



Communication Studies

Communication Studies is built upon one of the pillars of the humanities: rhetoric—or the art of persuasion. Since antiquity, Western culture has valorized eloquence—*ars eloquentiae*—as the essence of an excellent education and evidence of superior critical judgment. This classical foundation supports a Communication Studies curriculum rich in choice and direction, enabling students to cultivate a full range of communication skills.

THE PROGRAM

The mission of the Communication Studies Department at Gonzaga University is to cultivate a sophisticated understanding of the process of communication as symbolic action. The department provides a theoretically-grounded and experiential education that prepares students to analyze, produce, deliver, and critique human communication in its many forms. The department prepares students with rhetorical skills, a refined sense of judgment and discernment, and the ability to carefully adapt communication practices to any given context and audience.

The power of communication is inescapable; it affects us everywhere and is central to all aspects of our daily, social interactions. However, because people communicate all day every day, many people often underestimate and misunderstand the complexity of communication processes. The Communication Studies department teaches students to embrace communication as the central means of creating, maintaining, and transforming social realities. Communication Studies equips students to carefully analyze the way people co-create social realities and cultures through communication and to discern how these social realities affect our communities, for better or worse. Majors and minors gain experience analyzing and proposing solutions to complex problems confronting the human condition because a deep understanding of communication creates limitless possibilities to improve the world.

Research also shows that the most successful people in any profession are exceptional communicators. Communication Studies classes help students develop the skills employers demand such as the ability to work effectively in team settings, analyze information necessary to make decisions and solve complex problems, communicate with people inside and outside an organization, and influence others. We prepare students for a broad range of careers spanning advertising, marketing, public relations, government, non-profit organizations, and other

leadership positions. Our graduates also pursue advanced graduate studies in media research, law, business, education, medicine, cultural studies, and other humanities and social sciences. Communication Studies is also home to the University's nationally renowned intercollegiate debate program, which has its own facility, Conway House.

In short, Communication Studies provides students with a critical understanding of the reasons why people think, feel, and act in particular ways; the leadership know-how necessary to make a difference in the world; and the skills that employers seek.

CURRICULUM

The Communication Studies Department offers a **major** (36 credits) and a **minor** (21 credits) in Communication Studies. Both majors and minors are required to take the following three courses:

COMM 184 - Communication, Culture, & Society
COMM 264 - History of Rhetoric
COMM 280 - Communication Theory

Communication Studies majors are required to take nine upper-division courses, whereas minors take five. Examples of upper-division Communication Studies courses include:

- Communication Research Methods
- Organizational Communication
- Advanced Public Speaking
- Intercultural & International Communication
- Persuasion
- Interpersonal & Small Group Communication
- Media, Technology, & Society
- Communication Training & Consulting
- Media Criticism
- Communication & Leadership

OUTCOMES

Communication Studies is the major of the future: it bridges multiple fields while preparing students for many different career paths, such as law, business, teaching, government, public service, and non-profit administration. In recent years, students have used the conceptual and practical skills from their Communication Studies degree to secure internships and jobs with a variety of companies and organizations across the country.

Recent examples include:

- The Boeing Company
- Make-A-Wish Foundation
- Nordstrom
- Shriners International
- Special Olympics
- Target
- Teach For America
- United Way
- The Walt Disney Company

Communication Studies courses also prepare students for a range of graduate studies in communication areas that span media research, critical and cultural studies, journalism, filmmaking, and other creative arts. Recent graduates have also landed scholarships for graduate study in other disciplines, including law, fashion merchandizing, and public health. Recent graduates have been accepted to a number of excellent graduate programs, including:

- Boston University
- Gonzaga University
- Johns Hopkins University
- University of Utah
- University of Washington
- Washington State University

FACULTY CONTACTS & SPECIALTIES

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