

# Communication Studies

A Communication Studies degree provides students with a strong background in verbal and non-verbal communication, and is flexible enough so students can pursue graduate education or enter the work force in a variety of fields.

Graduates of Northern Michigan University's Communication Studies program are employed in a variety of fields. Some find themselves employed in business-related positions such as sales representatives, department store managers, loan officers, realtors, insurance adjusters, and pension fund administrators. Others have pursued university-level teaching, and still others have become admissions counselors, residence hall directors, and assistant alumni directors. Obviously, your options as a Communication Studies major are many, and only depend upon your willingness to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for a certain career field.

## Skills and Competencies

Like many liberal arts degrees, a Communication Studies major provides students with a strong background in a variety of skills and competencies. As you can see from the sample list of careers, the skills you may learn as a student are transferable to a great many fields. Communication—written, oral, and interpersonal—is an essential skill, and one that employers desire. Your ability to research and analyze information will also be developed through your studies, as will your problem solving and organizational skills. Your creativity—the ability to design projects, develop programs, and generate ideas—will also be challenged as a Communication Studies major. There is not one “typical” career path for Communication Studies majors, so you may find yourself in a career field that is dictated by your experiences as a student.

## Course Work

This degree includes the following courses as part of the program requirements, and specific major requirements along with general education courses and graduation requirements.

### Introductory Core

SP100 Public Address (4 cr.)  
SP110 Interpersonal Communication (4 cr.)  
SP120 Small Group Process (4 cr.)

### Critical Thinking

SP200 Argumentation (4 cr.)  
SP250 Research Methods & Careers (4 cr.)

### Theoretical Foundation

SP310 Communication Theory (4 cr.)  
SP320 New Media Literacy (4 cr.)

### Applications

SP491 Practicum (1–8 cr.)  
SP492 Internship (1–8 cr.)

### Assessment

SP 480 Communication Capstone (2 cr.)

### Concentration 12–16

Health & Environmental Communication 16cr.

Bc 430

SP 422

SP 432 or PR 432

Choose: AH 336, GC 424, HL 322, NAS 342, or NU 386

Interpersonal /Intercultural Communication 12cr.

BC 415

SP 410

Choose: SP 402, 410, 422, MGT 240, or 355

Public Communication 12cr.

SP 401

SP 422

Choose: BC 470, 480, LDR 300, NAS 310, PR 432, PS 440, PSY 220, SP 402, or 432

Organizational Communication 12cr.

SP 421

PR 332

Choose: SP 402, 410, 422, MGT240, or 355

Detailed course descriptions can be found at [www.nmu.edu/bulletin](http://www.nmu.edu/bulletin).

## Career Development

You should begin the resume-building process as soon as you can. The Academic and Career Advisement Center can assist you with career planning, while Career Services will help you fine tune your resume and look for jobs related to your field. In the meantime, the more hands-on experience you have, the better the chances are that you will find a job. Becoming involved in a professional related internship is a way to develop your professional skills and gain experience. Your academic course work is important as well, so be sure to maintain a high grade point average.

## Additional Considerations

Strong written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills are essential if pursuing work in these areas. You can gain excellent experience in the government field by finding an internship related to your interests.

A business minor or second major may be helpful, and relevant experience beneficial, when looking for positions in the business/industry field.

Practical experience in a media-related field will significantly improve your chances of finding employment. A minor in International Studies, Electronic Journalism, Media Production & New Technology, or Media Studies may be beneficial.

Remember to take any necessary exams early, it can take six weeks for results to be sent to the schools in which you applied.

## Job Outlook

Starting salaries are contingent upon geographic location and the individual's work experience and initiative, and usually range from \$30,000 to \$55,000. The career field should expand at an average rate of 11% in the coming years. National surveys indicate communication skills are among the main qualifications that employers seek regardless of the profession.

# Potential Careers

NMU's Communication Studies prepares students for employment in the following careers:

Admissions Representative

Campaign Director

Consultant

Copywriter

Editor

Executive Manager

Human Resources Manager

Industrial/Labor Relations Rep.

Legislative Aide

Lobbyist

Market Research Analyst

News Anchor

Personnel Manager

Politician

Press Secretary

Public Affairs Officer

Publisher

Reporter

Research Assistant

Sales Representative

Speech Communication

Speech Writer

Social Media Manager/Marketer

University Professor

# Additional Resources and Information

For Career Planning and Opportunities:

Academic & Career Advisement Center  
3302.1 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2971  
[www.nmu.edu/acac](http://www.nmu.edu/acac)

Communication and Performance Studies  
203 Thomas Fine Arts  
906-227-2045  
[www.nmu.edu/caps](http://www.nmu.edu/caps)

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:

Career Services  
3302.3 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2800  
[www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers)

For Information about NMU Student Organizations  
Associated with this Major Contact:

Center for Student Enrichment  
1206 University Center  
906-227-2439  
[www.nmu.edu/cse](http://www.nmu.edu/cse)

Internet Resource Links:

[www.careers.org](http://www.careers.org)  
[www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

For Career Information with National  
Organizations:

[www.natcom.org](http://www.natcom.org) -National Communication Assoc.



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY**

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

The Academic & Career Advisement Center  
2020



What to do with  
a major in...

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