Communication Arts and Sciences, B.A. (Liberal Arts)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: University Park

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, and 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 Communications Arts and Sciences?

Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS) is committed to the study, teaching, and practice of human communication for the betterment of Pennsylvania, the nation, and the world. Using methods and theories that span the humanities and social sciences, we create knowledge about the role of communication in diverse interpersonal, communal, national, international, and cultural settings. Our research is integral to our educational mission: to promote greater understanding of and facility with oral, written, and nonverbal communication.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to learn about the importance of human communication from a combination of social scientific and humanistic perspectives.
- You want to learn how to craft effective messages for different audiences.
- You want to develop analytic and critical thinking skills in order to understand how messages influence audiences.
- You want to acquire theories, methods, and practical tools to understand the roots of social conflict and help change them through improved practices of communication.

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 third-semester classification (http://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (http://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, Communication Studies Option, a minimum of 120 credits is required; For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Arts and Sciences, Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice Option, a minimum of 123 credits is required.
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 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 Recommended Academic Plan for your intended program.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements
- General Education: 45 credits
- Electives: 15 credits
- Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements: 24 credits
- Requirements for the Major: 36-39 credits

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 Recommended Academic Plan for your intended program.

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.

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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

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better

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

Requirements for the Option: Require a grade of C or better

Select an Option

15-18

Requirements for the Option

Communication Studies Option (15 Credits)

Available at the following campuses: Berks, Brandywine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 204</td>
<td>Communication Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better

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></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 213</td>
<td>Persuasive Speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 214W</td>
<td>Speech Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 216</td>
<td>Practical Parliamentary Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 250</td>
<td>Small Group Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 252</td>
<td>Business and Professional Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 271N</td>
<td>Intercultural Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 280W</td>
<td>Storytelling and Speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 283</td>
<td>Communication and Information Technology I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Select 3 credits from the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 302</td>
<td>Social Influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 311</td>
<td>Methods of Rhetorical Criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 321</td>
<td>Rhetoric and Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 352</td>
<td>Organizational Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 373</td>
<td>The Rhetorics of War and Peace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 375</td>
<td>Rhetoric and Public Controversy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 383N</td>
<td>Culture and Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 398</td>
<td>Special Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 399</td>
<td>Foreign Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better

Select 6 credits from CAS courses, 3 credits maximum from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 494</td>
<td>Research Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 495</td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 496</td>
<td>Independent Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 499</td>
<td>Foreign Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foundations, Scholarship, and Practice Option (18 Credits)

Available at the following campuses: University Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 101N</td>
<td>Introduction to Human Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 304</td>
<td>Quantitative 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: Require a grade of C or better

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></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 210</td>
<td>Landmark Speeches on Democracy and Dissent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 215</td>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 220</td>
<td>Persuasion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Learning Objectives

1. Appreciation for the significance of communication in everyday experience and as a distinctive intellectual paradigm.
2. Ability to understand, apply, critique, and extend communication concepts, principles, theories, and perspectives.
3. Skill at communication inquiry, including humanistic and social scientific approaches.
4. Logical, critical, creative, and ethical thinking about communication for decision-making and problem-solving.
5. Competency at generating and performing messages appropriate to their audience, purpose and context.
6. Facility with locating, synthesizing, and assimilating new information from a variety of sources and using it to inform communication analysis and practice.
7. 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 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising
814-865-2545
Use the Liberal Arts Majors and Minors web page (https://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/undergraduate-students/education/majors-and-minors/) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program.

### Berks

Jill Burk  
Program Coordinator, Assistant Professor  
Franco 148  
Reading, PA 19610  
610-396-6094  
jkb20@psu.edu

### Brandywine

Joshua Phillips  
Assistant Teaching Professor Communication Arts and Sciences  
25 Yearsley Mill Road  
Media, PA 19063  
610-892-1426  
jdp5595@psu.edu

### Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2020-21 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 contain suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

### University Park 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.

#### First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 (or honors equivalent (GWS)) *</td>
<td>3 CAS 100 (or honors equivalent (GWS)) *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 101N *</td>
<td>3 CAS Additional course (work with adviser)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantification (GQ) *</td>
<td>3 Humanities (GH) + (US)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) (FYS)</td>
<td>3 Natural Sciences (GN)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language 1</td>
<td>4 World Language 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Second Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS Additional course (work with adviser)</td>
<td>3 CAS Additional course (work with adviser)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantification (GQ) *</td>
<td>3 Natural Sciences (GN)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (GA) + (IL)</td>
<td>3 Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Fields</td>
<td>3 Humanities (GH)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Third Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 301 *</td>
<td>3 CAS 303 *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser) *</td>
<td>3 CAS 311 *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences (GN)</td>
<td>3 BA Fields</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (GA)</td>
<td>3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Fourth Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS 304 *</td>
<td>3 CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser) *</td>
<td>3 CAS 4XX-level course (work with adviser)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting CAS course (work with adviser) *</td>
<td>3 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Cultures</td>
<td>3 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness (GHW)</td>
<td>3 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 123

* 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

### 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.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and replace both ENGL 30H and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits.

### 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 (http://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 (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/).

**Advising Notes**

This document is only for planning purposes and cannot replace working with an academic adviser. Each student is unique, and some campuses may not offer many CAS courses. Most students are “off the plan” after one semester.

Students need at least 24 credits in CAS courses completed at UP due to competency requirements. Campus advisers may work with the UP CAS adviser if they have questions about what their current students might take.

Two general education courses (GQ, GN, GA, GH, GS) must be integrative studies courses - Inter-Domain or Linked.

Depending on placement and proficiency, world language courses may need to be replaced with elective credits.

Students are required to take one Writing across the Curriculum course. There are three CAS 4XX-level courses that will fulfill this requirement, but any W course will work.

**Career Paths**

CAS graduates are change makers: analysts, strategists, persuaders, facilitators, collaborators, connectors, and scholars. The CAS program equips students for success in the work force, graduate school, and civic life. CAS courses provide students the theories, methods, practical tools, and experiences to understand the roots of social conflict and the sources of well-being. CAS majors can make a positive difference in our society.

**Careers**

A Bachelor of Arts degree in CAS prepares students for success in careers that value a rigorous and diverse understanding of communication practices. Such careers include business, behavioral science, government, health and human services, human development, law, public relations, public policy, sales, and more. CAS graduates may work as analysts, strategists, facilitators, collaborators, or negotiators.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS ARTS AND SCIENCES PROGRAM (http://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/hiring-cas-majors/)

**Opportunities for Graduate Studies**

A Bachelor of Arts in CAS also provides excellent preparation for graduate study in either communication science or rhetoric, as well as fields such as business, behavioral science, health and human services, human development, public policy, social work, and more.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (http://cas.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/hiring-cas-majors/)

**Professional Resources**

- National Communication Association (https://www.natcom.org/)
- Lambda Pi Eta (https://www.natcom.org/student-organizations/lamba-pi-eta/)
- International Communication Association (https://www.icahdq.org/)

**Contact**

**University Park**

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