

Communication

Department of Communication, College of Fine Arts and Communication



Program of Study

The communication major provides students with a better understanding of human communication processes, including how communication has been conceptualized, investigated and how members of the communication discipline have used their knowledge and scholarship to effect change in their personal and professional lives. Students are given opportunities to study how effective communication enhances well-being and relationships, promotes civic engagement and allows for effective participation in a global community.

Courses focus on understanding and identifying organizing principles and patterns of social life through the observation and analysis of human communication behavior. This major is firmly grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and is intended to prepare students to be effective members of society, as well as valued employees in whatever careers they may choose to pursue. Graduates have often found positions in occupations such as sales, human resources, training, education and consulting, or have pursued advanced academic or professional degrees in fields such as law, management and marketing.

Communication majors will complete 42 semester hours (SH) in communication coursework. In addition to completing required core courses, students will choose to focus on one of three options: communication studies, interpersonal communication and processes, or social influence. Communication majors are able to select minors that complement their major areas of study and their career goals. Communication majors earn a Bachelor of Arts in Communication upon successful completion of the program.

Western's ample class options and helpful faculty are what I credit for my success with my communication degree after graduation. From understanding the statistics behind our employee survey to scripting internal and external communication pieces, to thinking critically during meetings—my communication degree is something I utilize every day while working in the "not so normal" culture department at Southwest Airlines. The options you have with a communication degree are limitless; and the communication faculty at Western will both encourage and challenge you to do your very best through your journey at Western and beyond. —Allison Osborne, BA 2010, Communication Specialist, Culture Programs and Administration, Southwest Airlines

Internship Opportunities

As a communication major, students can participate in an internship for up to 12 SH of credit. Internships may be arranged with cooperating public or private organizations and can provide you with valuable job experience. Eligible students must have a 2.25 overall GPA, a 2.5 GPA in the communication major and obtain approval from the department's internship coordinator. Communication students have completed internships at Walt Disney World, Caterpillar, Six Flags, Enterprise Car Rental, Target, Inc. and more.

Academic Advising

Communication majors are advised by a full-time department academic advisor. Advisors will help plan a course of study and will advise students each semester. Transfer students from community and other four-year colleges and universities will work with the academic advisor to ensure all requirements are completed.

Honors College

To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15 percent of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class. A comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 SH or more. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors or contact the honors program director in the Department of Communication.

Special Opportunities

Lambda Pi Eta – LPE is a national communication honor society. LPE membership is by invitation only to students who meet honors requirements. LPE recognizes and rewards outstanding scholastic achievement in communication studies, as well as promotes and encourages interest in the field of communication. LPE further encourages professional development among communication majors.

Communication Student Society – CSS is open to all communication majors and minors. CSS gives students the opportunity to make connections with faculty and fellow students outside the classroom. It also sponsors social events, job and career preparation programs, and other events throughout the year.

Career Opportunities

The communication major provides excellent preparation for such diverse careers as sales, advertising, management, public relations, personnel, human services, education, training and a host of other careers that require effective communication skills and/or a working knowledge of communication processes.

Students are encouraged to contact Western's Career Development Center for assistance with résumé preparation, interviewing and job search techniques. Seniors are advised to register and establish their credential file with the office in order to take advantage of job referral and on-campus interviewing opportunities.

Starting my degree, I thought being a communication major was all about public speaking. Boy, was I wrong! My education in communication has given me the skills necessary to communicate with others, be organized and persuasive and offer solutions. Based on these skills from Western, I will have a successful career. –Kylie J. Wilson, undergraduate communication major, 2014



Scholarships

Each year a number of communication majors and an honors student receive the Wayne Thompson Scholar Award. An Undergraduate Research Scholarship rewards excellence in undergraduate research in the field of communication. More information is available from the Department of Communication.

Graduate Study

The Department of Communication offers a graduate program (MA) in communication on the Macomb campus for students interested in continuing their education beyond the bachelor's degree. Financial assistance may be available through either graduate or teaching assistantships for eligible students. More information is available from the graduate coordinator (wiu.edu/comm/graduate).

For More Information

For more details about the WIU Department of Communication, contact the department chair, Memorial Hall 302, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455; (309) 298-1507; or visit wiu.edu/comm.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available on Mondays and Fridays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and individual appointments can be made on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Campus tours are conducted at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments with advisors, faculty or a financial aid advisor may be arranged separately during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10 a.m., and a campus tour is conducted at 11 a.m. Schedule a visit or tour online at wiu.edu/admissions by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU (742-5948) or (309) 298-3157, or by emailing admissions@wiu.edu.

wiu.edu/comm

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Memorial Hall 302 • Western Illinois University
1 University Circle • Macomb, IL 61455-1390
Phone: (309) 298-1507



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