MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION
Master of Arts in Communication

The 10 course, 30-credit-hour Master of Arts in Communication integrates communication principles and applied experiences that prepare students for communication professions or for doctoral education. Western’s program is distinguished by:

- Nationally-recognized faculty who teach all master’s level courses
- Student placement in top communication careers post-graduation at regional, national and international organizations
- Faculty and graduate student collaboration in leading-edge research relevant to academic and practitioner careers
- Experiences that result in career advancement; earnings increase 18% from the bachelor’s level to the master’s level
- Courses that fit your schedule; all classes offered after 6 p.m., in hybrid format (in-person and online)

For more information on the WMU School of Communication Master of Arts in Communication Program SCAN the code here or visit: wmich.edu/communication/academics/graduate

SAMPLE PROGRAM TRACK
A 30-Credit-Hour Program

**FOUNDATIONS** (Required) 9 credit hours

- COM 6010 - Introduction to Communication Theory and Research (3 credit hours)
- COM 6020 - Quantitative Communication Research (3 credit hours)
- COM 6050 - Qualitative Communication Research (3 credit hours)

**ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENT PATHWAY**
15 credits (sample courses)

- COM 6450 - Mass Communication (3 credit hours)
- COM 6740 - Interpersonal Communication (3 credit hours)
- COM 6820 - Organizational Communication (3 credit hours)

**PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT PATHWAY**
18 credits (sample courses)

- COM 6830 – Power and Leadership (3 credit hours)
- COM 6730 - Conflict Management (3 credit hours)
- COM 6810 - Group Communication Processes (3 credit hours)

**ELECTIVES** (Can be applied to either pathway)

- COM 6400 - Seminar in Mass Communication (3 credit hours)
- COM 6700 - Seminar in Interpersonal Communication (3 credit hours)
- COM 6800 - Seminar in Organizational Communication (3 credit hours)
- COM 7100 - Independent Research (2 to 6 credit hours)
- COM 7120 - Professional Field Experience (2 to 6 credit hours)

**CAPSTONE OPTIONS**

- COM 7000 - Master’s Thesis (1 - 6 credit hours, 6 credit hours needed to complete thesis)
- COM 7150 - Professional Project (3 credit hours)
- Comprehensive Exams (0 credit hours)
Focus Areas

Students will engage in an integrative degree spanning human and mass communication. The degree adds value to students’ career advancement through:

• Leading teams and facilitating group discussions successfully
• Managing relationships effectively (i.e., conflict, feedback, motivation)
• Developing expertise in communication skills and knowledge for personal fulfillment and professional development
• Networking with communication professionals

Funding

Our graduate assistantships provide a competitive stipend plus a tuition waiver of nine credits per semester (18 credits per academic year). Working closely with faculty mentors, graduate students gain extensive teaching experience, including being responsible for their own sections of introductory courses. The annual funding consideration deadline is February 1.

Admission

Domestic

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, allowing students to begin coursework during the fall, spring and summer semesters.

Applications for graduate assistantships are due on February 1.

International

Fall: April 1
Spring: Aug. 1
Summer: Jan. 15

Estimated Time-to-degree Completion*

• Full time students (2-3 courses per semester, may also include summer sessions) – 2 years
• Part-time students (1-2 courses per semester, may also include summer sessions) – 2 ½ years

* reduced if students enroll in summer session

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Potential Careers

- Human resources director
- Communication director
- Community college professor
- Training and development professional
- Social media manager
- Talent acquisitions representative
- Non-profit communication manager
- Customer experience lead
- Academic advisor
- Public relations manager

According to Glassdoor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics

Immediate Impact

From 2017-18 to 2020-21, WMU’s post-graduation activity reports show that 94 percent of communication graduate degree recipients were actively engaged in full-time, communication-related employment or continuing education.

Employed full time: 81%
Continuing education: 13%
Seeking employment: 6%

Based on WMU Career Services Guides from 2017-2021

Contact

School of Communication Undergraduate Advising
com-advising@wmich.edu

Dr. Julie Apker
Director of Graduate Studies
com-grad@wmich.edu

School of Communication
wmich.edu/communication/academics/graduate/

College of Arts and Sciences
wmich.edu/arts-sciences
(269) 387-4366
COM 5060 – Special Topics in Global Communication
3 credit hours
Study of international communication such as transnational media corporations and communication and development communication. May be repeated for credit under different topics.

COM 5600 – Instructional Communication Best Practices
3 credit hours
Students will learn best practices of instruction that span disciplines and extend to professions outside higher education.

COM 6010 - Introduction to Communication Theory and Research
3 credit hours
Students will explore paradigms, theories, methodologies and approaches to communication research.

COM 6020 - Quantitative Communication Research
3 credit hours
Students will examine varied social science methodologies including evaluation, experimental and survey research designs, and statistical analysis.

COM 6050 - Qualitative Communication Research
3 credit hours
Students will participate in specific qualitative techniques (e.g. observations, interviewing, focus groups) and will learn qualitative analysis.

COM 6400 - Seminar in Mass Communication
3 credit hours
Special topics may include: social movements, media criticism, mass communication technology, and cultural diversity and the media. This course may be repeated for credit under different topics.

COM 6450 - Mass Communication
3 credit hours
Students will survey a range of mass communication theories that address media production, analysis and reception.

COM 6700 - Seminar in Interpersonal Communication
3 credit hours
Special topics may include: interpersonal and mediated communication, intercultural communication. This course may be repeated for credit under different topics.

COM 6730 - Conflict Management
3 credit hours
This course explores theories and strategies of productive and nonproductive interpersonal conflict within organizations.

COM 6740 - Interpersonal Communication
3 credit hours
Students will apply theory to interpersonal settings and will critique the contributions and limitations of various theoretical approaches.

COM 6800 - Seminar in Organizational Communication
3 credit hours
Special topics may include corporate advocacy, public relations, training and development, and strategic communication. This course may be repeated for credit under different topics.

COM 6810 - Group Communication Processes
3 credit hours
Students will learn how groups work and are made more effective through leader facilitation. They will gain experience in problem-solving and decision-making methods.

COM 6820 - Organizational Communication
3 credit hours
This course examines organizational communication perspectives, theories and processes applying knowledge to organizational experiences.

COM 6830 - Power and Leadership
3 credit hours
Students will explore topics including: traditional and contemporary leadership styles and competencies, culture and power. Emphasis on applying leadership research in for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

COM 7000 - Master's Thesis
1-6 credit hours
A research activity in which students propose and test new ideas, replicate a study or advance theoretical understanding. Students demonstrate scholarly abilities and show competence in methodology and analysis.

COM 7100 - Independent Research
2-6 credit hours
Independent research can take a variety of forms and consider varied topics, theories and concepts of a student’s choosing. Students work with faculty mentors/supervisors to develop and implement the project selected.

COM 7120 - Professional Field Experience
2-6 credit hours
Designed for graduate students nearing completion of their degree who wish to pursue internships or other professional experiences that relate to their career goals.

COM 7150 - Professional Project
3 credit hours
Students demonstrate mastery through an applied communication project. The project may take forms such as workshops, case studies, training guides or other options within a chosen area of study.