The Master of Arts degree in Communication emphasizes both theoretical and applied knowledge. The general communication program offers students higher levels of knowledge, skills, theory, research, and practical experience in the communication discipline. Students often participate in seminars and work one-on-one with faculty members.

Graduates of the program pursue professional careers in a broad range of business and educational organizations, or they continue their graduate education beyond the master’s level.

Program Location: Macomb

Admission Requirements
Students must have a 2.75 cumulative GPA or a 3.0 GPA in their last two academic years in order to be considered for regular admission to the graduate program in Communication. Those students not holding at least an undergraduate minor in Communication or those deficient in undergraduate courses, skills, or advanced theoretical knowledge may be asked, upon evaluation of their transcripts, to make up their deficiencies prior to obtaining full graduate standing.

If and when deficiencies exist in the applicant’s undergraduate curriculum, specific undergraduate courses will be assigned until the candidate has demonstrated a sufficient level of competence in the designated areas of concern. Deficiency courses do not apply toward graduate credit. Each applicant will be evaluated on an individual basis, so the nature and the number of courses to be made up (if any) will vary from student to student.

International students must have an overall TOEFL score of at least 237 (580 paper score). The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required for regular admission to the Communication graduate program.

Students entering the Communication program must enroll during either the fall or spring semester.

Degree Requirements
The Master of Arts (MA) degree in Communication requires a minimum of 33 to 34 semester hours (sh) of coursework made up of directed electives and the following core courses: Communication Theory, Empirical Research in Human Communication, and Message Production. Graduates can choose one of three exit options: (1) thesis, (2) creative project, or (3) research paper.

Degree Advantages
Why seek an MA degree in Communication? A Master’s degree in Communication provides advantages that extend beyond what the student learned during his or her undergraduate work. The MA degree program emphasizes both theoretical and applied knowledge.

The advantages include the following:
- Higher levels of knowledge, skills, theory, research, and practical experience in the communication discipline
- Practical leadership skills
- The possibility of gaining teaching experience as a graduate teaching assistant
- The possibility of increasing your research skills and practical experiences as a graduate assistant
- Advanced knowledge and expertise in your chosen area of study

Graduate Assistantships
Graduate assistantships are merit-based academic award programs, which provide work opportunities in a job closely related to an academic interest in communication. As full-time graduate assistants, students will be required to work up to 20 hours per week or teach 5 to 6 sh per semester, for which they will receive a monthly stipend and tuition waiver. Assistantship applications received prior to March 15 may be given priority consideration. The MA in Communication degree program has assistantships from among the following categories: Graduate Assistant, Research Assistant, and Teaching Assistant. All categories of assistantships may not be available each year.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.

Faculty Expertise
Faculty engage in research, serve in professional organizations at the state, national, and international levels; present at professional meetings; and publish in scholarly journals and serve as editorial consultants for those journals.
“This is knowledge that I utilize in every aspect of my life, whether it be relationships at home, interactions with my students and colleagues, or connections in the community. Through the guidance of dedicated WIU faculty, I was challenged to move beyond the role of spectator and into making meaningful contributions to the field, enriching my own life and providing opportunities to enhance the lives of others.”

— Christina Farwell, MA, 2011
Instructor, John Wood Community College

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**Professors**
Peter F. Jorgensen, PhD, University of Arizona**
Lisa A. Miczo, PhD, University of Arizona**
Nathan Miczo, PhD, University of Arizona**

**Associate Professors**
Mary Hogg, PhD, University of Iowa*
M. Ilon Lauer, PhD, University of Georgia **
Bree McEwan, PhD, Arizona State University **
John Miller, PhD, Wayne State University **

**Assistant Professors**
Josh Averbeck, PhD, University of Oklahoma**
Chris Carpenter, PhD, Michigan State University**
Rahul Rastogi, ABD, Purdue University*
L. Brendan Young, PhD, University of Iowa*

*Associate member of the graduate faculty
**Full member of the graduate faculty

**Distinctive Features**
The MA degree program in Communication at Western is large enough to be of recognized quality and rigor but small enough to provide you with individualized attention. The Department of Communication graduate faculty members are noted for their teaching effectiveness as well as their significant scholarly and professional activities.

The advantages of Western’s MA degree in Communication include small classes; working closely with faculty; the opportunity for graduate assistantship funding; increased job options; preparation for doctoral studies; and the choice of a thesis, creative project, or research paper option to complete the MA degree.

**Featured Alum**
Communication is a fundamental part of everyday life. Every person, in every job, in every facet of life has to be able to communicate. Obtaining valuable skills from WIU has helped me to understand the world, and all of us who live in it, a little better. The faculty made the material relevant, useful, and part of who I am today.

— Stacey M. Macchi, BA, 2001, MA, 2003,
Alumna and College Instructor

**Contact Information**
For admissions process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact Dr. Josh Averbeck, Graduate Coordinator, Department of Communication, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1059, JM-Averbeck@wiu.edu.