Theory and research in communication have the potential to improve nearly every element of human life. Scholars in communication studies investigate communication processes as they occur among individuals, groups, organizations and societies.

Graduates of the master of arts in communication studies program at Texas State University pursue careers applying communication research in profit, nonprofit and governmental organizations; teach at the community college and university levels; and pursue doctoral education.

The program offers a comprehensive degree incorporating empirical and rhetorical research methods. Students also may customize their programs by concentrating on specialized areas. The program receives consistently high rankings in surveys of master’s programs in communication studies.

Enrollment in most graduate courses is limited to 18 students. This seminar format allows students to receive individual attention and to explore research programs unique to their own interests. Most classes are offered in the evenings to accommodate working students.
Course Work

Students may pursue a 36-hour master of arts degree culminating in comprehensive exams or a 30-hour degree that includes a thesis. After completion of two required communication research methods courses, students can design their own customized programs from one or more of the following program areas:

Students with a focus on organizational communication investigate the structure, function, and process of communication in organizations in order to enhance organizational effectiveness. Key courses include Organizational Communication, Negotiation, and Advanced Organizational Communication Analysis and Development.

Students with a focus on rhetorical studies investigate the power of symbols to shape perceptions and alter attitudes. Courses in this area offer a broad overview of rhetorical theory and rhetorical methods, and they allow students to focus on rhetoric in specific contexts including Political Communication, Organizational Rhetoric, and Media Criticism.

Students with a focus on communication training and development explore the knowledge and skills needed to enhance communication performance. Courses in this area include Communication, Training and Development, Organizational Communication, and Advanced Organizational Communication. A certificate in corporate communication and training is also available to students who complete a prescribed nine-hour curriculum.

Students with a focus on interpersonal communication investigate the role of communication in the development and maintenance of human relationships. Courses in this area include Interpersonal Communication as well as courses that allow students to study interpersonal communication in a variety of specific contexts. Key courses include Relational Communication, Family Communication, Nonverbal Communication, and Gender Communication.

Students with a focus on instructional communication find a broad array of courses that prepare them for a career in teaching. Courses in this area include Instructional Communication and Communication Assessment. Students are also encouraged to take courses related to communication curricula typically found in community colleges, such as interpersonal communication, small group communication, public speaking, and communication fundamentals. In addition, students may select courses offered by Texas State’s College of Education.

Students who focus on health communication investigate the essential role of communication in healthcare through a variety of courses that may include: Health Communication, Critical Health Rhetoric, Communication in Health Organizations, and Relational Health Communication. Course work in health communication explores topics such as barriers to patient and provider interactions, health communication leadership, health disparities, healthcare training and assessment, health in relationships, and healthcare team effectiveness.

Admission Policy

Admission to the communication studies graduate program is selective. Applicants must have earned a minimum GPA of 3.2 during the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work leading up to the bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Each applicant must submit the following to The Graduate College:

- the online Texas State Graduate College application through ApplyTexas
- application fee
- one official transcript from each college or university attended
- statement of purpose (500-700 words) that addresses the following:
  1. Which area(s) of communication studies are you most interested in pursuing and why?
  2. Why did you select the M.A. in communication studies at Texas State?
  3. How does your academic background prepare you for graduate study in the Department of Communication Studies at Texas State?
  4. What are your plans after completing the M.A. degree, and how do you plan to apply your degree?
- three letters of recommendation

The department does not require the Graduate Record Exam for admission to our program, and the Admission Committee seldom considers the exam scores. However, an applicant’s scores may be useful additional support for admission if some other factors are not as strong and if the applicant desires to apply to other programs after their M.A.

The essay will be evaluated on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate correct composition, grammar and writing style; provide a complete and well-developed response; and explain and justify her or his answers.

Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply for access to an online application, where to submit application documents and additional details. The application deadline for summer and fall admission is May 15 and for spring admission November 15. Priority is given to applicants who apply by March 1 for summer and fall admission and October 15 for spring admission. If admitted, consult the department’s graduate advisor as soon as possible about advising and available courses.

Financial Assistance

Graduate assistantships that include highly competitive stipends and allow nonresidents to pay resident tuition rates are available to qualified applicants. Assistantship responsibilities include teaching communication fundamentals, working in the communication lab or serving as assistant director of forensics. Applications are available from the department website at www.finearts.txstate.edu/commstudies. A résumé and three letters of recommendation must accompany each application.

For more information about scholarships, financial aid and application deadlines, visit The Graduate College website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on Financing Your Graduate Education. Please note that program admission priority deadlines must be met in order to be considered for scholarships, fellowships and assistantships.

Contact

Graduate Director
Department of Communication Studies
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666-4684
Phone: 512.245.2165
Fax: 512.245.3138
E-mail: commgraduate@txstate.edu