COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES, B.A. (BERKS)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: Berks

Program Description
This major helps students better understand and analyze how people communicate in order to influence others and impact the world around them. The ability to communicate effectively in personal, social, professional, and multicultural situations is an essential skill in modern society. Discovering how to improve practices of communication in any of those situations—whether from a humanistic or scientific perspective—is equally vital. Students of Communication Arts and Sciences will therefore learn to argue persuasively, think critically, solve problems collaboratively, understand and manage conflict, influence people ethically, form and keep relationships, and participate constructively in civic life. The flexibility of this program offers preparation for a variety of careers, which include administration, business, health, higher education, human resources, law, public service, social or political advocacy, and more. Such flexibility is illustrated in the fact that this degree offers two different options for completion based on varying instructional and student needs (the Communication Studies option and the Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice option). For these reasons, majoring in Communication Arts and Sciences also offers an excellent concurrent degree program: a substantive understanding of human communication—which is valuable in numerous forms of personal, social, or professional life—can significantly enhance students’ preparation in many fields of study.

Two degree options are available for the Communication Arts and Sciences B.A. in order to provide flexibility based on student and faculty needs at different campuses where the degree is offered:

Communication Studies Option
Available at the following campuses: Berks, Brandywine

The B.A. in Communication Arts and Sciences (Communication Studies) provides increased knowledge and skill concerning the practice of human communication across an array of interpersonal, organizational, social, and cultural contexts. Students pursuing the B.A. in this degree option will learn to argue persuasively, think critically, solve problems collaboratively, understand and manage conflict, influence people ethically, form and keep relationships, and participate constructively in civic life. The flexibility of this program offers preparation for a variety of careers, which include administration, business, health, higher education, human resources, law, public service, social or political advocacy, and more. The B.A. in Communication Arts and Sciences (Communication Studies) also offers an excellent concurrent degree program: a substantive understanding of human communication—which is valuable in numerous forms of personal, social, or professional life—can significantly enhance students’ preparation in many fields of study.

Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice Option
Available at the following campuses: University Park

The B.A. in Communication Arts and Sciences (Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice) promotes an understanding of fundamental facets of human communication, knowledge of theories and research that illuminate communication processes, and expertise in practical applications of communication research to civic, cultural, family, health, interpersonal, organizational, and social contexts. Students pursuing the B.A. in this degree option will learn to argue persuasively, think critically, solve problems collaboratively, understand and manage conflict, influence people ethically, form and keep relationships, and participate constructively in civic life. The flexibility of this program offers preparation for a variety of careers, which include administration, business, health, higher education, human resources, law, public service, social or political advocacy, and more. The B.A. in Communication Arts and Sciences (Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice) also offers an excellent concurrent degree program: A substantive understanding of human communication—which is valuable in numerous forms of personal, social, or professional life—can significantly enhance students’ preparation in many fields of study.

What is Communication Arts and Sciences?
Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS) privileges the study and practice of communication in interpersonal, organizational, public, and intercultural contexts. Using methods and theories that span the humanities and social sciences, faculty and students create knowledge about the history, present state, and prospects of the fact that we can and do influence one another. This major inspires students to be more effective and ethical in the personal, professional, and public roles their futures have in store for them.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to learn about the history and theory of communication from both humanistic and social scientific perspectives.
- You are curious about relationships, group dynamics, power, and conflict.
- You want to learn how messages influence people and shape situations.
- You want to develop analytical and critical thinking skills to understand how messages influence people and shape situations and institutions.

Entrance to Major
In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/)

Degree Requirements
For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Arts and Sciences, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>12-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

Requirements for the Major

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if foreign language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

Common Requirements for the Major (All Options)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 301</td>
<td>Rhetorical Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 303</td>
<td>Communication Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 15 credits of other CAS courses; at least 12 credits must be at the 400 level. A maximum of 3 credits from CAS 494, CAS 495, CAS 496, and CAS 499 may satisfy this requirement. CAS 126 and CAS 195 may not be counted as part of the major.

Requirements for the Option

Select an option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 304</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods for Communication Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 311</td>
<td>Methods of Rhetorical Criticism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Courses

Select 9 credits from the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 203</td>
<td>Interpersonal Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 210</td>
<td>Landmark Speeches on Democracy and Dissent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 215</td>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.
Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

Foreign Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign Language Courses (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student’s primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

Other Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the General Education US/IL requirement.

Program Learning Objectives

- Praxis and Reflection: Appreciation for the significance of communication in everyday experience and as a distinctive intellectual paradigm
- Theoretical Knowledge: Ability to understand, apply, critique, and extend communication concepts, principles, theories, and perspectives
- Epistemology and Research Methodologies: Skill at communication inquiry, including humanistic and social scientific approaches
- Critical Thinking: Logical, critical, creative, and ethical thinking about communication for decision-making and problem-solving
- Message Creation and Critique: Competency at generating and performing messages appropriate to their audience, purpose, and context
- Research Literacy: Facility with locating, synthesizing, and assimilating new information from a variety of sources and using it to inform communication analysis and practice
- Ethics and Diversity: Interest, understanding, and capacity to engage diverse communities, both local and global, and to function as a member of a deliberative society

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of-class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.
READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

**Berks**

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BKCommArtsC@psu.edu

**University Park**

Liberal Arts Academic Advising  
814-865-2545  
Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

**Suggested Academic Plan**

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

**Communication Arts and Sciences, B.A. at Berks Campus**

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>First Year</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fall</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
<th><strong>Spring</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30H (GWS)†</td>
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<td>CAS 100A or 100B (GWS)‡</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course (GQ)§</td>
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<td>General Education Course (GQ)‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Language Level 1</td>
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<td>World Language Level 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS Selection*</td>
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<td>CAS Selection*</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)</td>
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<td>General Education Course (GN or GA or GH or GS)</td>
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**Second Year**

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<tr>
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<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
<th><strong>Spring</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS Selection*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D (GWS)†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 301 or 303*</td>
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<td>CAS 204 (or 300 Level CAS Selection (CAS 311))</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Language Level 3</td>
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<td>200 Level CAS Selection*</td>
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**Third Year**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Fall</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
<th><strong>Spring</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 301 or 303*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CAS 204 (or 300 Level CAS Selection (CAS 311))†</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Knowledge Domain</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Knowledge Domain</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course (Integrative Studies)</td>
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<td>General Education Course (Integrative Studies)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course (Exploration)</td>
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<td>General Education Course (Exploration)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective (Writing Across the Curriculum)</td>
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<td>Elective (Writing Across the Curriculum)</td>
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**Fourth Year**

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<th><strong>Spring</strong></th>
<th><strong>Credits</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>400 Level CAS Selection*</td>
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<td>400 Level CAS Selection*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Other Cultures Domain</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirement: Other Cultures Domain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
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<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits 15</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Credits 124**

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major  
‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education  
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement  
† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

1 For General Education Course notations, please be sure to include three (3) credits of United States (US) Cultures and three (3) credits of International (IL) Cultures. Consult adviser for details.  
2 The following courses are offered Spring Semester only: ENGL 202B.  
3 The following courses are offered every other Fall semester only: CAS 301, CAS 303.  
4 The following courses are offered every other Spring semester only: CAS 204, CAS 311.  
5 For CAS Selection, consult adviser for list. CAS 101N is recommended.  
6 For 200 Level CAS Selection, consult adviser for list.  
7 For 300 Level CAS Selection, consult adviser for list.  
8 For 400 Level CAS Selection, consult adviser for list.
University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student’s primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in Other Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as Other Cultures courses (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/).

Career Paths

CAS graduates are analysts, strategists, persuaders, facilitators, negotiators, collaborators, connectors, and leaders. The CAS B.A. equips students for success in the workforce, graduate and law school, and civic life.

Careers

The CAS B.A. prepares students for success in careers that value a rigorous and diverse understanding of communication practices. Graduates thrive in careers in business, government, law, public relations, public policy, sales, and more.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE COMMUNICATION ARTS AND SCIENCES PROGRAM (https://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/careers-in-cas/)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

The CAS B.A. provides excellent preparation for graduate study in rhetoric, as well as fields such as business, human resources and employment relations, law, and public policy. CAS at University Park has three integrated undergraduate-graduate degrees through which approved CAS majors can earn an undergraduate and graduate degree in five years instead of six: Public Policy, Media Studies, and Human Resources and Employment Relations.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (https://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/integrated-undergraduate-graduate-programs/)

Professional Resources

- National Communication Association (https://www.natcom.org/)
- International Communication Association (https://www.icahdq.org)
- Rhetoric Society of America (https://rhetoricsociety.org)
- Lambda Pi Eta (https://www.natcom.org/lambda-pi-eta/)

Contact

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