced students. Open to undergraduate and graduate students. The Class Schedule will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1 to 4 lectures.

**COMS 485. Cooperative Education Experience. 6 units**

Term Typically Offered: SU

CR/NC

Prerequisite: 2.5 GPA and consent of instructor.

Part-time work experience in business, industry, government, and other areas of student career interest. Positions are paid and usually require relocation and registration in course for two consecutive quarters. Formal report and evaluation by work supervisor required. Major credit limited to 4 units; total credit limited to 12 units. Credit/No Credit grading only.