

College of Arts and Science

Department of Communication

Did you ever wonder why some candidates are more credible than others? Some speeches more moving? Some people are effective leaders? It's the power of communication — language, tone of voice, gestures and other subtleties. MU students learn to apply the scientific study of communication to many everyday career and personal situations.

Our Strengths

Both the National Commission on Higher Education Issues and the University of Missouri General Education Architecture cite oral communication as one of the primary attributes human resource directors, recruiters and hiring officers seek in new employees.

Much more than a question of correct grammar and spelling, communication skills determine the content and style of the message; they are skills that can be applied in everyone's professional and personal lives.

One of the strengths of the Department of Communication is its focus on communication literacy. This includes the production and critical analysis of messages in a wide range of personal and societal contexts. In less academic language, it gets students in the habit of thinking:

What effect do I want to have on this person or that group of people? On my professor? My client? My patient? My boyfriend? These are all different questions, all having different answers and different choices. Students learn to use language deliberately and carefully, not casually. They learn to critically think about how others communicate as well.

All faculty members are active scholars and teachers whose contributions to research are complemented by what they do in the classroom. All teach undergraduate courses, so students are exposed to some of the most outstanding professors on the campus. In recent years, five have won prestigious awards for their excellence in teaching and advising both undergraduate and graduate students, including three William T. Kemper Fellowships for Teaching Excellence, a Provost Out-

standing Junior Faculty Award, and a Blue Chalk Award for excellence in undergraduate advising.

Teaching and Learning

In a discipline requiring so much communication, professors quickly get to know their students by name, and they are readily accessible to answer questions in a discipline where there are few right or wrong answers, but instead gradations of effective writing and speaking.

As part of the College of Arts and Science emphasis on involving students in research, teaching and service, communication majors undertake a capstone project that provides service to the community.

Students have prepared promotional material for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Ronald McDonald House, the American Diabetes Association, and Missouri's Department of Health and Human Services.

Students majoring in communication get opportunities to work directly with professors on research projects. A recent student, for example, worked with a faculty member on a study of college students' television-viewing habits and preferences. The student presented a competitively selected paper at the annual conference of the Speech Communication Association.

Majoring in Communication

The department offers a bachelor of arts degree. Many students emphasize areas of interest by selecting courses related to specialties such as *Media and Political Communication*, *Organizational Communication* and *Interpersonal Communication*.

All courses blend skill development with rigorous intellectual content. A good example is *Communication 3636 Contem-*

porary Issues in Telecommunications, which examines the impact on society of rapidly changing electronic technologies and messages.

Admission to the department is by application, and students may apply during the fall or winter semester. Late applications are not accepted.

To be considered, a student must:

- have completed 45 hours of course work.
- have at least a 2.5 grade point average.
- have taken and completed a communication course at MU with a grade of B- or better.
- submit a brief essay on why the student wants to be a communication major

Many other departments require students take *Communication 1200 Introduction to Public Speaking* because the course gives students experience in public speaking, while teaching skills in listening and evaluating the messages of others.

Degree Requirements

Bachelor of Arts (120 hours)

Students majoring in the Department of Communication are required to complete at least 30 hours of course work in the department, but not more than 40 hours. They must also satisfy foundation and general education requirements.

Required courses:

Communication 1200 Public Speaking

Communication 2500 Media, Introduction to Communication

Communication 3100 Controversies in Communication

Communication 4974 Capstone Course

Students select coursework from three focus areas:

- Practice and Application of Communication, including courses such as:

Argument and Advocacy

Media Writing

Relational Communication

Business and Professional Speaking

- Theory and Analysis of Communication, including courses such as:

Political Communication

Theory and Research in Persuasion

- Organizational Communication, including courses such as:

Culture and Communication

Gender, Language and Communication

Advising

A professional adviser counsels program applicants and helps majors plan their schedules. Students can always go directly to faculty members for help.

Pre-communication majors are advised by professional advisers in the Student Success Center.

The Career Center is an important source of information on all fields, and students are encouraged to take advantage of its resources early and often. The department itself organizes Career Days, and an alumnus started the Leaders Lecture Series for the department.

Internships

Majors can find out about internships through the department, or they may get approval to find them on their own. Many intern with local businesses and service agencies, and in the process learn to network and to explore career options while earning course credit.

A recent graduate was instrumental in helping Big Brothers/Big Sisters reorganize its fundraising campaign. Another went from an internship with Boone Electric to a position writing promotional materials for a military school to her present position with the Fox Television affiliate in Boca Raton, Fla. One student interned with the MU athletic depart-

ment and turned the experience into full-time employment. Another interned with ESPN in New York, and a classmate of hers interned on the Sally Jesse Raphael program.

Because employers value what communication majors can offer, they seek interns in this field. A number of the department's graduates have gotten their first jobs this way.

Value of a Communication Degree

Confirming the usefulness of a communication degree from MU, scores of alumni have positions in all kinds of businesses and professions, including sales, public relations, media production and management, broadcast programming and corporate communications. Others are in market research or advertising. Many have media-related responsibilities, working as on-air performers, producers, speech writers, media consultants or legislative assistants.

Some pursue a masters or a doctorate in communication, while others choose professional school, often in law or public administration. A recent communication alumnus entered a graduate program at Purdue University on a full fellowship.

Faculty members are seriously interested in the success of every student and proud of their varied accomplishments.

Missouri Admission

The University admits students on the basis of their chances for success here. The main criteria are the high-school curriculum, test scores and class rank.

Applicants are expected to have followed a college-preparatory program with at least 17 units of credit, as follows (one unit equals one year):

Four units of English

Two units emphasizing composition or writing skills are required; one unit may be in speech.

Four units of mathematics

Acceptable courses include algebra I, geometry, algebra II, pre-calculus/trigonometry/analytic geometry, calculus and math analysis. Courses such as computer math, programming, consumer math and accounting are not acceptable.

Three units of science

At least one must be a laboratory course, such as earth science, biology, chemistry or physics. Courses such as general science and agricultural science are not acceptable.

Three units of social studies

Examples are world history, American government and principles of democracy.

Two units in a single foreign language

One unit in fine arts

Scholarships

If you apply for financial aid, you will learn about University scholarships and grants. In addition, the department awards Curators Fellowships, normally \$1,000 per student. The awards are announced annually.

How to Apply

For information about applying to the communication program, call or write:

Department of Communication

115 Switzler Hall

University of Missouri

Columbia, MO 65211

Phone: 573-882-4431

E-mail: atkinsonh@missouri.edu

Web: communication.missouri.edu

For information about applying to MU, call or write:

Office of Admissions

230 Jesse Hall

Columbia, MO 65211-1300

Phone: 573-882-7786

800-225-6075 (toll free in Missouri and Illinois)

Fax: 573-882-7887

E-mail: mu4u@missouri.edu

Web: www.missouri.edu

The University of Missouri does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, disability or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. For more information, call Human Resource Services at 573-882-4256 or the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

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