Communications, B.A. (Capital)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: Harrisburg

Program Description
Communications is an interdisciplinary program that combines practical, professional instruction with critical and cultural examinations of mass media. Our interdisciplinary and theoretical approach enables our students to understand the contextual relationships between contemporary media and ethics, history, drama, and art, as well as the mechanics of emerging information technologies. We feature small classes, a multidisciplinary faculty with real-world professional experience, high-technology laboratories, and an excellent location for media internships. This major prepares students for careers in areas such as public relations, journalism, graphic design, photography, new media, advertising, media production, and telecommunications. Because of our analytical approach, students can use the major to prepare for postgraduate studies.

What is Communications?
Communications is an academic discipline that deals with the creation and distribution of mass communication messages through media such as books, newspapers, television, radio, film, video games and the internet. Mass communications use writing, photographs, video and interactive content to give information or influence the audience. Communications also concerns the study of how we communicate in different ways with diverse audiences through marketing, advertising, public relations, journalism, film and other media.

You Might Like This Program If...
- You enjoy writing, design, photography, or film/video production.
- You enjoy solving problems or influencing others with your ability to create messages.
- You are interested in a career in public relations, journalism, graphic design, advertising, multimedia production.

Entrance to Major
Entry to the Communications major requires a 2.00 or higher cumulative grade-point average and successful completion (earning a grade of C or better) of COMM 100 (GS).

Degree Requirements
For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications, 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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0-12 credits are included in Electives if foreign language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

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 (http://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.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)
- Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
- Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Knowledge Domains
- Arts (GA): 6 credits
- Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
- Humanities (GH): 6 credits
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 6 credits
- Natural Sciences (GN): 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)
- Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements
First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements
- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits.
Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

**Quality of Work**
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree 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 (http://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 (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advisingandplanning/degreeprogramtext).

**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.

**Requirements for the Major**
At least 12 credits of Communications courses must be taken at the 400 level.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prescribed Courses:</strong> Require a grade of C or better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 251</td>
<td>The Nature of Media</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 332</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 456</td>
<td>Media Criticism and Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 458</td>
<td>Media Law and Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Courses:</strong> Require a grade of C or better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 230W</td>
<td>or COMM 260W News Writing and Reporting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select two courses in visual communication from the following:</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 215</td>
<td>Basic Photography for Communications</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COMM 241</td>
<td>Graphic Design for Communications</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Program Learning Objectives
1. Students will recall Communications theory and theorists.
2. Students will construct media projects using a variety of visual, audio and Web technologies.
3. Students will assess the Communication situation and create original written documents, images, sound, or graphics accordingly.
4. Students will analyze media using Communications theory and methods in their own research and writing.
5. Students will develop the professional, ethical and social responsibilities of the media professions.

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 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy)

Suggested Academic Plan
Harrisburg 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 time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time.

| World Language, Level 1 | 4 |
| General Education Course | 3 |
| (GHW) | 1.5 |
| General Education Course | 3 |
| (GHW) | 1.5 |
| 14.5 | 15.5 |

Second Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 100 (GS)</td>
<td>3 Elective or Minor Course</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 ENGL 202B or 202D‡</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language, Level 3</td>
<td>4 General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 General Education Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Third Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 251*</td>
<td>3 COMM 230W or COMM 260W*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Course</td>
<td>3 COMM Selection from List E*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual COMM Course from List F†</td>
<td>3 Supporting Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Requirement: Other Cultures</td>
<td>3 Elective or Minor Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Requirement: BA Fields</td>
<td>3 Supporting Course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Fourth Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMM 332*</td>
<td>3 COMM 456*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Course</td>
<td>3 COMM 458*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM Selection from List E*</td>
<td>3 COMM Visual Selection from List F†</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Requirement: BA Fields</td>
<td>3 Elective or Internship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective or Minor Course</td>
<td>3 BA Requirement: BA Fields</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Total Credits 121

* 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 COMM Selection from Department List E, at least 12 credits of COMM courses must be taken at the 400 level. See List E below.
2 Visual COMM Course from List F, at least 12 credits of COMM courses must be taken at the 400 level. See List F below.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:
US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University 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.
GWS, GQ, GHW, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS, and Integrative Studies). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate an Inter-Domain course and Z is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

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 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.

Program Notes
Supporting Courses (12 Credits)

- Select 12 credits in a single discipline or subject area (other than Communications) in consultation with an academic adviser. These credits, combined with electives, may be applied to a minor in support of the student’s interests (Sem: 5-8).

COMM List (E)

- COMM 215 – Basic Photography (3)
- COMM 241 – Graphic Design for Communications (3)
- COMM 242 – Basic Video/Filmmaking (3)
- COMM 269 – Photo Journalism (3)
- COMM 270 – Introduction to Multimedia Production (3)
- COMM 337 – Intermediate Documentary Production (3)
- COMM 363 – Desktop Publishing (3)
- COMM 415 – Advance Photography (3)
- COMM 437 – Advanced Documentary Production (3)
- COMM 441 – Advanced Graphic Design (3)
- COMM 482 – Advanced Communication Workshop (4)

Visual COMM List (F)

- COMM 110 – Media and Democracy (3)
- COMM 150 – The Art of Cinema (3)
- COMM 160 – Basic News Writing Skills (3)
- COMM 168 – American Journalism: Values, Traditions, and Practices (3)
- COMM 215 – Basic Photography (3)
- COMM 234 – Digital Cultures (3)
- COMM 241 – Graphic Design for Communication (3)
- COMM 242 – Basic Video/Filmmaking (3)
- COMM 250 – Film History and Theory (3)
- COMM 269 – Photo Journalism (3)
- COMM 270 – Introduction to Multimedia Production (3)
- COMM 320 – Introduction to Advertising (3)
- COMM 332 – Reporting (3)
- COMM 337 – Intermediate Documentary Production (3)
- COMM 346 – Writing for the Screen I (3)
- COMM 350 – Comparative Media Cultures (3)
- COMM 360 – Radio Reporting (3)
- COMM 363 – Desktop Publishing (3)
- COMM 370 – Public Relations (3)
- COMM 372 – Digital Public Relations (3)
- COMM 374 – Audio Communications (3)
- COMM 405 – Political Economy of Communications (3)
- COMM 414 – Media Management (3)
- COMM 415 – Advanced Photography (3)
- COMM 418 – Media Effects: Theory and Research (3)
- COMM 420 – Research Methods in Advertising and Public Relations (3)
- COMM 421 – Advertising Creative Strategies (3)
- COMM 424 – Advertising Campaigns (3)
- COMM 428E – Social Media Strategies (3)
- COMM 430 – Mass Media and Politics (3)
- COMM 436 – Advanced Audio Production (3)
- COMM 437 – Advanced Documentary Production (3)
- COMM 441 – Advanced Graphic Design (3)
- COMM 457 – Media Audiences and Contexts (3)
- COMM 458 – Media Law and Ethics (3)
- COMM 459 – Cultural Effects of Interactive and Online Media (3)
- COMM 461 – Magazine Writing (3)
- COMM 462 – Feature Writing (3)
- COMM 471 – Public Relations Media and Methods (3)
- COMM 472 – Public Relations Event Planning (3)
- COMM 474 – Depth Reporting (3)
- COMM 481 – Advanced Multimedia Production (3)
- COMM 482 – Advanced Communication Workshop (4)
- COMM 488 – Writer’s Seminar (3)
- COMM 495 – Internship (1-3 per semester/maximum of 6)
- COMM 496 – Independent Studies (3)

Career Paths

Penn State Harrisburg’s communications program features small classes, a multidisciplinary faculty with real-world professional experience, high-technology laboratories, and an excellent location for media internships.

Careers

This major prepares students for careers in areas such as public relations, journalism, graphic design, advertising, media production, and telecommunications.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM (https://harrisburg.psu.edu/humanities/communications/bachelor-humanities-communications)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Communications is an interdisciplinary program combining practical, professional instruction with critical and cultural examinations of mass media, including Penn State’s Master of Arts in Communications.
MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES
(https://harrisburg.psu.edu/humanities/communications/master-arts-communications)

Contact
Harrisburg
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
Olmsted Building, W356
Middletown, PA 17057
717-948-6189
ckl14@psu.edu

http://harrisburg.psu.edu/humanities/communications/bachelor-humanities-communications