

# COMMUNICATION

Communication is the art of building community through created and shared symbol systems, from the embodied message to digital rhetoric. It is rooted in the creative work of God, establishing communion with his creatures.

The Communication Department equips graduates to build the church and benefit society worldwide by educating whole persons in the history, art, theory, and practice of competent, ethical communication. The Department enables students to understand historical and cultural effects of communication; engage in intentional processes of creating identities and messages; comprehend guiding theories, foundational research, and investigative methods; and demonstrate knowledge, skill and motivation for the ethical creation of messages.

Students focus their studies in three content areas: Strategic Messages, Collaboration & Interpersonal Relationships and Media, Culture & Performance. The department also offers co-curricular activities in Debate, Theater, and a Certificate in Journalism. A Bachelor of Arts degree is offered in Communication.

**NOTE:** In addition to the requirements for a Communication major or minor, students will need to either take COMM 101 or pass the Oral Competency Exam to meet their oral communication competency requirement. *This requirement should be completed by the end of the sophomore year.*

*The department offers an honors program for outstanding junior and senior majors desiring to carry out independent research. Details of the program are available from the department Chair and on our department website (<https://www.wheaton.edu/academics/programs/communication/>).*

## Faculty

**Chair, Associate Professor,** Emily Langan

**Professor,** Mark Lewis

**Associate Professors,** Kenneth Chase, Danielle Corple, Theon Hill, Andy Mangin, Read Schuchardt, Rebecca Sietman

## Programs

- Communication Major (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/communication/communication-major/>)
- Communication Minor (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/communication/communication-minor/>)
- Theater Minor (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/communication/theater-minor/>)
- Journalism Certificate (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/communication/journalism-certificate/>)

## Courses

### Communication Courses

#### COMM 101. Public Speaking. (2 Credits)

A performance-based course to aid students in the invention, organization, delivery, and criticism of informative and persuasive speeches. This course does not meet major requirement. Gen Ed Oral Communication competency.

**General Education:** COMP

#### COMM 111. Fundamentals of Communication. (2 Credits)

This course examines the centrality of communication in our perceptions of reality and interactions with others. Students will explore interpersonal, group, multicultural, digital, and public communication. They will develop skills in sharing information, reasoned argument and critical self-reflection of ethical communication behaviors. The course serves as the gateway to the study of communication and is required of all communication majors.

#### COMM 205. The History and Rhetoric of Hip-Hop. (2 Credits)

On August 11, 1973, a Jamaican-American named Clive Campbell hosted a house party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx with little more than a couple of turntables and amplifiers. Music and cultural historians often regard Campbell's party as the founding event for what has come to be known as hip-hop. Almost fifty years later, hip-hop thrives as one of the most popular, yet controversial, forms of cultural expression in contemporary society with footholds in music, fashion, art, business, activism, and politics around the globe. We will consider the history, themes, and messages of hip-hop using a rhetorical lens. Through this course, students will gain valuable skill in engaging and evaluating popular forms of cultural expression with academic rigor and Biblical principles. (Open to Wheaton College Summer Institute students only)

#### COMM 215. Journalism. (4 Credits)

An overview of basic writing skills utilized in mass media, with a practical emphasis on the gathering and writing of news and sports, and analysis of campus and metropolitan newspapers.

#### COMM 219. Journalism Co-Curricular. (0 Credits)

Students enrolled in COMM 219 would join (individually or together) in events/activities for the purpose of applying and broadening the academic discussion of journalism.

#### COMM 221. Interpersonal Communication. (4 Credits)

An examination of face-to-face interactions using cognitive learning, skills training, and experiential techniques to better understand and interact with others. Topics include verbal messages, nonverbal communication, listening, self-disclosure, conflict, gender roles, and intercultural communication.

#### COMM 223. Communication and Gender. (2 Credits)

An overview of how perceived gender difference shapes and influences our interaction with others. Discussion covers the impact of gender diversity on language, nonverbal communication, mediated messages, relationships, and conflict. Course is offered occasionally.

#### COMM 241. Media Studies. (4 Credits)

An introduction to the history of mass media, from speech to digital. This course includes a variety of approaches and critical practices used to examine and evaluate the media environment.

#### COMM 243. Digital Society. (4 Credits)

An examination of the new media environment and its influence on social spaces, cultural meanings, and human interactions.

#### COMM 246. Media Production. (4 Credits)

An overview of media production skills with an emphasis on recording, editing, and producing using new media technologies and distributing them in varying outlets. Students will be expected to create video blogs, podcasts, and other new media texts. Course is offered occasionally.

#### COMM 252. Argumentation and Debate. (4 Credits)

A performance-based course in which students learn argument design, including use of reason and evidence, and practice in competitive debate. Gen Ed Oral Communication competency.

**General Education:** COMP

**COMM 253. Messages, Influence, and Culture. (4 Credits)**

An introductory study of the relationship between rhetoric and social change, focusing on the rhetoric of oppressed groups in America. Topics include the rhetoric of social movements, poverty, race, gender, and power. Recommended course fee: \$15.

**Tags:** DUS

**COMM 261. Strategic Communication. (4 Credits)**

An overview of public communication with emphasis on how organizations and campaigns develop strategic goals, choose appropriate communication channels, target audiences, and assess outcomes.

**COMM 296. Journalism Practicum. (2 to 4 Credits)**

A lower level experiential learning internship enabling students beginning their journalism program to gain hands-on experience under professional supervision. The Program Coordinator will supervise this course in conjunction with a site supervisor. Internship form required.

**COMM 301. Communication Theory. (4 Credits)**

This course provides an overview and integration of current theories for examining interpersonal, small group, organizational, media, public, and intercultural communication. The essential theories and dominant paradigms used in the field of communication are discussed, applied, and critiqued. COMM 111 and Junior standing (or permission of instructor).

**COMM 302. Rhetorical Theory. (4 Credits)**

An historical and critical analysis of the modes of persuasion. The contributions of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine, as well as selected medieval, renaissance, modern, and postmodern theorists will be considered. Prerequisite: COMM 111 and Junior standing (or permission of the instructor).

**COMM 311. Human Communication Research. (4 Credits)**

An overview of methods and techniques for systematic observation of communication behavior. Students will learn to design, run, and analyze various qualitative and quantitative methods in areas of their communication interest. Prerequisite: COMM 111 and Junior Standing (or permission of instructor). Pre or Corequisites: COMM 301 or COMM 302.

**Tags:** SI

**COMM 312. Communication Criticism. (4 Credits)**

A study of communication performances using a variety of methods, with special attention to textual analysis. Texts selected will be taken from media, culture practices, theater, and public discourse. Prerequisites: COMM 111, and Junior standing (or permission of instructor). Pre or Corequisites: COMM 301 or COMM 302.

**COMM 324. Communication and Diversity. (4 Credits)**

This class examines communication related to various co-cultural groups. It analyzes the use of rhetorical tools, such as metaphors, narratives, and frames, in current discourses of race, ethnicity, gender, and other forms of difference. This class also covers theological foundations and metacommunication about issues of diversity, as students seek to develop skills in humbly communicating across difference.

**Tags:** DUS

**COMM 343. Screenwriting. (4 Credits)**

An overview of the craft of writing and producing a feature narrative screenplay. Students will write their own scripts and learn the process of script breakdown, storyboarding, location hunting, and scheduling for media production.

**COMM 344. Visual Symbolism: Icons, Brands, Logos. (4 Credits)**

An overview of the creation, evolution, meaning and migration of visual symbols from the ancient religious world to the contemporary corporate world. Through experiments in design and interpretation, students will explore applications of visual symbols in branding, politics, advertising, and religion. Prerequisites: COMM 241, or COMM 253, or instructor permission.

**COMM 345. Narrative Media. (4 Credits)**

A skills-based course in non-linear editing, advanced techniques of media production, sound design, and directing. Students will make a narrative or documentary visual production, utilizing lighting, sound, and directing. Course is offered occasionally. Cross-listed with ARTS 343. Additional course fee required: \$100.

**COMM 353. Advanced Persuasive Speaking. (4 Credits)**

A skills-based class in which students become proficient in researching and delivering public speeches and oral performance within a variety of contexts. Prerequisite: COMM 101, COMM 252, or passed oral competency exam.

**COMM 361. Nonprofit Communication. (4 Credits)**

This course examines issues related to nonprofit organizing and communication, such as philanthropy/fundraising, social entrepreneurship, and storytelling. In addition to exploring current debates and issues within the field, students build practical skills related to communicating in and for nonprofit organizations.

**COMM 362. Group and Professional Communication. (4 Credits)**

An experiential course which integrates theory and practice in small task groups. Topics include roles and leadership, discussion, decision making and problem-solving, social influence, conflict, power, and interaction in peer groups.

**COMM 363. Persuasion. (4 Credits)**

An examination of theories of attitude and behavior change, specific techniques of persuasion, and analysis of contemporary practitioners. Students will gain experience in attitude research and preparing a persuasive strategy.

**Tags:** SI

**COMM 367. Reconciliation & Conflict Resolution. (2 Credits)**

This course provides theoretical and practical resources for working through conflict in interpersonal, group, and international contexts. An emphasis will be placed on negotiation tactics and reconciliation processes. Course is offered occasionally.

**COMM 393. Intercollegiate Debate (Practicum). (0 or 1 Credits)**

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. Two credits of COMM 393 meet the oral competency requirement at Wheaton. One hour credit per year (4 hours maximum; 2 hours maximum if combined with COMM 252). Register for credit in Spring semester. Graded pass/fail.

**General Education:** COMP

**COMM 404. Advanced Topics in Communication. (4 Credits)**

This course offers an in-depth look at various contemporary and classic topics across the span of the communication discipline. Students will engage in primary research or performance as a component of the course. Potential topics include online communication, nonverbal, sport and communication, rhetoric of rap music, political style, crisis communication, media effects, and propaganda. Course may be repeated for separate topics. Prerequisite: COMM 111 or permission of instructor. Pre or Corequisite: COMM 301 or COMM 302 or COMM 311 or COMM 312. Additional course fee may be required.

**COMM 415. Special Topics in Journalism. (4 Credits)**

An advanced study of such topics as interviewing, community journalism, ethics and the law, and investigative reporting. Guest instructors will be selected who have established professional success in journalism. Course may be repeated for separate topics. Prerequisite: COMM 215 or permission of instructor.

**COMM 416. Special Topics in Journalism. (2 Credits)**

An advanced study of such topics as interviewing, community journalism, ethics and the law, and investigative reporting. Guest instructors will be selected who have established professional success in journalism. Course may be repeated for separate topics. Prerequisite: COMM 215 or permission of instructor.

**COMM 441. Media, Religion, and Culture. (4 Credits)**

An examination of the ways that media formations influence the practices of faith and theology within a given historical epoch. Prerequisite: COMM 241 or COMM 243, or permission of instructor.

**COMM 445. Media Constructions. (4 Credits)**

An advanced study of professional-level video production, with structured teaching leading to high quality portfolio presentations in the media industry. Course is offered occasionally. Cross-listed with ARTS 345. Prerequisite: COMM 246 and COMM 345 or permission of instructor.

**COMM 461. Organizational Communication. (4 Credits)**

An application of communication theory and research in work contexts. Both corporations and non-profits will be examined through case studies, site visits, interviews, applied research, and team work projects.

**COMM 494. Senior Seminar. (2 Credits)**

An overview and integration of ethical perspectives as students consider the role of responsible communication in contemporary society. Development of the portfolio assessment is included. Prerequisite: COMM major with Senior standing.

**General Education:** SHAR

**COMM 495. Independent Study. (1 to 4 Credits)**

An investigation of current issues and developments in a specialized area of communication. Prerequisites: two appropriate Communication courses and permission of a professor.

**COMM 496. Internship. (2 to 4 Credits)**

An application of course work that engages the student in a responsible role as a worker in an organization or other practical experiences. Prerequisites: 16 hours in Communication; junior or senior standing with Communication major or minor. Graded pass/fail. (may be repeated for a maximum of eight credits, but only four hours count toward the major.)

**COMM 498. Journalism Internship. (2 or 4 Credits)**

An application of course work that engages the student in a responsible role as a worker in the journalism profession. This experience will receive a letter grade based on a portfolio of work, journal entries, summative essay, and site supervisor evaluation.