

Communication BA, Strategic Communication Emphasis

Strategic Communication aims to persuade and inform. Corporations, nonprofits, government agencies, and small businesses use strategic communication tactics to deliver messages to the public in order to encourage individuals to take action. It is an interdisciplinary approach that can incorporate elements from public relations, advertising, health, and organizational communication. Courses in this emphasis area target the skills students need to communicate with audiences through writing, content development, and strategic messaging. Professions that may apply strategic communication principles include advertising, public relations or any profession that communicates with the public for a specific purpose.

Students majoring in communication must complete a minimum of 36 credit-hours in communication courses. Students may complete either a general communication degree or they may select one of four different emphasis areas as a focus for their studies: Interpersonal Communication, Mass Communication, Applied Visual Communication, or Strategic Communication. To complete the degree with one of these emphases, the student must complete the 21 credit-hour core and at least 15 hours of electives from within the selected emphasis area. In addition, the skills and knowledge applied in the required Practicum/Internship should be consistent with the selected emphasis area. Students seeking a general communication degree must complete the 21 credit-hour core and can select elective courses from any combination of the emphasis areas.

General Education Requirements

Majors must satisfy the university and college general education requirements. The college's foreign language requirement may be taken in any language. Communication courses may not be taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

Degree Requirements

At least 18 credit hours must be taken at UMSL. Furthermore, at least 12 credit hours of the communication courses completed must be numbered 3000-4999 for students seeking a general communication degree, as well as for students pursuing an emphasis area. All students must earn a C or better in each of the required core courses of the major and maintain a 2.0 grade point average in all of the courses applied to the communication degree.

Required Courses

COMM 1030	Interpersonal Communication I (MOTR COMM 120)	3
COMM 1050	Introduction to Mass Communication	3
COMM 2231	Communication in the Organization	3
COMM 2332	Intercultural Communication	3
COMM 2235	Professional Communication	3
COMM 3330	Research Methods in Communication I	3

COMM 4920	Practicum in Applied Communication	3
or COMM 4950	Internship in Applied Communication	
Total Hours		21

Emphasis Area Requirements

The strategic communication emphasis area deals with public and inter-organizational communication intended to serve a specific company goal or purpose. It is an interdisciplinary emphasis that can incorporate areas from public relations, advertising, and organizational communication. 15 credits are needed.

Up to six credit hours of Special Topics Courses, Directed Readings courses, and Supervised Research courses offered by the Communication and Media Department can be applied to the emphasis area if the specific topic of the course is relevant to the emphasis area.

Choose five of the following courses:

MEDIA ST 1100	Introduction to Advertising	
COMM 1150	Introduction to Public Relations	
COMM 1369	Introduction to Health Communication	
MEDIA ST 2080	Advertising Copywriting	
COMM 2180	Public Relations Writing	
MEDIA ST 2180		
COMM 2240	Persuasive Communication	
MEDIA ST 3025	Current Issues in Strategic Communication	
COMM 3150	Crisis, Disaster, and Risk Communication	
MEDIA ST 3150	Feature Writing	
MEDIA ST 3338	Advertising Technique	
COMM 3355	Dangerous Messages	
MEDIA ST 3355	Media Law and Regulation	
COMM 3368	Advanced Health Communication	
COMM 3370	Social Media in Public Relations	
COMM 4100	Communication Campaigns	
COMM 4500	Seminar in Fundamental Communication Theory	
COMM 4600	Seminar in Fundamental Organizational Communication Theory	
Total Hours		15

Learning Outcomes

- Create high-quality print, digital, and video products
- Design high-impact messages tailored to specific audiences
- Learn the fundamental skills necessary to be competitive in the ever-changing communication field
- Interpret and apply strategic communication principles to design, research, and plan strategic communication campaigns
- Compose written materials in a clear and concise format following the appropriate style utilizing the best communication channel
- Create ethically sound, legally and socially responsible strategic communication tactics

Four Year Plan

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
INTDSC 1003 ¹		1 COMM 2231	3
COMM 1030		3 EXPLORE: Mathematics & Life/Natural Sciences	3
COMM 1050		3 EXPLORE: Humanities & Fine Arts	3
ENGL 1100		3 EXPLORE: Humanities & Fine Arts	3
CORE: Mathematics Proficiency		3 Elective or minor	3
CORE: US History & Government		3	
	16		15

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
COMM 2235		3 COMM 2332	3
CORE: Information Literacy		3 EXPLORE: Humanities & Fine Arts	3
EXPLORE: Mathematics & Life/Natural Sciences		3 EXPLORE: Mathematics & Life/Natural Sciences	3
FGN LANG 1001		5 FGN LANG 1002	5
	14		14

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
COMM 3330		3 COMM XXXX: Strategic Communication Emphasis Course	3
ENGL 3100		3 COMM XXXX: Strategic Communication Emphasis Course	3
FGN LANG 2101		3 COMM XXXX: Strategic Communication Emphasis Course	3
Cultural Diversity Requirement		3 Elective or minor	3
Elective or minor		3 Elective or minor	3
	15		15

Fourth Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
COMM 1950		1 COMM 4920	3
COMM XXXX: Strategic Communication Emphasis Course		3 Elective or minor	3
COMM XXXX: Strategic Communication Emphasis Course		3 Elective or minor	3
Elective or minor		3 Elective or minor	3
Elective or minor		3 Elective or minor	3
Elective or minor		3	
	16		15

Total Hours: 120

¹ INTDSC 1003 is required only for first-time freshmen and transfer students with less than 24 college credits.

Please Note: This plan is an example of what a four year plan could look like for a typical student. Placement exam scores in math as well as the completion of coursework may change the plan. It should not be used in the place of regular academic advising appointments. All students are encouraged to meet with their advisor each semester. All requirements are subject to change.