COMMUNICATIONS

Applicants must submit the following:

- an online Graduate School application (http://gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply) with the application fee;
- official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply);
- two letters of reference attesting to the applicant’s suitability for the program (preferably from previous professors or others who are familiar with the applicant’s intellectual/creative work or interests);
- a writing sample or other creative production (e.g. short film, photo essay, advertisement or PR campaign sample, multimedia art, etc).

International applicants must hold the equivalent of an American four-year baccalaureate degree. They must submit official or attested university records, with certified translations if the records are not in English. Notarized copies are not sufficient.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students) for more information.

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts (M.A.)
Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies)

Students admitted to the Master of Arts in Communications Program at Penn State Harrisburg must complete 36 credits, 21 of which must be at the 500 level in order to be granted the degree. Each student must complete and submit either a master’s project or thesis. The master’s project option (COMMS 580) consists of a creative production with an accompanying scholarly essay. The thesis option (COMMS 600 or COMMS 610) consists of an original research paper that follows the guidelines established by the Graduate School’s Office of Theses and Dissertations (http://gradschool.psu.edu/current-students/etd). The subject of the master’s project or thesis must be defined in conjunction with a faculty member, and evaluated by a committee of at least two faculty members, supplemented by outside consultants where appropriate. To register for the master’s thesis or project, a student must have completed COMMS 500 and COMMS 503 and must have earned at least 27 credits towards the Master of Arts in Communications.

The 36-credit program is distributed over two groups of courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 500</td>
<td>Communications and Cultural Theory</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 503</td>
<td>Research Methods in Communications</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 580</td>
<td>Communications Master’s Project</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 600</td>
<td>Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or COMMS 610</td>
<td>Thesis Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choose 6 credits from ONE of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 525</td>
<td>Advanced Writer’s Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or COMMS 568</td>
<td>Media Production Workshop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choose 6 credits of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMS 519</td>
<td>Communication Technology and Culture in History</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student May Register for or Audit These Courses in Order to Make Up Graduate Students. Courses Below the 400 Level May Not. A Graduate Be Used to Meet Some Graduate Degree Requirements When Taken by Advanced Undergraduate Courses Numbered Between 400 and 499 May Graduate Courses Carry Numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Courses

Electives
Take 15 Credits in Additional Courses at the 400- and 500-Levels, from a List of Approved Courses Maintained by the Graduate Program Office. Elective Courses Can Come from Either Communications or Other Fields, Including: American Studies, Business Administration, Community Psychology and Social Change, Criminal Justice, Education, Health Administration, Health Education, Humanities, Information Systems, Management, Marketing, Public Administration, Training and Development.

Total Credits: 36-39
1. COMMS 500 and COMMS 503 to Be Taken Within the First 12 Credits After Enrollment in the Program.
2. Students Elect Either COMMS 580 or COMMS 600/COMMS 610. If a Student Chooses to Write a Thesis, at Least 6 Credits in Thesis Research (COMMS 600 or COMMS 610) Must Be Included in the Program.
3. The Following 400-Level Communications Courses May Not Be Taken to Fulfill the Requirements of This Degree:
   - COMM 495
   - COMM 495A
   - COMM 496
   - COMM 497

Grade-Point Average and Time Limit
A 3.00 Grade-Point Average Will Be Required for Successful Completion of the Degree.

A Full-Time Student Can Expect to Complete the Program in Four Semesters, a Part-Time Student in Six or More Semesters. All Requirements for a Master's Degree for the Master of Arts in Communications (Including Acceptance of the Master's Thesis or Project) Must Be Met Within Eight Years of Admission to Degree Status. Extensions May Be Granted by the Graduate School in Appropriate Circumstances.

Transfer of Credits
Transfer Credits Are Limited to 9 Equivalent Graduate Communications Credits With a Grade of B or Better Taken Within the Last 5 Years From an Accredited Institution, Subject to Restrictions Outlined in GCAC-309 Transfer Credit (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-309/transfer-credit). It Must Be the Opinion of the Reviewing Faculty That These Courses Are Equivalent in Quality to Those Offered at Penn State Harrisburg. Credit Will Not Be Given for Any Course Used to Complete a Previous Degree.

Graduates Demonstrate Knowledge and Proficiency in the Major Theories and Methods Used in the Study of Communications and Their Applications in Intellectual Inquiry and Creative Activity.

Graduates Design and Execute Strategies to Answer Significant Questions in Communications and Produce or Create Highest Quality Media Content — Such as Films, Videos, Photography, Graphic Design, Web-Based Platforms, Screenwriting, Journalism, Memoirs, Drama, Copywriting and Social Media. — According to the Highest Professional and Ethical Standards.

Graduates Convey Ideas or Arguments in Clear, Concise,Well-Organized Written Proposals, Research Papers, Exhibitions and Oral Presentations in Professional and Academic Settings, and Communicate to Diverse Audiences by Audio, Visual and Written Media Such as Video, Film, Journalism, Graphic Design, Photography, Copyrighting and Social Media.

Graduates Utilize Analytical Skills to Evaluate Ideas, Theories and Academic and Cultural Works in the Communications Field, and To Conceptualize Solutions to Communications Problems and Challenges in Different Social/Cultural Contexts.

Graduates Observe the Highest Ethical Standards in Both Scholarship and Professional Practice.

Contact
Campus Harrisburg
Graduate Program Head Jeffrey P Beck
Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) Craig Robert Welsh
or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)
Program Contact Hannah B Murray
W-356
777 W. Harrisburg Pike
Middletown PA 170574898
hbm5103@psu.edu
(717) 948-6201

Program Website View (https://harrisburg.psu.edu/humanities/communications/master-arts-communications)

Student Aid
Graduate Assistantships Available to Students in This Program and Other Forms of Student Aid Are Described in the Tuition & Funding (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding) Section of The Graduate School's Website. Students on Graduate Assistantships Must Adhere to the Course Load Limits (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants) Set by The Graduate School.

Courses
Graduate Courses Carry Numbers From 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced Undergraduate Courses Numbered Between 400 and 499 May Be Used to Meet Some Graduate Degree Requirements When Taken by Graduate Students. Courses Below the 400 Level May Not. A Graduate Student May Register for or Audit These Courses in Order to Make Up Deficiencies or To Fill in Gaps in Previous Education But Not to Meet Requirements for an Advanced Degree.

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