COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Associate Professor: Aimée Knight Ph.D.; Bill Wolff Ph.D.; David Parry Ph.D.; J. Michael Lyons; Steven Hammer Ph.D.
Assistant Professor: Rachael L. Sullivan Ph.D.

Undergraduate

- Communication Studies (https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/arts-sciences/communication-studies/communication-studies-major/)

Undergraduate Minors

- Communication Studies (https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/arts-sciences/communication-studies/minor-communication-studies/)

COM 100 Introduction to Communication (3 credits)
Focuses on factors and processes involved in interpersonal communication: source and receiver variables, verbal and nonverbal messages, and strategic interaction. Prepares students to argue policy topics and make short speeches.

COM 101 Communication and Public Life (3 credits)
Students explore the relationships between media and communication in public and private settings, including culture industries, social and civic institutions and professions. The course also examines how technology shapes media and communication practices and processes.

COM 104 Professional Prep Seminar (1 credit)
What can you do with a degree in Communication and Media Studies? Do you know how to search for an internship or a job? And, are you ready to apply for a position should the opportunity arise? This professional development seminar will enhance students' knowledge about internships and careers within their major and help them build practical skills through a series of steps and events throughout the semester. This one-credit course meets once a week through the semester to provide practical instruction and skills in areas that include internship search and application, resume/cover letter prep, professional communication and networking/interviewing.

COM 150 First Year Seminar (3 credits)
First-Year seminar course in Communications.

COM 170 Communications Special Topics (1-4 credits)
Topics will vary according to the semester in which the class is offered.

COM 175 My Digital Life (3 credits)
We live in digital media, not with it. The question is not longer whether digital media is good or bad for us, but how we make sense of our immersion in social media, streaming and constant connection. How does it impact who we are, who we have been and who we will become - as individuals and as a society? This course tackles myriad issues related to our digital lives, from addiction and attention to free speech and the “counterfeit self.” By the end of the course, students will be able to: explain the role of media in their lives, recognize the way digital media shape their understanding of the world, and analyze moral and ethical dilemmas that arise on our digital lives.

COM 200 Communication Theory/Practice (3 credits)
This introduction to communication and digital media studies focuses on various ways people employ language, image, and more cinematic means for communicative purposes. Through a series of hands-on projects students learn to research and analyze contemporary issues and trends in the field of communications, with an emphasis on digital media. In doing so, students examine how communication technologies are impacting the relationship between media audiences, producers, and content.

COM 201 Ethics in Communication (3 credits)
This course explores ethical issues in the field of communications. Themes include: privacy, civic media, citizen journalism, copyright, intellectual property, cyber bullying, net neutrality, social networking, global ethics, and digital divides. Students develop skills in applied ethical decision making, democratic dialogue, and civic participation through a range of projects in both online and community settings.

COM 202 Visual Design (3 credits)
This course examines the role of aesthetic, sensory-based experience in digital environments. The course focuses on contemporary ways to understand sensory perception (especially sight, sound, and touch) and its relationship to meaning making. Students will come to understand aesthetics as a mode of complex communication intricately related to social and cultural influences. Students will apply this understanding to a variety of hands-on projects involving color, typography, photography, infographics, sound design and editing, and presentation design.

COM 203 Digital Field Methods (3 credits)
In this course, we focus on the methods, theories, and tools of field-based audiovisual production. Students will practice photography, videography, and audio recording in both field- and studio-based environment, and will learn how to edit and revise content in the Adobe Creative Suite. Working throughout the semester on these production skills rooted in rhetorical principles of audience and purpose, students will create a multimedia portfolio of work.

Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 204 Public Speaking (3 credits)
Course covers principles and practices of effective oral presentation. Lectures and exercises are used to enable students to develop and deliver information, demonstrations, and persuasive speeches. Emphasis placed on conceptual frameworks and specific communication skills for scientific audiences.

COM 270 Communications Special Topics (3 credits)
Topics will vary according to the semester in which the class is offered.

Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 290 Professional Prep Seminar (1 credit)
What can you do with a degree in Communication and Media Studies? Do you know how to search for an internship or a job? And, are you ready to apply for a position should the opportunity arise? This professional development seminar will enhance students' knowledge about internships and careers within their major and help them build practical skills through a series of steps and events throughout the semester. This one-credit course meets once a week through the semester to provide practical instruction and skills in areas that include internship search and application, resume/cover letter prep, professional communication and networking/interviewing.

Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 371 Civic Media (3 credits)
This course engages students in questions about media, technology, sociality, and society. Students examine both theoretical and experiential foundations in order to understand the relationship between mediated communication and human communities. Those who complete this course will gain hands on experience engaging audiences and developing communities through various social media platforms.

Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate
COM 372 Web Design & Development (3 credits)
This course explores the principles and best practices for creating web content, ranging from introductory work in HTML to design prototypes and web typography. Students will work with several types of web content (text, image, audio, video) and consider how that content is best used in the composition of usable, accessible, and attractive web sites. Students will also learn about the structure/history of the web, typical design workflows, and potential careers in web work.
Prerequisites: (COM 200 and COM 202 and COM 203) or ART 190
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 382 Global Digital Media (3 credits)
Communications study tour students will study how digital media is used outside the context of the United States, and study the role it plays in other cultures. Through travel to another country students will be able to research and experience first hand differences in digital media practices. Destination varies depending on semester. As part of this course students will produce a digital media project that reflects both their in class research and study abroad experience.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 400 Health Communication and Educa (3 credits)
This course introduces principles and techniques of health communication to ‘inform, educate and empower people about health issues.’ Our focus will include communicating about health and science to the public through media channels, health advocacy, patient information and decision aids, as well emergency and crisis communication. Students will create multiple products for group critique with the goal of developing skills and competency.

COM 402 Advanced Web Design (3 credits)
The class will be a mixture of web design theory and practical front-end techniques. Students are expected to have experience hand-coding websites using HTML and CSS, a basic understanding of using Git, and be familiar with basic principles of design such as color and typography. Topics covered will include: usability, accessibility, Git, Javascript/Query, designing for content management, and using Wordpress as a CMS. By the end of this course, students should have a solid understanding of the web design industry and modern web design techniques.
Prerequisites: COM 372 and COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 411 Health Literacy (3 credits)
Health literacy— or the ability to obtain, process and act on health information— is an essential patient safety and public health issue. This course provides key concepts and skills for students in health related fields to identify patients with health literacy risks; to provide clear health and medical information in oral and written formats; and to assess and modify healthcare delivery systems and environments to enhance patient access and understanding.

COM 441 Social Media & Community Engagement (3 credits)
Not-for-profit and community-based organizations rely on strategic digital communication to create social change. Students in this course gain in-depth knowledge of communication theories and practices while conducting research projects with local organizations through the Beautiful Social Research Collaborative. Students in the course actively participate as a member of a project team to complete projects with a non-profit client.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 442 Non-Profit Communications (3 credits)
Not-for-profit and community-based organizations rely on strategic digital communication to create positive social change. Students will gain in-depth knowledge of communication theories and practices while conducting research projects with local organizations through the Beautiful Social Research Collaborative. Those who complete this course will know how to apply a variety of social media theories and practices to help organizations achieve their communication goals. Students in the course will actively participate as a member of a project team to complete projects with clients in the Greater Philadelphia area and, from time to time, beyond. Local travel is required.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 444 Mindful Communication (3 credits)
In this experiential course, we combine the study of communication theory with mindfulness training. Mindfulness is about paying attention on purpose to what’s happening in the present moment— without judgment. We will explore a range of research topics related to mindful communication, including attention, presence, deep listening, perspective taking, relational awareness, communication goals, conversational dynamics, and emotional intelligence. We will also examine real-world examples of mindful (and mindless) communication in relationships, school, public, and social media. With these skills, we can increase our ability to communicate effectively in each unique situation we encounter and modify unproductive communication habits.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 451 Privacy/Surv in the Dig Era (3 credits)
Based on your cell phone history researchers can predict where you will be 24 hours from now. You can download and install software onto a computer to monitor and capture everything a user does. Nearly every thing you buy is recorded in a database. Corporations track every page view and click. Your email is easily read by third parties. Target knows when a customer is pregnant. Even the post office scans and digitally images every piece of mail it sends. It is impossible to not leave a digital trace, and all of these traces are being collected. In this class we will look at how our digital lives intersect with and effect our privacy. Is privacy dead in the age of constant surveillance? Should we even care? And who benefits from all this data collection? We will look to answer these question both on a technological level, what is possible, and a critical level, what does this mean for democracy and society. We will also seek to put this knowledge into practice, understanding and using what tools and techniques citizens can employ to regain privacy both in their lives as individuals and citizens.
Prerequisites: (COM 200 and COM 201)
Attributes: Justice Ethics and the Law, Undergraduate

COM 452 Podcasting (3 credits)
Students focus on producing podcasts, from understanding form and genre to techniques in working with digital sound production. Students will learn advanced audio recording and post-processing techniques and tools, integrate music, write and revise scripts, publish and promote their work digitally, learn and practice interviewing techniques, and work collaboratively to create a cohesive series. Previous experience working with audio recording and editing will be helpful, though it is not a prerequisite.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 203
Attributes: Undergraduate
COM 453 Advanced Design (3 credits)
In this course, students will develop a graphic design portfolio and deepen their knowledge of typography, color theory, the graphic design profession, and more. As a communications course, it emphasizes rhetorical dimensions of design, including purpose and audience. During the creative process, students will move through phases of research, planning, drafting, feedback, revision, and reflection—on sketching as a means of paying attention and gathering inspiration. Class projects may include branding materials, illustrations, posters, and magazine layouts for both print and digital formats. The primary goal of the course is to produce portfolio-quality work in graphic design and to build on skills and concepts covered in previous courses. Students should have at least a working knowledge of Adobe software products, including Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. Qualified students may seek instructor approval
Prerequisites: (COM 202 or ART 190 or MKT 325 or CSC 341)
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 454 Other Nets (3 credits)
This course will examine the internet outside the United States (US) context, focusing on digital cultures in different countries. Examples will be drawn from Europe, China, India, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. It will seek to question the concept of a world wide web, and focus on how internet fragmentation has created deliberative enclaves and polarization of online discourses, particularly drawing examples from the case of Brexit.
Prerequisites: (COM 200 and COM 201)
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 455 Music Protest & Social Justice (3 credits)
Popular musicians use their platform to release songs, videos, and statements that reveal, condemn, and inspire action in response to perceived social, political, and military injustices. These songs, videos, and statements exist within a complex system of power, cultures, values, politics, entertainment, music, and texts. In this course, we will consider that complex system by analyzing protest and social justice songs that cover important issues, including race, civil rights, sexual orientation, war, labor, and immigration, from Slavery Spirituals to the present moment. In doing so, we will see how protest music works within social movements, fights power, encourages activism, and, perhaps, inspires change.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 460 Health Communication Advocacy (3 credits)
This course will address the topic of health as it is enacted and defined within the discipline of communication studies. This course systematically explores and elaborates key concepts, principles, and underlying theories pertinent to public health communication campaigns and advocacy practices. Specifically, this course will provide students with conceptual and applied knowledge about communication interactions and its effects on health care, health practitioners, and patients. Topics include but are not limited to patient-provider interaction, social and cultural issues of health, mass media representations of health and healthy behaviors, and communication within health organizations.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 465 Bear Witness: Images/Soc Change (3 credits)
For most of us the visual experience of war comes from images. We will likely never see war first-hand so photographs, movies, video games and graphic novels help shape our collective understanding and memory of armed conflict. This course will investigate images of war from the United States, Iran, Spain, Rwanda, both World Wars, the war in Vietnam and the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will examine photographs, films and video games and discuss the dual purpose of war images - as pieces of art and as the documentation of an event.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 470 Communications Special Topics (3 credits)
Topics will vary according to the semester in which the class is offered.
Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to students with a major, minor, or concentration in English.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 473 Special Topics/ Com&Digi Media (3 credits)
This special topics course will explore a specialized area at the intersection of technology and rhetoric.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 475 Crime, Justice, & Media (3 credits)
This course looks at media narratives of crime and justice. We study how those narratives have impacted sentencing, incarceration and law. We will then produce new narratives, stories of redemption, through interviews with men and women who had served life-without-parole sentences and recently returned home. The course includes substantial work outside of class, including at least one trip to Graterford prison to talk to men serving life sentences. Media production experience will be helpful, but is not required.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Diversity Course, Faith Justice Course, Globalization Course, Justice Ethics and the Law, Undergraduate

COM 480 Senior Capstone (3 credits)
This required course provides department majors an opportunity to propose, plan, create and present a project to demonstrate what they have learned during their time at the university. The course focuses on an individual, semester-long creative and/or research project. The project scope and logistics will be negotiated between the student and instructor. The project is designed to serve as a transition from undergraduate to professional work and/or graduate school. The course includes a public presentation at the end of the semester.
Attributes: Undergraduate

COM 491 Communications Internship (1-3 credits)
An on-the-job learning experience in which students spend 12-15 hours a week over a semester, with opportunities to develop further their understanding of communications, ideally in a career field close to their own interests. Normally taken in the junior or senior years, after career interests have clarified through diverse courses in the curriculum.
Prerequisites: COM 200 and COM 201
Attributes: Undergraduate
COM 492 Independent Study (6 credits)
COM 493 Indep Research Project I (3 credits)
COM 494 Indep Research Project II (3 credits)
COM 495 Advanced Research Project (3 credits)

COM 700 Health Communication and Educ (3 credits)
This course introduces principles and techniques of health communication to 'inform, educate and empower people about health issues.' Our focus will include communicating about health and science to the public through media channels, health advocacy, patient information and decision aids, as well emergency and crisis communication. Students will create multiple products for group critique with the goal of developing skills and competency.

COM 711 Health Literacy (3 credits)
Health literacy—or the ability to obtain, process and act on health information—is an essential patient safety and public health issue. This course provides key concepts and skills for students in health related fields to identify patients with health literacy risks; to provide clear health and medical information in oral and written formats; and to assess and modify healthcare delivery systems and environments to enhance patient access and understanding.