Department of Communication Studies  
Student Handbook
(June 2017)

Pop Quiz!

Being a Communication Studies major means:

A. You’ll learn how to communicate effectively and ethically
B. You’ll learn how to critique different types of communication, from a speech to a Super Bowl ad, from a Facebook wall post to a conversation with your roommate’s parents, from a class presentation to a journal article, and more
C. You’ll learn how to be a contributing and responsible group member
D. You’ll be able to explain to your friends why the statement “Communication is just common sense” is completely incorrect
E. All of the above

If you selected E. All of the above, congratulations! You may now put your clickers down.

As the faculty of the Department of Communication Studies at UNCW, we welcome you to your academic home. We’ve written this short handbook to help YOU, the Communication Studies (COM) major or Pre-COM (PCOM) major, navigate your way through the major successfully. When you cross the stage at Commencement, we want you to be a competent, rhetorically astute, ethical, and accomplished communicator who can excel in the personal and professional pursuit of your choice.

It’s a lofty goal, and one we take very seriously. Each of us as faculty may differ in our teaching methods, our communication styles, and our experience, but we are united in our commitment to our discipline and to higher education. We want you to understand not only HOW to excel but WHY we have these high expectations of you and your peers. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, this can be a great conversation starter with your fellow classmates and your COM faculty.

Let’s get started!

The Faculty of the Department of Communication Studies
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Table of Contents

SECTION 1: The Big Picture ................................................................................................... 3
  Mission and Department Learning Objectives ............................................................. 3
  Diversity and Communication ....................................................................................... 4

SECTION 2: Department and Academics ........................................................................... 5
  The Foundation and Core Courses ............................................................................. 6
  Snapshots of Our Sub-Disciplines ............................................................................. 7
  Advising: Mission and Purpose ................................................................................. 9
  Clubs and Extracurricular Activities ......................................................................... 10
  Other Enrichment Opportunities ............................................................................... 11

SECTION 3: Doing Good Work in the Major ................................................................. 13
  A Successful Communication Studies Major ............................................................. 13
  Taking the Long View ............................................................................................... 14
  The Core Skills ......................................................................................................... 15
  Common Vocabulary ................................................................................................. 17
  The “Good Presentation” in Communication Studies ................................................. 19
  The “Good Paper” in Communication Studies ......................................................... 19
  The “Good Group Member” in Communication Studies .......................................... 20
  A Note on Effort vs. Output ...................................................................................... 22

SECTION 4: Conclusion ..................................................................................................... 23
  How to go to college ................................................................................................. 24
  References ............................................................................................................... 25
  Helpful Links and Resources .................................................................................... 26
  COM Major “To Do” List ........................................................................................ 27
  Specialty Area Courses ............................................................................................. 28
  Changing Your Major ............................................................................................... 31
The Big Picture

There are many goals in college, but the shortest summary of them all may be “get ready for what’s next.” Co-founder of the GoodWork Project, Howard Gardner, argues that five minds will be valued in the future:

1. The Disciplined Mind
2. The Synthesized Mind
3. The Creative Mind
4. The Respectful Mind
5. The Ethical Mind

These habits of thinking, along with the abilities to communicate, work in teams, and solve problems, are important building blocks of an enriching personal life, effective citizenship and professional opportunities.

This document summarizes our department mission and structure and offers some basic guidelines for how to succeed as a student in our department. It is very much a compass and expression of common ground between all of our students and the faculty. This is not a definitive summary of all we have to offer. More information about each of these issues is available elsewhere on the department website or in documents such as the university catalog, the registrar’s office website, and in your Banner/SeaNet account.

Mission and Department Learning Objectives

We have identified an initial set of key objectives that are common to all COM majors, regardless of sub-discipline emphasis or career objectives (see page 4). These four departmental objectives connect with the broader university goals expressed in the UNCW Mission Statement. For example: “Our commitment to student engagement, creative inquiry, critical thinking, thoughtful expression and responsible citizenship is expressed in our baccalaureate and master’s programs,” in addition, “Our culture reflects our values of diversity and globalization, ethics and integrity, and excellence and innovation.”

Our four learning objectives below also seek to produce key aptitudes in our students that help you develop communication competence. That term is generally understood to be the integration of two elements: effectiveness (ability to reach your goals) and appropriateness (ability to meet social, cultural, ethical and situational expectations).

Each course and assignment that you encounter will have one or more of these educational objectives. Each time you approach such assignments with effort and attention to detail you should be further developing the core skills discussed elsewhere in this document and the outcomes listed here. If that is not happening, you are likely not doing the assignment as intended or with the rigor and reflection necessary to achieve college-level mastery of the discipline. If you do not see how a specific assignment fits into the pursuit of communication competencies, please find an appropriate time and place to discuss your concerns with your instructor.
The National Communication Association (NCA) created a more comprehensive set of learning objectives for communication studies majors. You should understand these goals and keep them in mind as you approach each course and assignment. The goals below are adapted from a document on undergraduate curriculum approved by the National Communication Association.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome: The capacity...</th>
<th>Examples from COM Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...to build and deliver an effective oral argument or performance of text, based on thorough audience analysis and clear rhetorical objectives.</td>
<td>You’ll do a variety of oral presentations in many classes. It is important to realize that college is cumulative and each presentation, however informal, should demonstrate your ongoing growth as a communicator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to construct effective written argument or media product based on thorough audience analysis and clear rhetorical objectives.</td>
<td>Papers should demonstrate advanced writing skills. Many courses require ongoing refinement of these skills during the planning stages even if the final product may ultimately be in a different medium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to locate and critically evaluate secondary research, conduct original primary research, and integrate such information into new communication products.</td>
<td>COM 200 is just the beginning of engaging in formal research about communication. Many advanced courses will require some level of original research as well as secondary research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...to analyze and critique messages in all forms and across objectives from an informed, critical perspective.</td>
<td>Many COM classes will require an evaluation of messages using theories and concepts (interpersonal, media, rhetorical and others) to inform your analysis and critique.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diversity and Communication**

The concept of diversity makes efforts to communicate more invigorating and more challenging. Our department is committed to the authentic exploration of issues of diversity as they expand, constrain, and inform the communication process. Diversity occurs on many levels, including race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, family structures, religious and political perspectives, social class, disabilities, and national origin. While every classroom audience may not contain a broad range of diverse representation, our communication choices as presenters and discussants, should reflect a genuine understanding and appreciation for diversity.

Interpersonal communication scholars Barnett Pearce and Vernon Cronen propose “cosmopolitan communication” as a productive approach to diversity in communication: “When applied to individuals, the label calls to mind a citizen of the world who interacts comfortably with people who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, hold different values, and express discrepant beliefs” (Griffin 2009, p. 80).
Communication Studies
Department & Academics

This section will help you understand and navigate the basic structure of our department so you can plan appropriately for things like a specialty area (or not!) within COM and be prepared for your senior year.

**The Foundation and Core Courses**

There are some key issues to be aware of even at this stage of your college experience. But let's begin preparing you for success by outlining how the program is organized.

The Foundation Courses: The foundation courses serve *three* important functions for our department.

**First, they prepares students for the work ahead.** To succeed in this major you must have a broad sense of the discipline and be able to engage the scholarly literature of the field. Those two objectives begin to get addressed in COM 105. You also must be able to engage in independent research and work effectively in groups under pressure. COM 200 begins to address these objectives.

**Second, they help you to establish intention and focus.** We don’t want COM majors who don’t know why they are here or what the major is about. We want COM majors who have chosen to major in COM because it matches up with their personal and professional goals. We also want majors who can articulate their interests within this broad field. We hope the gateway courses are challenging enough to foster such reflection and focus.

**Third, the classes help regulate our numbers.** We have an obligation to provide a high quality, experiential and powerful learning experience for our majors. The gateway limits our numbers by perhaps “scaring away” some folks just wandering around hoping to bump into their major. Some of our upper level courses and production courses need to be small in order to be effective. This helps us meet that demand.

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**Did you know that** COM alum, Shane Fernando ’00 was the student body president that brought the clock tower to campus? He thought the millennial class of 2000 should leave a special class gift. He worked with legislatures and others for matching gifts and the result was a lasting legacy. Go COM!
The Core: The core courses are what hold this very broad and ever-expanding discipline together. Let’s briefly look at them in order and why we have made them our core.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Why it is in the Core</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSC 105</td>
<td>Computer skills are critical for success in the major and beyond. You will need to become very competent in file management, relevant software, and be aware of ethical issues surrounding computer use, the internet, and especially intellectual property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 105</td>
<td>Exposure to the breadth and essentials of the discipline is necessary so potential majors can make a more intentional choice about their major and begin acquiring the vocabulary necessary for success in the major, and in one or more sub-disciplines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 101</td>
<td>Provides training in the central craft of the major. Preparing and delivering a substantive, coherent, and effective presentation is the basic expectation we and others have of our major. This class begins the process of mastering those skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 200</td>
<td>COM majors must make arguments. Credible information is the basis of support for any argument you will make. So, being able to access and evaluate, and generate credible information is critically important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 301</td>
<td>The next two classes are both your toolbox and your family tree. They expose you to the people, theories and concepts that make up the nucleus of our discipline. This course emphasizes the humanities side of our family tree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 305</td>
<td>This course is the companion to COM 301. They can be taken separately or together. The key is to understand their similarities and differences. This course emphasizes the social science side of our family tree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 400</td>
<td>This course is our cumulative final for the major. It is your chance to demonstrate that you have acquired skills and a knowledge base consistent with our expectations for a senior COM major. You will engage in assignments that ask you to draw upon everything you’ve learned from the core and your other classes and produce rhetorically effective artifacts that demonstrate your readiness for whatever you’ve identified as your “next step.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COM 400 and the Need for Artifacts: One of the key ways you can prepare for success in COM 400 is to start a folder on your thumb drive and a physical archive in which you save artifacts that might be needed in COM 400 (an additional electronic backup is a must!). These would include things like a career search instrument that you take in COM 105 or a certificate of completion for a training program in COM 200. Make sure that each group member has a copy of the final presentation materials or a draft of the final paper. It is critical that you accurately represent your role in the creation of any group authored artifact. Misrepresentation of such materials has led to students failing the portfolio assignment. Be thorough, be accurate, and be ethical in the archiving and presentation of your artifacts. Think about archiving at least one key artifact from each COM class as well as archiving artifacts related to club involvement and other outside-of-class experiences.
Tracks or No Tracks: Can I Major in Public Relations (PR)? Nope. You can certainly pursue a specialty or area of concentration. However, our department does not offer or require formal tracks or concentrations. We do this for two reasons.

1. We see many powerful connections between the sub-disciplines and want students to be able to mix and match in ways that might best suit their personal and professional goals. You may decide to combine an interest in desktop publishing and interpersonal communication as the best way for you to prepare for a career in real estate sales.

2. It is difficult to predict the ebb and flow of your evolving interests. You may start out interested in PR but take a media class and decide that is what you want to explore.

So what should you do to clarify your intentions? Start by reviewing the catalog descriptions of our courses and determine which ones excite you and draw you in. It may be that you see yourself as a specialist with focused interests in organizational and international communication. It may also be that you see yourself as an intentional generalist finding the entire major interesting. However, even a generalist must take a 400 level course in the major other than COM 400. It is important for every major to engage in the rigor of a 400 course as part of their growth as a scholar and practitioner of communication. You can also pursue related courses outside the major. For example, someone with an interest in organizational communication might also take industrial psychology.

**Snapshots of Our Sub-Disciplines**

You may not get a chance to take courses in each of our sub-disciplines. You may also want to combine more than one area of focus. The following summaries and definitions provide a starting point to help identify which area(s) are most intriguing to you at this point.

**Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC):** IMC is the theoretical framework for persuasive communication activities such as public relations, advertising, promotions, event design, brand management, social media, word-of-mouth marketing, and more. IMC focuses on customers or prospective customers as its audience and seeks to affect the behavior of these groups. The field of PR studies emphasizes the establishment and maintenance of relationships with all of an organization’s publics. Advertising identifies target markets and creates persuasive messages to reach these targeted groups. Related areas include crisis and corporate communication.

**Intercultural/Interracial:** Intercultural communication offers a focus and skill set for communication encounters that involve participants from other cultures both international and domestic. Interracial communication explores how individuals from other races engage in various settings, particularly in situations where race is a salient or prominent factor. Interracial communication seeks to provide historical, social, and communicative information so that students may become more competent communicators during interracial encounters.

**Interpersonal & Conflict Management:** Interpersonal Communication provides students with the concepts, insight, and theoretical constructs needed to explore relationship development, within the contexts of families, friendships, colleagues, and romantic relationships. Theoretical constructs are
used to examine the way messages are designed and interpreted, the context of messages, and how individuals cope with conflict. (www.ecasite.org)

**Media Production:** With “digital convergence” as the new normal, students will learn to create and work with written, visual, and audio content to create effective digital messages for a given communication goal. These products may include posters, public service announcements, music videos, documentaries and more. Media production is attentive not only to technical training but also to theoretical knowledge that considers questions of ethics, persuasion, aesthetics, and law.

**Media Studies:** Communication scholars Littlejohn and Foss (2005) describe this area as addressing “media content and structure, society and culture, and audience.” Courses explore many of the larger themes in other areas such as race, politics, gender, and class as they are represented (or not) in media. Those students interested in IMC and media production may find these courses helpful.

**Organizational and Group Communication:** Everyone will work in or with organizations. So it is important study what people do as they attempt to achieve group goals. More narrowly, “org. comm.” focuses on how, in order to pursue those goals, group members effectively and ineffectively formulate and exchange messages. A very brief list of these “messages” would include speaking, writing, gestures, media, clothing, decorations/space, and more. Students with interest in leadership, management, sales, talent development and other careers will find this a good fit.

**Performance Studies:** What does it mean to “perform” college student, or son, or daughter? Performance studies asks such questions. It is an interdisciplinary field of knowledge that explores the relationships between culture, texts, performers, and audiences. It is an artistic process of studying and communicating stories through their performance. It allows students to “try on” other people’s voices, bodies, emotions, intellect, and perceptions by embodying speakers who are depicted in literary texts, ethnographic texts and personal narratives.

**Political Communication:** The study of the role that communication plays within political systems. Areas of study include forms of public address, governmental institutions, political campaigns, social movements, and the media. (www.natcom.org)

**Rhetoric and Public Address:** According to James Herrick (2009), rhetoric is “…the systematic study and intentional practice of the effective symbolic expression…The systematic presentation of the art of rhetoric, descriptions of rhetoric’s various functions, and explanation of how rhetoric achieves its goals are collectively known as rhetorical theory” (7). According to Sarah Trenholm (2008), “Public speaking offers the opportunity to speak up when it is important to do so, to develop ideas in one’s own way, and to make a difference in the public sphere” (276). Numerous studies confirm that those who can speak well in public are very competitive in the market place as graduates and often excel in leadership positions once hired.

**I don’t see what I want to specialize in!?!:** Relax, this is actually very common. Many students will say “I want to focus on sport promotions, fashion merchandising, social media account management, radio, etc. Here are two pieces of advice. First, pursue your focus while also building your versatility. Journalism might be your lifetime passion. Or your interests may change—even while you’re here! So
be open to that possibility. Second, focus on your specialization through your course projects, not our course titles. If you love sports marketing, you can learn about it holistically through almost any of our courses! Ask your faculty to help you connect the dots for your semester projects. Another way to help you navigate through our program is by proactively working with your advisor.

**Advising: Mission and Purpose**

The Department of COM Studies believes that advising should be a collaboration between students and advisors that exemplifies civility and respect. PCOM students should demonstrate intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and responsibility in preparation for their advising session. In return, advisors are committed to providing informed guidance and advice about university and department policies and procedures to help students achieve their academic goals in a timely manner.

Each student has different needs, and we are committed to ensuring that students are given the opportunity to meet with an experienced and knowledgeable academic advisor. The advising policies and procedures help ensure that advising sessions are an effective and efficient investment of time for both student and advisor.

**Advising Meetings:** Advising meetings are held the two to three weeks before registration begins each semester. Typically registration opens the first Monday of November for the spring semester, and the first Monday of April for the summer and fall semesters. Emails are sent to all PCOM and COM students around fall break and spring break with instructions. It is each student’s responsibility to follow the instructions carefully to be prepared for the sessions. It is also the student’s responsibility to arrange their work schedule to meet with their advisor.

Preparation for advising meetings includes, but is not limited to, developing a schedule for the upcoming semester. In addition you may want to ask your advisor about one or more of the following issues. If so, please plan ahead and have your questions prepared.

1. Internships
2. Education abroad
3. Minors
4. Directed Individual Studies
5. Graduate School
6. Summer School
7. Clubs and Organizations
8. Post-Graduation Plans
9. Other ______________

**PCOM Advising:** The lead PCOM advisor is officially the assigned advisor for all students whose primary major is PCOM. However, these students are advised by the PCOM Team. Due to the number of PCOM students the PCOM Team does not make individual appointments. PCOM students are assigned a week to attend advising, and the PCOM Team is available during specific times that week to meet with the students. It is critical to regularly check your official UNCW email account during the advising season!
**COM Advising:** COM Majors are assigned a specific advisor in the department. The new advisor will not be a PCOM advisor, and the advisor’s name will appear on the student’s degree audit. The faculty members will post appointment availability outside their office. Once a COM Major receives the advising email, it is their responsibility to sign-up for an advising appointment.

**The Proper Role of Clubs and Extra-curricular Activities in COM**

The COM department at UNCW takes great pride in the leadership roles our majors take on all across campus and in the community. We’ve had numerous SGA presidents and senators, club presidents and officers, and leaders in the Greek organizations. Such involvement can be enriching and life changing. It can also be a great source of experiences and artifacts for your resume and COM 400 portfolio. Our general recommendation is to focus on finding an organization or two where you can make a sustained and focused contribution. You need not be an officer to be an active member helping to make a positive difference in the club or cause. But joining five clubs and being little more than a casual attendee doesn’t really do much good for anyone. Do not chase “lines on your resume.” Employers place great importance on seeing a track record of sustained involvement leading to leadership responsibilities in student organizations.

As you explore clubs and attempt to “find your people,” we strongly encourage attendance to a special event held by any group. For example; even if you are not a member of Amnesty International, you should certainly feel encouraged to attend a rally or a special event that involves an outside speaker. Becoming an engaged citizen and “soaking up” all the college experience while you are here is important. This is especially true for the clubs most closely associated with our major: CSS, LPH, UNCW Storytellers, and Pier601 Creative. While you may only be a formal member of one of the organizations, please feel welcome to attend panel sessions that are of interest. Clubs are one of the best ways that you can refine your abilities to lead, to follow, and to serve causes greater than yourself. One way to begin to explore clubs and organizations is to visit their website, Facebook page, or other social media presence. Links can be found on the [COM Studies webpage](#).

Just about any club is open to students from any major. [Student Media](#) (including The Seahawk newspaper and Teal TV) can be great not only to learn media skills, but they also have need of those interested in sales, advertising, and other communication-related positions. Several other clubs are also strongly tied to COM. Here’s a brief description of each.

**Communication Studies Society:** CSS is active in department, campus, and community events and helps students with a variety of interests in communication studies to network with professionals and succeed in the major.

**Lambda Pi Eta:** LPH is the national honors society for our discipline. To qualify for membership you must meet specific membership criteria including 12 credit hours and a 3.25 GPA in the major. LPH members also engage in some important service projects during the year.

**UNCW Storytellers:** While not technically a “club,” this course provides a significant service mission to local schools, and the relationships formed and experiences shared with students are often quite powerful. The course can be taken multiple times and several of our students have emerged with aspirations to be professional storytellers.
**Pier601 Creative:** Offered as a practicum for advanced IMC students, Pier601 Creative is the COM Studies marketing firm. Students partner with local organizations and businesses in an applied learning environment to create branding and effective promotional content. Student responsibilities include research, strategic planning, media production, social media management, and digital marketing.

**Other Enrichment Opportunities**

Is UNCW a party school? Yes, but so is Wake Forest or any other school you might know of. Your college experience is not where you go, but what you make of where you go. “Parties” can be a lot more fun when they are enjoyed guilt free because you’ve completed your work at a level that makes you proud. They can be sources of guilt and regret when they are a form of escape from higher responsibilities. Below are some of the many enrichment opportunities that exist in addition to social events, clubs, and student organizations.

**Internships**:
The purpose of an internship is to provide practical work experience in a field you have identified as a potential career interest. Under the supervision of industry professionals, you will blend your academic training with pragmatic application. If you are a junior/senior with an overall GPA of 2.5 and you are a full COM Major you may apply to be an intern. Your completed and in-progress coursework at the time of application should make an argument that you are prepared for the field experience that an internship provides. For example, do not expect to be approved for an internship at a PR agency when you have not taken appropriate preparatory course work in IMC/PR. Please meet with the department internship director to discuss the many opportunities available. Additional information as well as the application is available on the department website.

**The DIS**:
The Directed Individual Study is a unique opportunity to work with a faculty member to explore topics not offered in our curriculum or to explore a topic more deeply than is possible in our curriculum. Projects range from the practical issues of designing a website to engaging in research projects with faculty.

**Honors in the Major**:
Honors in the major is for students that want to carry out independent research projects that culminate in a publication or broadcast quality product. The student should explore this option during their junior year and be ready to carry out the project over his or her final two semesters at UNCW. Honors projects have ranged from documentaries and in-depth interview to rhetorical analyses of literature. The projects can be a great source of pride but should not be entered into without a great deal of thought. Such projects require a significant commitment from you and your honors thesis committee chair. If you think you would like to carry out such a project begin brainstorming on paper and then share your ideas with a professor that is a good match for the project. Also see [http://www.uncw.edu/honors/](http://www.uncw.edu/honors/) for more general information on honors program.

**Study Abroad**:
UNCW is committed to fostering global citizenship. UNCW defines global citizenship as “the ability to evaluate large-scale impacts of historical, scientific, economic, political, cultural and artistic perspectives on individuals, societies and our environment; and by participation in efforts to make the world a better place.” We support that effort in many ways. Global issues are integrated into many courses and courses like Intercultural Communication address such challenges and opportunities even more directly. We also work closely with the Office of International Programs (OIP)
(http://uncw.edu/intprogs/) to help COM majors go abroad. Here are some things you should do if you are considering studying abroad.

1. Tell your advisor(s) of your intention early on—this may impact when you take certain courses.
2. Tell our COM department OIP liaison about your intentions as well. The liaison is our resident “expert” on working with OIP and can also help with schedule planning.
3. Consider focusing on ELECTIVE hours for your study abroad semester; these can be COM elective hours and/or general elective hours. While it is occasionally possible for courses to come back as specific classes at UNCW or our department, this is rare. It is more common to have courses come back as COM International Seminars (either as COM 294, COM 394 or COM 494) and thus earn COM elective credit hours toward your degree or simply come back as general elective hours.

We also take students abroad in some of our classes as an optional travel component. Please read the SeaNet schedule carefully and read the COM News Bulletins carefully about these opportunities. They are a great chance to immediately apply course concepts while seeing a new part of the world we live in!

“How vain it is to sit down to write when you have not stood up to live’ (Henry David Thoreau). I think that this trip is one of the most exemplary ideas or definitions of that quote. You are getting up and you are going out and you are living a life that you can write about later and really take pride in it and appreciate it. I think that when you've had those experiences (and shared them), then someone else who's reading your account or watching your video footage, they could really gain that deep sense of appreciation that you have not only for what you love to do in life but for life itself.”

- Connor Buss ’14, Swansea Video Production Trip, 2014
Doing Good Work in the Major

Very few students come to college saying “I want to be a marginal student who is completely unimpressive in the eyes of the faculty and my fellow students—nailed it!” Yet, time and again, we have students who miss the mark. We hope this section clarifies what it means to hit the mark.

A Successful Communication Studies Major:

1. Understands how the study and practice of communication is informed by diverse theoretical perspectives and historical roots in both the humanities and the social sciences;
2. Embraces their personal and professional development by intentionally embodying the core skills and other markers of personal maturation and mastery of communication.
3. Demonstrates communication competency (self-awareness and adaptability) with diverse and complex audiences and context:
   - in multiple forms of presentation
   - in analysis and interpretation of contemporary media
   - in analysis and creation of arguments intended to influence beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors
   - in the process of systematically asking questions and attempting to answer them and understanding the limitations of the conclusions that are reached

Alumni Advice

“Pay attention in class and apply what you learn every day while studying. Start thinking now about your goals and aspirations once you finish your COM studies degree. Take it from me, you can pick any field and the tools taught at UNCW will get you there if you make a plan, work your butt off—nothing will be given to you—and network, network, network. One more thing... Linkedin is for colleagues and recruiters... Facebook is for friends. There is a difference. Best of luck to you all!”

- Eileen Vincett, '01, Senior Designer of Men's Accessories, Ben Sherman, London, England

Find more information and advice on our COM Alumni Spotlight at http://www.uncw.edu/com/alumni/month/index.html
Taking the Long View: Being a Good Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

During your freshman year, we hope that you are able to focus on making significant progress in basic studies and taking courses that support your eventual focus in communication studies. The connections between your major and many of the courses you’ll take in basic studies are rich and should be explored and reflected upon. Even during your freshman year, you should begin the habit of systematically saving all your best work for possible COM 400 artifacts. It also not too early to find your clubs and organizations.

During your sophomore year, you should continue to emphasize basic studies while taking some COM courses. You should ideally take CSC 105 and COM 101. COM 105 should be a priority but several other courses are also useful regardless of your specialization. These include COM 116, 160, 212, 220, 232, and 271. It is important during your sophomore year to formally declare your major. Remember to systematically save all your best work for possible COM 400 artifacts. If you are planning to study abroad in your junior or senior year, this is a good time to talk with your advisor about course sequencing and other important implications. You should also have settled in on some extracurricular focal points.

As a junior, you’ll begin to emphasize more classes in the major while also making intentional use of general electives. Our website contains a list of courses outside the department that support various specialty areas. It is at this point that you need to begin to take courses that will help you clarify your professional and personal identity as a graduate of UNCW. For example, if you hope to go into Human Resources your course work should reflect that. Courses in organizational communication, interpersonal communication and industrial psychology among others would be evidence of your professed interest. This is also a good time to explore internship options and what you need to do to set yourself up for a successful internship or the possibility of an honors thesis in the major. Remember to systematically save all your best work for possible COM 400 artifacts.

You’re a senior—and you’re in the home stretch! At this point you should be into the heart of the major and you should begin to make insightful and significant connections between your courses. You should be speaking and writing as a senior COM major, not simply as a student in a given class. For example, when explaining why you made certain choices in an assignment you might reference interpersonal communication theory and rhetorical theory as well as principles and concepts in PR. You should seek out challenges associated with your senior status. You should take the top courses in your professed interest area. You should seek out special topics seminars. Your presentations should be the equivalent of a music major’s senior recital. And of course, you should take COM 400. Remember, pilots are judged by how well they land the plane: finish well!
**The Core Skills: What Are They and What Do They Look Like?**

The Department of Communication Studies offers a diverse array of courses and faculty. However, we generally agree that we must pursue the development of the whole person as part of being a COM major. This expectation is grounded in the origin of our discipline. Ancient Roman rhetorician Quintilian’s quotation exemplifies the long standing relationship between character and authentic communication. Below is a summary of some common attributes and objectives we seek to foster. We expect you to work with us to acquire and develop these outcomes through private reflection on course content and express them through activities and assignments you encounter.

It is important to see this list as central, not comprehensive; other concepts could easily be added. These were selected because they are foundational to pursuing other important outcomes and because they reflect an understanding of our discipline as an art, craft, and science. In each of our emphasis areas you will encounter assignments that require and seek to develop these traits.

You will often hear that “theory informs practice” in our courses. That is also true on this list. Some of the concepts are primarily “habits of mind” and focus on thought processes. Others are “habits of action” and focus primarily on behaviors. Clearly they work together: habits of mind should result in habits of action and certain actions can help refine habits of mind.

Finally, remember that living by these concepts should be framed by a strong awareness of the ethical dimensions, ideals and obligations of whatever you are thinking, valuing, and doing. For one example of how these ethical obligations should inform our communication choices see the National Communication Association (NCA) [Code of Ethics](https://www.nca-net.org/about-nca/ethics/code-of-ethics).

Collectively, this attention to specific communication skills and more foundational character traits help to prepare you for a life of intention, personal enrichment, citizenship and professional success. There will be times when you must be a leader, there will be times when you must be a committed, energetic and principled follower under the leadership of others, behaving in a manner that makes it easier for them to effectively lead. In the balance of those two roles is the life of the engaged citizen, pursuing life, liberty, and happiness but also setting aside personal gain for the larger good when necessary.

The following table outlines the core skills and how you can develop them as a COM Studies major.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Skill</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example From COM Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Feeling able to do what you set out to do, mentally, emotionally, and physically.</td>
<td>Performance and writing assignments throughout the curriculum should work to instill confidence in your ability to speak and write well under pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Curiosity</td>
<td>Valuing and participating in experiences that comprise “the life of the mind.”</td>
<td>Asking higher level questions in class. Connecting concepts, themes and behaviors between courses. Completing extra work of an academic or scholarly nature; participating in opportunities offered by the university that are academic or scholarly in nature (e.g., attending a lecture series or challenging artistic performance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Taking control of the processes necessary to achieve what you set out to accomplish. This involves the coordination of motivation, initiative, and perseverance.</td>
<td>Consistently meeting due dates and criteria of assignments. Honoring your advising appointments and office visits by being on time and prepared. Many assignments in various situations require responsibility, both as a member seeking positive final peer evaluation and in giving honest feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Working well with others to accomplish a high quality outcome of a completed task, service, product or performance.</td>
<td>Panel presentations, video projects and many other COM assignments will require and foster collaboration. It is important to explicitly work on becoming a better team member, as well as completing the task at hand. Both process and product are important concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Using sound reasoning, criteria, theories and definitions to explore specific questions or issues of concern.</td>
<td>Debates, class discussions and performance analyses, as well as essays that ask for arguments help to acquire and develop critical thinking skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>Coordinating all that you know and can do to bring about satisfactory outcomes.</td>
<td>Research and DIS projects, internships, extracurricular opportunities within the department (CSS, UNCW Storytellers, Lambda Pi Eta, Pier601) as well as groups and organizations outside the department such as SGA and Student Media are all ways to demonstrate and refine problem solving abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civility</td>
<td>Showing regard for the dignity of other people and the importance of social expectations.</td>
<td>Respectful involvement in class discussion and performances (active listening and meaningful contributions). “Pulling your own weight” out of respect for your fellow group members as people. Being honest but tactful in peer feedback and interaction with faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praxis</td>
<td>Able to do what the theory or concept tells you to do with skill and self-awareness.</td>
<td>Making clear, insightful and recognizable connections in assignments that demonstrate your ability to connect course content to your own thinking, performance choices and habits. This concept speaks to your ability to put course vocabulary into practice.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Megaskills by Dorothy Rich.*
Some Common Vocabulary

With a discipline as broad as communication studies it is often difficult to identify a common vocabulary. Many central terms such as “theory” have several useful definitions. Below is a primer of some vocabulary that is common to many classes and many assignments. Obviously, there is a LOT more that could be said about each of these important terms.

Communication (not CommunicationS): Let’s begin with the most basic of reminders: the name of your major is “communication studies” not “communications.” You are pursuing a degree in the Department of Communication Studies. This may seem like a little thing—it’s not. “Communications” is a label typically associated with cable companies and radio technicians. It is also sometimes used to refer to the process of exchanging messages in certain specific settings (for example, aviation and the military). It does not imply the richness and the blend of the social sciences, humanities, and practical crafts explored in our department.

Critical Thinking: Critical thinking is, in short, self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. This element of the thinking process is central to how we engage in teaching and learning. Critical thinking requires “rigorous standards of excellence and mindful command of their use” (Paul and Elder, 2007, p. 4). You must become a strong thinker if you are to thrive in this major. Communication is creative and powerful. Consequently, a simplistic template or set of techniques are not sufficient. You must work to refine your ability to connect theory with practice. This is an ongoing and continuous process. There are theories and concepts that will inform your analysis, evaluation, creation and consumption of communication and you must be able to employ them insightfully.

Argument: An argument is a claim that is supported by reasoning and evidence. The lack of either reduces the statement to a mere assertion or opinion. Essays, speeches, documentaries, public service announcements, brochures, and the like all make arguments. They attempt to influence values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Be ready and willing to make arguments and critique arguments of others.

Dialogue: The complement to argument is dialogue. Dialogue is communication with the primary goal of mutual understanding rather than influence. Good dialogue may still change minds and hearts as a consensus or “best idea” emerges but no one sets out initially to convince others of a point of view. You should become adept at both argument and dialogue and know when to engage in either.

Cicero’s Five Canons: To create and express arguments is at the very core of our major. Regardless of the artifact (business presentation or talk show interview) you must address the following five concerns to be effective. These five issues will often be the basis for grading rubrics that our faculty use to provide feedback on your presentations and papers.

1. **Invention:** Finding and developing the subject of the communication: what are you going to communicate?

2. **Arrangement:** Assembling the content in a strategic and satisfying way: in what order are you going to communicate your ideas and arguments?
3. **Style**: The artful expression of the ideas appropriate to the situation and audience: with what formality, mood and specific language will you communicate your ideas and arguments?

4. **Memory**: Committing to memory your general knowledge of the topic and the specific presentation that has been prepared: do you feel confident that you truly "know your stuff?"

5. **Delivery**: Performing all that you’ve prepared by the proper management of verbal and nonverbal elements: does what you actually do express and enhance what you have prepared?

**Questions of fact, value and policy**: It is important to know what type of question you are answering or what type of issue you are dialoguing or arguing about. This brief chart will can help you sort things out. We often must build a case by addressing each of these issues in sequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions or issues of Fact</th>
<th>Is or is not the case? Questions of fact are verifiable through investigation: <em>Communication studies is the second largest major at UNCW</em> can be investigated by counting the number of majors.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions or issues of Value</td>
<td>Good, better, best, bad, beautiful, worthy, etc. These are questions or issues which call for criteria: <em>Relational dialectics is a better theory than social exchange theory</em> requires us to reveal criteria or values for “best.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions or issues of Policy</td>
<td>What we should or should not do. Questions of policy are questions of action: <em>COM should eliminate the “B or better” standard in foundational courses.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a similar set of questions that are a bit more specialized to fit the context of doing research. Many of your papers will address one or more of these issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions or issues of Description</th>
<th><em>What was that communication like? What were some basic patterns of exchange?</em> This issue is similar to questions of fact, but often deals with interpretation as well as more objective dimensions. Theories and other course concepts will help you describe things more deeply and insightfully so look for these connections when possible.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions or issues of Relationship</td>
<td><em>How is A related to B? Does A cause B? Does more of A result in less of B?</em> Many quantitative studies attempt to address these questions and issues for example: <em>Does creating a competitive organizational culture increase productivity in the long term?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions or issues of Evaluation</td>
<td><em>Was that effective? Was that ethical?</em> Like questions of value, questions of evaluation imply criteria. In many cases your criteria will come from the theories and concepts you encounter in your courses. Look for these connections when possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The “Good Presentation” in Communication Studies

Your primary evidence of mastery of the major will come through your presentations and papers or multimedia submissions. Each assignment will have specific directions to follow but here are some basic guidelines that are always expected even if not explicitly stated in the assignments.

Speaking in public is one of the biggest challenges an individual faces. The primary goal, simply stated is to understand and to be understood. You must first seek to understand your audience and how they “see the world” before you can craft and deliver a speech that your listeners will understand. And, you do want to be understood. Many of the guidelines below, under The “Good Paper” in Communication Studies, apply here as well. But there are also additional obligations and some key differences. Hold to these guidelines and obligations in every presentation because every presentation is a “real speech.” We often find ourselves as faculty reminding students that the upcoming assignment is a “speech speech” or “real speech.” We shouldn’t have to do this. Every speech you do after COM 101 should demonstrate an ever-deeper mastery of those principles. The expectation is every class you take (that has elements of presentation) is a progression of improvement in public speaking.

1. Present for the “best” actual audience in the room. Relate to the audience but do not pander. Implicitly ask them to be smart and be their best selves.

2. Learn to cite sources smoothly as you speak. This is critical to your credibility and your grade.

3. Continue to refine your use of communication principles learned in other classes.

4. Respect the time limit! Time management is the key evidence of your active rehearsal and preparation. It is a critical way that show respect for your audience, instructor, and other speakers that may go that day. Our culture values time and you must as well.

5. Be creatively multi-media: effectively integrate visual and audio reinforcements that enhance the presentation. Do so in ways that show mastery of the technology needed.

The “Good Paper” in Communication Studies

The key characteristic of a good paper is that you follow the directions given by your instructor. Each paper—from an informal reflection piece to a formal research paper—is assigned to achieve some educational outcomes. Understand them before you begin. While specific expectations such as page length and number of sources may vary, here are some expectations to keep in mind whenever you write.

1. Understand and pursue what the assignment is really after. This sounds obvious but many students miss that an analysis of a film in COM 305 Communication Theory is not about the film. It is about demonstrating your command of one or more communication theories through insightful analysis of the film as communication. This is a different purpose and focus than analyzing a film for an English class or Film Studies class.

2. Demonstrate respect for language and the communication process. Use correct grammar. Find the exact right words, punctuate correctly, spell correctly, etc. Use relevant vocabulary from the readings and textbook. Make it very clear that you take communication seriously. Remember
that writing never gets “easy,” it only gets “better.” For help in these areas and more check out the APA Formatting and Style Guide [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/).

3. Demonstrate respect for intellectual property and the ideas and words of others. Integrate sources with appropriate citations and attribution. Avoid plagiarism as if your academic life depends on it—it does. See the [UNCW Code of Student Life](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/) for elaboration.

4. Write with purpose. Look at the assignment description but also dig deeper: Which of the questions above are you addressing: fact, value, policy? Description, relationship, evaluation? You may address several during the course of an extended essay but be clear about your overall argument.

5. Manage the obligations of [the five canons](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/). An “A” paper is a lot like an Olympic figure skating routine. There are points awarded for difficulty and for execution. Similarly, there are points at stake for invention—difficulty of subject matter—and each of the other five canons as well. To do well you must aim high and show mastery and artful management of each obligation.

6. Write for a specific audience. This audience may be real or imagined but should be specific. For a PR news release it may be a journalist working for a national media outlet. For a research paper it may be fellow academics. For an essay exam it may be a professor. Get the audience clear in your head before you write: such clarity will shape how you manage the five canons in your paper—especially style.

7. Reflect on and revise your work. For almost all assignments your best work will only emerge through revision of preliminary drafts. Do not expect above average grades unless you engage in above average processes of writing and revision.

**The “Good Group Member” in Communication Studies**

One of the elements of our major that many students find challenging is group work. You will encounter groups throughout your COM coursework. We don’t put you in groups to be lazy or reduce grading.

Groups are where you learn to communicate with other people to get things done and have opportunities to develop your core skills. Everyone has responsibilities outside of the classroom. Everyone is imperfect. How will you create excellent work *anyway*? Such challenges do not excuse you from being a contributing, responsible group member—*anyway*.

While different courses require different group structures, tasks, projects, and leadership, we’d like to offer some general DO’s and DON’Ts, in the list below, to help you understand how to be a “good” group member.

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**COM Advice**

“Students should know going into the COM major that one way to succeed is to recognize the importance of group work and schedule accordingly. Group work is a priority that you must schedule around.”

- COM Senior

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DO:

1. **Be responsive.** If your group e-mails, calls or texts you—respond quickly, even if it’s a simple “I got your message and I'll get back to you in a few hours.”

2. **Ask questions.** If you don’t understand the project, you won’t be a contributing group member. Ask questions to clarify the purpose, what goals the group has, what success and failure look like, and so on.

3. **Prepare.** No one likes to waste time, especially in group meetings. Be prepared for each meeting. Do the individual tasks you were assigned and provide a summary of your progress. Groups move forward through a combination of individual work between meetings and group meetings to decide next steps based on that work.

4. **Take initiative.** Don’t wait for fellow group members to assign you tasks. Volunteer and then deliver on your promise.

5. **Focus on collaboration.** Try to focus on being productive, engaging ideas, and learning new content and processes, rather than personalities and friendships.

6. **Use your major.** Apply what you’re learning in your COM courses to your group’s communication. This is what we call *praxis*—theory-informed action. A functional group is not a mysterious phenomenon that only occurs when the stars align. Use communication concepts to help your group succeed—and have crucial conversations about real issues when your group is not succeeding.

DON’T:

1. **Disappear.** The case of the disappearing group member is one that instructors see often. Passivity can negatively impact your grade, your relationships with your group mates, and future coursework. For example, if you were a marginal group member in COM 200, you’ll be remembered by your classmates as one to avoid in a group in classes in your specialty area.

2. **Show up unprepared.** Don’t show up to a group meeting 10 minutes late with no materials. Make each meeting a working meeting.

3. **Take it personally.** Your awesome best friend may turn out to be the group member from hell, and you’re stuck with picking up his/her slack. Or you may be assigned to a group with someone who is your polar opposite. This is good practice for life. Work functionally, not relationally, with your classmates. Think more about “how can we work together” than about “how much do I like/dislike this person.”

4. **Think “we always have to meet in person.”** Sometimes working on a paper together makes more sense online, with everyone tracking comments and edits. This is no less important than a face-to-face meeting, and in fact may be more productive.

5. **Expect your professor to give you time in class.** It will be rare that a COM instructor uses class meetings for group time. When that happens, use this wisely.
Very few life experiences are completely solitary. You will always need to be a self-aware and adaptive communicator. You’ll encounter groups in the workplace, at home with family or roommates, in your extracurricular activities, and so on. Consider group work in COM Studies the opportunity to gain practical wisdom (*phronesis*) in the area of group communication.

**A Note on Effort versus Output**

While hard work, effort and time spent completing projects are certainly valued in our major and in our society, it is the quality of the final product (i.e., exam, analysis paper, digital media product) and not the effort by which it was created, which must be the primary focus for evaluation. This is especially important to understand in the case of creative and scholarly projects that are often time consuming but must be judged on their merit of the value of their quality upon completion, not the amount of work that went into producing them. Effort and following best practices are almost always necessary for success, but they are not sufficient to guarantee success.

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**Alumni Advice**

“Be prepared to take risks, embrace all forms of communication, and be open to constantly refining and developing your skills. Media and forms of communication are constantly changing and will continue to do so. Stay on top of the change and your knowledge will put you ahead of the pack.”

- Patrick McCarthy ’07, Senior Press Manager, E! Entertainment/NBC-Universal, Los Angeles, CA

Find more information and advice on our COM Alumni Spotlight at [http://www.uncw.edu/com/alumni/month/index.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/alumni/month/index.html)
Conclusion

How to Go to College

We’re not being flippant when we offer that heading. Certainly time management, choosing friends wisely, and finding the right major all contribute to success in college, but you also need to consider your own position on some fundamental issues so that college as whole makes more sense. We want you to consider two more: motive and content.

**Motive:** why are you doing what you are doing? Whatever your primary motivation is for going to college, it will markedly affect how well you do as a communication studies major. Some students attend college to prepare themselves for a career. Studying communication in depth will surely help you achieve professional or career goals. Regularly ask your professors to underscore for you the connections between what you learn in class and how you will use that information professionally.

Another common motivation to go to college is to meet new friends, replace old ones, find a mate or partner, or become a member of an extracurricular group such as a fraternity, sorority, band, or club. If you are motivated in that way, the Department of Communication Studies is filled with sociable, approachable students and faculty members. However, understand that even within this motive, attention must be given to study and academic achievement.

**Other students are motivated by a sense of social responsibility.** They want to do right in the world, and believe that only by getting a college degree can they contribute as they would wish—and yes, a communication degree is an outstanding, practical starting point for a life of service.

An unfortunate motivation for college is that it’s simply what you feel obligated or forced to do at this point in your life. Absent some effort on your part, your indifference will not fade away. If this ever describes you, it is time to talk to the important people in your life such as your parents, spouse, or other trusted confidante to help you discern what might be a good next step in your life—which may or may not be to continue at UNCW. Many of our successful graduates took a year off in their studies to find themselves and a deeper purpose and motive for going to college. The break and the maturation it provided made all the difference.

You may say “I have several of these motives at the same time.” That’s great too. Understand that each of them will emphasize certain dimensions of college and raise a challenge or two. For those focused on careers, you’ll find it a bit more challenging to embrace the “life of the mind” aspects of some courses and assignments that are about refining critical thinking or deepening appreciation for the world.

“When education becomes an instrument of individual careerism, it cannot provide either personal meaning or civic culture” (Bellah et al., p. 293).

Do be aware of the extraordinarily compelling motivation of learning for the sake of learning. The communication studies program, like all good college programs, offers countless opportunities to “live the life of the mind”—indeed, your years as an undergraduate may be the only time in your life when you can give yourself over to this experience.
around you. Others will face different challenges. Know that this is part of college and don’t blame the system for being what it is: college is an opportunity for transformation and many other things as well.

Content: The content you learn in your classes is a minimum standard for competence in your chosen field. The following conversation from an article written by Douglas J. Eder, a higher education assessment and teaching scholar, illustrates why this is important to understand. Eder makes a habit of informally interviewing executives he sits next to on airplanes during his frequent travel and asking them what traits and characteristics they look for in employees. Read the list and note the last two sentences.

“We pass lightly through such sallies and get to where we can explore this question: ‘What traits do you look for in a top-notch prospective employee?’ One recent executive seatmate said that the excellent prospect…

• is self-motivated. High quality training is expensive and the self-motivated employee learns independently so I don’t have to spend excessive money getting him or her acquainted with our techniques
• practices professional and personal etiquette and can represent my company with competence and style
• demonstrates a capacity to analyze and solve problems effectively;
• writes well and can explain a technical or complex topic briefly and in jargon-free language so I can make a business decision
• speaks well in one-on-one conversations and in front of large groups;
• is ethical and dependable

‘What about competence in a major discipline?’ I ask.
‘Oh, that’s assumed. I thought you wanted to know what characterizes the top candidates.’”

It should be obvious from this dialogue that excellence in both content mastery and personal character are the hallmarks of top candidates. This is certainly true for jobs as well as many other aspects of life. Please intentionally pursue content mastery and self-mastery during your time with us and hopefully you can look back on this time as profound and life changing. That is certainly our highest hope for you.
References


Helpful Links

**UNCW**

1. Faculty & Staff Information [http://www.uncw.edu/com/about/facstaff.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/about/facstaff.html)
3. UNCW Mission Statement [http://www.uncw.edu/com/about/mission.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/about/mission.html)
4. B.A. Requirements [http://www.uncw.edu/com/admissions/requirements.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/admissions/requirements.html)
5. SeaNet [https://seanet.uncw.edu](https://seanet.uncw.edu)
7. COM Internships [http://www.uncw.edu/com/academics/internships.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/academics/internships.html)
8. COM Study Abroad [http://www.uncw.edu/com/abroad.html](http://www.uncw.edu/com/abroad.html)
11. UNCW Honors [http://www.uncw.edu/honors/](http://www.uncw.edu/honors/)
12. SGA [http://student.uncw.edu/org/sga/](http://student.uncw.edu/org/sga/)
13. Student Media [http://www.uncw.edu/studentmedia/](http://www.uncw.edu/studentmedia/)
15. Citation and Bibliography Help [http://library.uncw.edu/citations](http://library.uncw.edu/citations)

**Outside Resources**

21. Quintilian [http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Primary%20Texts/Quintilian.htm](http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Primary%20Texts/Quintilian.htm)
22. Critical Thinking [http://www.criticalthinking.org/aboutCT/define_critical_thinking.cfm](http://www.criticalthinking.org/aboutCT/define_critical_thinking.cfm)
24. APA Formatting and Style Guide [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
Communication Studies Major

TO DO List

Freshman

- Basic Studies
- CSC 105
- COM 101

Sophomore

- COM 105
- COM 116
- COM 160
- COM 200
- COM 212
- COM 220
- COM 232
- COM 271
- PCOM Advising
- Plan for study abroad
- Get involved, join an organization (CSS, LPH, Advertising)

*Save all your best work for COM 400

Junior

- Specialty area courses
- Explore internship options
*Save all your best work for COM 400

Senior

- COM 400
- COM 491
- Courses in your area of concentration

Alumnus

- Make sure we have a current email address!
- COM Studies Day
- Be a Protégé
- Register as an Internship Agency
- Send us your Business Card
- Visit the COMGiving website
**Recommend Courses in Discipline Specialty Areas, Beyond Core/Required Classes, for PCOM and COM Majors**

**Attention:** only courses starting with “COM” will count toward the Communication Studies Major. All other courses (i.e. MKT, PAR, SOC, etc.) will only count towards Graduation as either University (Basic) Studies or University General Electives.

### ADVERTISING
- COM 211 Storytelling
- COM 219 Voice and Diction
- COM 256 The Art of Persuasive Speech
- COM 258 Rhetoric of Popular Culture
- COM 265 Intro to Media and Society
- COM 280 Introduction to Digital Media Production
- COM 286 Digital Multimedia I
- COM 288 3D Computer Animation I
- COM 300 Applied Quantitative Research Methods
- COM 319 On-Camera Performance
- COM 338 Advertising I
- COM 361 Media Law and Ethics
- COM 362 Communication Ethics
- COM 378 Business and Professional Communication
- COM 380 Field Video Production I
- COM 382 Studio Video Production I
- COM 438 Advertising II
- COM 480 Field Video Production II
- COM 482 Studio Video Production II
- COM 483 Television Production Workshop
- COM 486 Digital Multimedia II
- ART 111 Drawing Fundamentals
- ART 220 (CSC 220) 3-D Computer Graphics Tools and Literacy
- MKT 340 Principles of Marketing
- MKT 347 Promotion Management
- MKT 442 International Marketing
- MKT 340 Principles of Marketing
- MKT 347 Promotion Management
- MKT 442 International Marketing
- PAR 315 Media Ethics
- SOC 304 Popular Culture

### INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION
- COM 211 Storytelling
- COM 223 Mediation and Conflict Management
- COM 232 Writing as Strategic Communication
- COM 256 Persuasive Communication and Social Influence
- COM 258 Rhetoric of Popular Culture
- COM 265 Communication Media
- COM 271 Small Group Communication
- COM 280 Introduction to Digital Media Production
- COM 286 Digital Multimedia I
- COM 300 Applied Quantitative Research Methods
- COM 319 On-Camera Performance
- COM 334 Public Relations I
- COM 338 Advertising I
- COM 344 Intercultural Communication
- COM 356 Speech Writing
- COM 361 Media Law and Ethics
- COM 362 Communication Ethics
- COM 372 Studies in Organizational Communication
- COM 378 Business and Professional Communication
- COM 387 Desktop Publishing
- COM 425 Negotiation
- COM 434 Public Relations II
- COM 436 Case Studies in IMC/PR/Advertising
- COM 438 Advertising II
- COM 465 Media, Cultures, and Society
- COM 498 Internship in Communication Studies
- BLA 361 Legal Environment of Business
- ECN 125 Survey of Economics
- ENG 202 Introduction to Journalism
- ENG 204 Introduction to Professional Writing
- ENG 312 Writing for Business
- HST 333 American Social History
- LED 211 Principles of Leadership
- LED 311 Communication and Leadership
- MGT 350 Principles of Management
- MGT 358 Organizational Behavior
- MGT 340 Principles of Marketing
- MKT 347 Promotion Management
- MKT 349 Consumer Behavior
- MKT 442 International Marketing
- PAR 315 Media Ethics
- PLS 220 Introduction to International Relations
- PLS 222 Contemporary International Political Issues
- PLS 352 American Political Culture
- PLS 403 Public Opinion and Democracy
- PSY 264 Social Psychology
- PSY 336 Industrial-Organizational Psychology
INTERCULTURAL/INTERRACIAL COMMUNICATION

COM 344 Intercultural Communication
COM 346 Interracial Communication
COM 347 Aging and Communication
COM 358 Diversity in Public Communication
COM 421 Nonverbal Communication
COM 458 Rhetoric of Faith Healing

COM 474 Communication and International Organizations
ANT 206 Cultural Anthropology
ANT 208 Language and Culture
PLS 220 Introduction to International Relations
SOC 325 Racial and Ethnic Group Relations

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

COM 220 Interpersonal Communication
COM 223 Mediation and Conflict Management
COM 226 Health Communication
COM 257 Argumentation and Debate
COM 334 Intercultural Communication
COM 346 Interracial Communication
COM 347 Aging and Communication
COM 421 Nonverbal Communication
COM 425 Negotiation

ANT 303 Culture and Gender
LED 311 Communication and Leadership
MGT 350 Principles of Management
PSY 223 Life Span Human Development
PSY 264 Social Psychology
PSY 366 Psychology of Close Relationships
SOC 345 Sociology of the Close Relationships
SOC 365 Social Psychology

MEDIA PRODUCTION

COM 265 Communication Media
COM 268 Broadcast Journalism I
COM 280 Introduction to Digital Media Production
COM 286 Digital Multimedia I
COM 288 3D Computer Animation I
COM 295 Seminar in Communication Studies
COM 300 Applied Quantitative Research Methods
COM 319 On-Camera Performance
COM 338 Advertising I
COM 361 Media Law and Ethics
COM 380 Field Video Production I
COM 382 Studio Video Production I

COM 368 Broadcast Journalism
COM 438 Advertising II
COM 465 Media Culture and Society
COM 480 Field Video Production II
COM 482 Studio Video Production II
COM 483 Television Production Workshop
COM 486 Digital Multimedia II
CRW 210 Writing for Digital Media
ART 220 3-D Computer Graphics Tools and Literacy
ART 282 Introduction to Digital Photography
ART 320 (CSC 320) Computer Animation

MEDIA STUDIES

COM 258 Rhetoric of Popular Culture
COM 265 Communication Media
COM 268 Broadcast Journalism I
COM 300 Applied Quantitative Research Methods
COM 350 Politics and Film
COM 361 Media Law and Ethics
COM 362 Communication Ethics
COM 368 Broadcast Journalism II
COM 465 Media, Culture and Society II

CRM 390 Media, Crime and Justice
ENG 301 International Journalism
ENG 384 Reading Popular Culture
PAR 315 Media Ethics
PLS 208 Politics and the Entertainment Media
SOC 303 Media and Society
SOC 304 Popular Culture
SOC 306 Sociology of Culture
ORGANIZATIONAL/ GROUP COMMUNICATION

COM 223 Mediation and Conflict Management
COM 226 Health Communication
COM 257 Argumentation and Debate
COM 271 Small Group Communication
COM 272 Introduction to Organizational Communication
COM 344 Intercultural Communication
COM 346 Intercultural Communication
COM 356 Speech Writing
COM 361 Media Law and Ethics
COM 362 Communication Ethics
COM 372 Studies in Organizational Communication
COM 378 Business and Professional Communication

COM 421 Nonverbal Communication
COM 425 Negotiation
COM 473 Consulting Training and Development
COM 474 Communication and International Organizations
LED 311 Communication and Leadership
MGT 350 Principles of Management
MGT 358 Organizational Behavior
PLS 308 Public Administration
PSY 336 Industrial-Organizational Psychology
SOC 340 Organizations in Modern Society
SOC 486 Sociology of Work and Occupations

PERFORMANCE STUDIES

COM 116 Performance of Literature
COM 211 Storytelling
COM 212 Storytelling in the Community
COM 219 Voice and Diction
COM 310 Performance Literature II
COM 313 Storytelling and Community Engagement
COM 319 On-Camera Performance
COM 415 Performance Practicum

ENG 312 Writing for Business
ENG 353 Southern American Literature
ENG 354 North Carolina Writers
ENG 380 Literature for Children
ENG 387 History of Literary Criticism and Theory
ENG 388 Rhetorical Theory to 1900
ENG 389 Rhetorical Theory Since 1900
HST 290 The Practice of History
PAR 110 Introduction to Logic
PAR 211 Philosophy of Human Nature
PAR 317 Epistemology
PAR 318 Metaphysics
PAR 319 On-Camera Performance
PSY 264 Social Psychology
PSY 324 Psychology of Aging
PSY 356 Motivation and Emotion
PSY 356 Motivation and Emotion
PSY 358 Motivation and Emotion
SOC 360 Social Theory

PUBLIC ADDRESS/ POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

COM 101 Public Speaking
COM 116 Performance of Literature
COM 219 Voice and Diction
COM 250 Introduction to Political Communication
COM 256 Persuasive Communication and Social Influence
COM 257 Argumentation and Debate
COM 271 Small Group Communication
COM 351 Media and Politics
COM 352 Election Campaign Communication
COM 356 Speech Writing
COM 378 Business and Professional Communication

ENG 303 Reading and Writing Arguments
PAR 110 Introduction to Logic
PAR 208 Language and Culture
ENG 303 Reading and Writing Arguments
ENG 388 Rhetorical Theory to 1900
ENG 389 Rhetorical Theory Since 1900
FST 445 Film Rhetoric
HST 290 The Practice of History
PAR 317 Epistemology
PAR 318 Metaphysics
PSY 324 Psychology of Aging
SOC 360 Social Theory

RHETORIC/ COMMUNICATION THEORY

COM 256 Persuasive Communication and Social Influence
COM 257 Argumentation and Debate
COM 258 Rhetoric of Popular Culture
COM 350 Politics and Film
COM 358 Diversity in Public Communication
COM 458 Rhetoric of Faith Healing
ANT 208 Language and Culture
ENG 303 Reading and Writing Arguments
ENG 315 Topics in Writing and Rhetoric
ENG 387 History of Literary Criticism and Theory
I WANT TO CHANGE My Major TO Communication Studies
AND I AM CURRENTLY TAKING COM 105 – Introduction to Communication Studies

Gateway:
COM 105 – Introduction to Communication Studies – must earn a “B” or better
COM 200 – Research Methods – must earn a “B” or better (CSC 105 is a pre-requisite)

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Using the on-line Major Declaration/Curricular Change link of MySeaport
   a. declare your Pre-Communication Studies major the last two weeks of the semester
      i. This change does NOT automatically occur when your grade is posted.
2. Ms. Bulger posts pre-registration advising hours for those who desire to change their major outside her office (LH 239).
3. Register for COM 200 and earn a “B” or better.
   a. You will then declare your COM Major the last two weeks of the semester following instructions provided in advising.

INFORMATION – Degree Requirements
Core Classes – 21 hours
- CSC 105 – Introduction to Computer Science
- COM 105 – Introduction to Communication Studies
- COM 101 – Public Speaking (may take at any time)
- COM 200 – Research Methods

After completing COM 200 with a “B” or better, you will use the curriculum change form and change your major from PCOM to COM. You may then begin taking the final three (3) core classes.
- COM 301 – Rhetorical Theory
- COM 305 – Communication Theory
- COM 400 – Communication Studies Capstone
  o Senior COM majors only; must have completed COM 301 or COM 305 prior to taking COM 400

COM Electives – 21 hours
- may take 9 hours at the 100/200 level
- must take 12 hours at the 300/400 level

INFORMATION – PCOM & COM Coded Classes
Courses coded PCOM/COM can be taken once you are PCOM. For example, COM 223 - 001 Mediation Conflict Management is open to both PCOM and COM majors. But you still must meet gateway requirements to become a full major and graduate with a degree in Communication Studies.

Both are needed before COM 200

COM Courses Typically Open to Everyone
✓ COM 101
✓ COM 104 (do NOT take)
✓ COM 105
✓ COM 116
✓ COM 160
✓ COM 220
✓ COM 223
✓ COM 246
✓ COM 271
✓ COM 286

Save Everything for Your Portfolio
One of the culminating experiences is the completion of COM 400 Communication Studies Capstone, a course that includes the preparation of a personal portfolio to organize and showcase your abilities. We encourage you to retain items, whether produced independently or in groups, for potential inclusion as portfolio artifacts. Beyond the course, your portfolio may prove a valuable tool as you seek entry into a graduate program or employment.
A Bit About Me

Name: Bill Bolduc

Degrees: B.A. and M.B.A. from Miami University (Ohio), Ph.D. from Florida State University

Teaching Area(s): Digital Media Production, Media Literacy

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): Primary creative area is in the production of documentary and informational videos with an emphasis on international projects (e.g., Belize, Wales, Ireland).

Connecting the dots: It is important for students to realize the knowledge of research methods and techniques is important in the areas of media production and media literacy. Effective citizens and media producers must have a thorough understanding of what is good research and what is not. Documentary producers must know how to conduct research in the pre-production phase of any project. Also, even though my courses focus on digital media production, solid writing and interpersonal skills are a necessity. From communication with potential clients to drafting proposals and scripts, written and oral communication skills are a must.

Teaching Philosophy: I begin each semester assuming that my students are motivated, mature and intentional about their learning. Regardless of the course, I attempt to find ways to get students to care about the subject matter at hand. From the examination of interesting real world examples to in-depth discussions exploring theoretical nuances of a topic, I try to find ways to encourage all of my students to actively engage in the topic. I often adopt a coaching approach in my attempts to inspire and motivate students, particularly in more advanced video production courses where students work independently on diverse projects. To me it’s important to create a trusting, respectful, and open environment in the classroom. Students are encouraged to actively participate in classroom discussions and to bring their life experiences to the table—always in a respectful manner.

Conversation Starters

- Do you have a favorite communication studies related website? To be honest, Facebook is my favorite communication studies related website, both as an insightful example of contemporary social media and as a way to stay in touch with Communication Studies alumni.

- Do you have a favorite research project you’ve been involved with? The completion of the documentary for the Swansea University study abroad program remains one of the most exciting and productive projects I’ve worked on. Two production students and I immersed ourselves in Welsh culture for eight days in our effort to tell the story of what it’s like to spend a semester at Swansea University. The students soaked up the cultural side of the project like sponges and our final product was something we are quite proud of.

- What do you like most about teaching in COM? I am stimulated by the topic of study. The media landscape is constantly changing, which keeps things interesting. Communication is at the core of being human and teaching students how to understand the process as well as execute it at a high level is challenging, exciting and rewarding.

- What is a favorite restaurant in the area? For lunch, PT’s Grille and for dinner, El Cerro Grande.

- What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? I’d probably be working in public television or radio somewhere.

- What are your hobbies or other outside interests? I play guitar with the Schoolboys faculty rock band and at my church. To stay fit I ride my bicycle regularly—commuting to school when I can and getting in longer rides on weekends.
A Bit About Me

Name: David Bollinger

Degrees: B.A. from UNC Wilmington, M.A. from UNC Greensboro

Teaching Area(s): Rhetoric, Business, Rhetorical Analysis, Capstone, Honors

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): When I graduated school I was in the area called “Theory and Research,” and while I did not continue for the Ph.D., I did sustain my interest in asking questions and applying methods to answer them. I took the “red pill,” researching the rhetoric of conspiracy theory. I use this topic in several classes, including an Honors special topic that focuses solely on conspiracy theories. Students (mostly) seem to love it so I will give it a measured success!

Creative outlets include acting (stage and screen) and music (in the current lineup I play guitar, keyboards, violin, and sing). The music is not everyone’s cup of tea, but if you have ever heard of Yes, King Crimson or Allan Holdsworth you have a pretty good idea of what we sound like (VIA is the band’s name). I also count gardening as a creative outlet. I live in the country on the NE Cape Fear River, God’s country. Things love to grow out there.

Connecting the dots: I do not believe in coincidences! This means everything we study (within this discipline) is interrelated and has a direct or indirect relationship with each component. I would also argue communication is the fabric, which keeps ALL disciplines together. Without seeing this huge overview I believe you are missing one of the key points in communication studies.

Teaching Philosophy: My philosophy of teaching rests mainly on the premise that if the instructor creates a positive learning environment the student will respond with the often anticipated but seemingly rare “WOW! That’s AMAZING! NOW it makes sense to me!!” moment. My goal is to show the significance and serious effect of how we communicate with each other, and how that real power (that has real effects) needs to be understood and used in the practice of the High Ethic. Worlds are created and destroyed, modified, eroded, and healed because of how we communicate. I work very hard at getting that cornerstone idea across.

Conversation Starters

• Why acting and music? I attended The Governor’s School (1976) for voice and was a voice major at UNCG in 1977, with a scholarship. But my parents imploded and I ended up coming home after my sophomore year. I always have felt I had unfinished business! Don’t get me wrong, I did the starving artist thing and I am glad it is over. Food: what a concept!

• What do you like most about teaching in COM? Getting across the idea that communication creates realities. All kinds!

• What is a favorite restaurant in the area? My kitchen!

• What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? I’d be back in sales, probably medical equipment. Yeah, I know it sounds strange.

• What advice do you have for graduating seniors? Don’t get married for a while and don’t have kids. When you DO get hitched, remember this: separate bathrooms!
A Bit About Me

Name: Jennifer Brubaker

Degrees: B.S. and M.A. from the Ohio State University, Ph.D. from Kent State University

Teaching Area(s): Political Communication, Family Communication, Mass Media

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): My research program emphasizes four primary concepts—politics, the media, technology, and pedagogy—which continue to intertwine and overlap in various combinations. One of my favorite research projects combined mass media theory, political communication and pop culture, looking at the effects of celebrity endorsements in the 2004, 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. Does it really matter who celebrities endorse or are we much too informed to be affected? Look for my upcoming research monograph “Integrated Marketing Communication and Political Communication: The Celebrity Brand and American Politics.”

Connecting the dots: Education is cumulative. While I hope students take many things from COM 101, 105 and 200 into the major, if I had to narrow it down, I’d emphasize the ability to gather research that others before you have produced, and understand how to comprehend the findings, apply it to similar conditions and then clearly and concisely create your own product, whether it is a literature review, essay, or a speech. Once you can master this ability, you can learn and succeed in most any area.

Teaching Philosophy: Students need to learn how to take information and turn it into something they will use outside the classroom. So often, students learn information quickly and forget it just as fast. By incorporating the course material into their lives, they assimilate it. Teaching the material is not my goal. Helping them to learn the material is. Anyone can teach something; it’s much more challenging (and rewarding) to help them learn.

Conversation Starters

• What is a favorite research project you’ve published? My study looking at the effects of post-debate analysis on viewers. Up until then, a good deal of research addressed the effects of debates and media effects, but no one had looked at the effects of the post-debate analysis. As a doctoral student, I mentioned the idea to a professor in another department less than a week before the final 2004 debate. He liked the idea and wanted to support me in the project. We worked hard to produce a study that we hoped would include maybe 100 undergraduates. Much to our delight, we found ourselves with nearly 400 participants and eventually significant findings. Post-debate analysis does affect viewers—and it does so significantly. Viewers judged the winner (and in a number of cases changed their minds) after viewing the post-debate analysis. Talk about media effects!

• What do you like most about teaching in COM? I love that our major can make us understand the world around us and actually help us to understand our everyday interactions, whether it be in our interpersonal relationships or our media consumption. I appreciate our eclectic department and that so many different ways to study communication exist—some theoretical and some very practical. I love how we can organically emphasize praxis, as our theories are so clearly tied into applied experiences.

• What is a favorite restaurant in the area? Any one where my children will eat and be entertained enough so that I can enjoy a glass of wine and actually have a conversation! Food-wise, I’m pretty simple—I love an acai bowl at Surfberry!

• What are your hobbies or other outside interests? I run. A lot. I ran years ago, doing races and such. Then I had three babies in three years and it became a practical way to exercise—first with the single jogger, then the double, and eventually the triple—yes triple!—jogger. Once they outweighed me, I turned in my jogger and began solo running again. Now, I actually enjoy running just to run—for me and not anyone or anything else. It’s a mind-clearing, freeing activity for me to do alone—pretty much the only thing I do alone. I also love hot yoga—I’ve practiced for 21 years now, and even if I’m not on my mat, I like to think I’m always practicing in some way.
A Bit About Me

Name: Tammy Bulger

Degrees: B.A. and M.A. in Rhetoric and Communication Studies from the University of Virginia

Teaching Area(s): Interpersonal Communication, Business and Professional Communication, Concepts in Communication, COM Studies Capstone, and Internships

Connecting the dots: The theories and concepts you learn in your foundation courses are what I want students to carry forward from COM 101, COM 105 and COM 200. In a variety of assignments in all classes I ask the students to apply a concept learned in foundational classes.

Teaching Philosophy: In my academic life, I challenge myself to try new technologies and assignments. One responsibility to my students is to stay current on information and new technologies, so that I keep them apprised of evolving knowledge. Another responsibility to my students is to adjust/adapt class when new technologies do not work as expected. When advising students, I counsel them to challenge themselves by: urging them to study abroad for a semester, to take courses outside their comfort zone, or complete a directed individual study or internship. In this way, I hope to encourage them to be curious about other cultures and experiences.

Conversation Starters

• What do you like most about teaching in COM? Our students! From the engaged students that complete unbelievable applied learning projects to the students that discover how to knit together a variety of classes that support what they want to do, inspire me to keep exploring this field.

• What is a favorite restaurant in the area? Caprice Bistro or Brasserie Du Soleil

• What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? I constantly tell my husband if I hadn’t met him soon after moving to Virginia Beach from Charlottesville I would have been a flight attendant. I tell my students “have passport will travel” is my motto.

• What are your hobbies or other outside interests? Travel, gardening, long walks with my dog, sitting on the beach listening to the waves. My bucket list is a list of places that I want to visit. Some of these are islands where I sit on the beach and relax and others are places that I’ll need another vacation when I return home to recoup from the site-seeing.
A Bit About Me

Name: Jennifer Chin

Degrees: B.A. and M.A. from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Teaching Area(s): Public Relations, Discipline Capstone, Advertising, Public Speaking, Event Planning, First-Year Seminar

Connecting the dots: Everything that you learn in this department builds on the next. We expect that you retain the public speaking skills you learned in COM 101 when you enroll in COM 400. In order to succeed in this major, you must learn, develop, practice, and refine the skills you learn. Public speaking is a life skill, as is effective communication.

Teaching Philosophy: I believe that it is important to teach students the importance of service. Students need to understand that they can make a difference in our society by using the skills they develop in the classroom. By working for others, students develop confidence, learn how to be accountable to others, and how to become an active participant in one’s community.

Conversation Starters

• What do you like most about teaching in COM? I love that the things we teach are relevant. Not a day goes by when I can’t find a current event that doesn’t relate to one of our course concepts or core skills. You can’t say that about every major or discipline.

• What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? If I weren’t a faculty member, I would be the music supervisor for one of my favorite television shows like This is Us or Grey’s Anatomy, or I’d be the tour manager for one of my favorite musicians, Jon McLaughlin, Ed Sheeran, or Lauren Alaina.

• What are your hobbies or other outside interests? I am a relatively new runner, but I love it because it’s just me, my favorite tunes and the open road. I love to compete, so I’ve run 11 half marathons, the Marine Corps Marathon and the Chicago Marathon. I also enjoy learning more about photography, I like most sports, and it’s not unusual to find me at a concert (I’ve seen more than 120 different bands/artists live).
A Bit About Me

Name: Vernon E. Cronen

Degrees: B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign

Teaching Area(s): Interpersonal Communication, Rhetoric, Argumentation and Debate.

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): My research and its application focuses on the development of the theory, “Coordinated Management of Meaning” (CMM). I am the co-author of the theory. It has many applications including, families, organizations, community groups and personal situations. My latest work has been on extending it to better focus on the aesthetics dimension of communication and extending its range of application. Here are two examples of CMM oriented work that tell you about CMM.

Last year I coauthored a chapter with one of my students on the aesthetic dimension of communication with application to marketing.


Dr. Olsen and I recently published an essay offering a systemic approach to classroom incivility.


https://www.academicimpressions.com/news/civility-classroom-better-approach

Connecting the dots: One of the great things about teaching here is the way our introductory courses provide connections to later work. Exposure to ideas about what makes for a theory and a paradigm, the difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches, why communication is a distinctive discipline, and social construction may seem abstract when you first encounter them. However, these ideas set the stage for later courses including my CMM course, and my approach to rhetoric and the argumentation and debate classes.

Teaching Philosophy: I like to tack back and forth between theory and application. That reflects my years as an academic and my experience as a consultant. The proportion of theory to application must vary with the course material. My rhetorical theory class is heavy on theory, of course, but I emphasize contemporary implications. The debate class is orientated to application and critique of students’ in-class debates. The CMM class is a balance of learning theory and then applying it by interviewing.

Conversation Starters

- What do you like most about teaching in COM? To me, communication is the fundamental social process. It is the location at which individuality, relationships, organizations, abilities, and meaning itself are made. I came to UNCW after a long career at University of Massachusetts for several reasons (not counting the beach). Students here are well prepared and enthusiastic. I especially enjoy the interaction I have with students and colleagues. I cannot imagine a more exciting place to be.

- What is a favorite scholarship project you have recently encountered? I have been reading some of the last publications by a former colleague at UMass, James Averill. In his last publications on the social construction of emotion, he turned to the issue of creativity in emotional life. I will keep pestering him about this theme—I may drag him out of retirement.

- What is a favorite Superhero or TV Character? I have no use for superheroes (with the possible exceptions of Bullwinkle and Rocky the Flying squirrel). When Eugene Debs was speaking to a crowd someone shouted their support saying that Debs would lead them to the promised land of workers’ rights including women’s rights. Debs responded that he could not lead them to that Promised Land and would not if he could. Because if he could lead them there then someone else could lead them back.
A Bit About Me

Name: Anita McDaniel

Degrees: B.A. from Texas A&M University, M.A. from the University of Houston, Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin

Teaching Area(s): Interpersonal Communication, Comic Scholarship, and Quantitative Research Methods

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): I specialize in the analysis of interpersonal relationship myths and the intertextual play between the visual and written texts represented in comic books.

I seem to be known best for my article on the nice guy dilemma entitled “Young Women’s Dating Behavior: Why/Why Not Date a Nice Guy?” in Sex Roles. http://www.springerlink.com/content/70644556t5nun557


Connecting the dots: The one thing that I hope students keep in mind after taking COM 200 is the ability to read (and critique) a journal article. All of my upper division classes require students to engage with scholarly research, so it helps when students know where to find it and how to interpret what they read. There is SO much research going on in our discipline that begins as an interesting topic of conversation at a party or a lead news item—issues that affect our everyday lives. I want students to appreciate how those everyday issues evolve into a literature review, relate to questionnaires, and add to the overall advancement of the discipline.

Teaching Philosophy: As a scholar, my motto is “theory is useless if you cannot apply it to real life situations.” Hence, my teaching philosophy involves motivating students to appreciate the various ways theory can be used to make sense out of their everyday encounters. I want them to understand why they speak and act as they do and how to become more intentional/strategic about their communication consumption and production. I push them beyond defining a theory. I ask them to identify a theory in practice, to use theory to evaluate their behavior, and to question the veracity of theoretical explanations and predictions. I want students to become curious about “just talking.” In short, I want them to think of theory as the nexus of academic life and real life.

Conversation Starters

• What do you like most about teaching in COM? I like watching students grow in confidence and overcome their fears. For example in COM 400, some students come to the class knowing what they want to do while others do not. At the end of the semester, everybody has a plan for independent life after graduation and a strategy for completing it. I don’t make students better speakers or more ready for graduation. I mentor them as they discover and maximize their strengths.

• What is a favorite restaurant in the area? McAlister’s Deli on South College. I LOVE their “pick-two” special because it is a lot of food for not much money. I can eat (and have eaten) the Spud Ole and Savannah Chopped Salad all day, every day.

• What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? I would have joined the military. Before I had my car accident, I was in the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University. I had planned to pursue a career in the Army in Supply because I liked the idea of being “the go-to gal.”
A Bit About Me

Name: Bruce C. McKinney

Degrees: B.A. from the University of New Hampshire, M.A. and Ph.D. from Penn State University

Teaching Area(s): Conflict Management, Mediation, Communication Theory

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): I have several research interests which include conflict management, mediation, Vietnamese perceptions of public relations, and Vietnamese conceptions of communication. I have published articles in Asian Profile, Communication Research Reports, Communication Quarterly, Communication Education, and Conflict Resolution Quarterly.


Connecting the dots: I believe communication is a cumulative process, and each of our courses is dependent on the previous courses. In other words, students should not forget what they take in public speaking the next semester when they must make a speech. They also need to realize that information presented in COM 200 has many real-life application in many careers: marketing, public relations, etc. The study of communication is a life-long process.

Teaching Philosophy: Learning only begins in the classroom, and needs to follow you your entire life.

Conversation Starters

- **What is a favorite scholarly project?** My favorite publication is “The Wreck of the Morning Dew: The U.S. Coast Guard and Crisis Communication,” published in the Atlantic Journal of Communication about twelve years ago. It was a case study of what can happen when people make fairly simple mistakes in their communication that has life-changing consequences—in this case three people died when the Coast Guard did not pay attention to a crucial message. I enjoyed researching this article and actually became a watch stander for the Wrightsville Beach Coast Guard Station one day a week at their communication station.

- **What is a favorite restaurants in the area?** I really like the Osteria Cicchetti in Wilmington. Italian food is my favorite, and the “OC” is a great place to go. They give you Italian bread and olive oil before your meal, which could be a meal in of itself. My wife Jess also loves the food there. She misses her native Vietnamese food, but I am slowly turning her into an Italian food lover.

- **What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member?** If I was not teaching I would love to have a basset hound rescue farm combined with a microbrewery. I am a dog lover (and yes, one of those people who can love dogs more than humans). I have had four basset hounds in my life. The last one I owned—Sugar—I rescued from a shelter and the first three months I owned her, she would shy away when I tried to pet her. She finally began to trust me and we had a fantastic relationship. If I could save more dogs like her, I would be extremely happy. I love micro beers, and to be able to make my own IPA with as many hops as I could find would be a dream come true.
A Bit About Me

Name: Hana S. Noor Al-Deen

Degrees: M.A. in Behavioral Sciences from CSU-Sacramento, M.A. in English from CSU-Sacramento, Ph.D. in Communication from SUNY at Buffalo

Teaching Area(s): Mass Media, Social Media, and International/Intercultural Communication

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): Dr. Noor Al-Deen’s current research is focused on social media. She has four published books, three of which are on social media. She was the editor of the book Social Media in the Classroom published by Peter Lang as well as the lead co-editor of the books Social Media and Strategic Communications (2013) published by Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom and Social Media: Usage and Impact (2011) published by Lexington Books. Also, she was the editor of the book Cross-Cultural Communication and Aging in the United States (1997) published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates/Routledge.

Social Media in the Classroom https://www.peterlang.com/view/product/31270

Connecting the dots: Students are strongly encouraged to focus on the Communication Studies Core Skills. Such skills are valuable when learning any communication subject.

Teaching Philosophy: The teaching philosophy that I utilize is based on the Applied Learning Theory which is defined as an approach that contextualizes learning in a way that empowers and motivates students while assisting them to develop key skills and knowledge required for employment, further education, and active participation in their communities. Combining a theoretical foundation with practical application would empower students to transform the information that has been learned in the class into practical application in real life situations.

Conversation Starters

• What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? Working as a volunteer for animal organizations such as ASPCA and Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) to help abused, homeless, and shelter animals.

• What is the best piece of advice someone ever gave you? Education is one of the most precious opportunities in one’s life. My appreciation for this continuous process is deeply rooted in my childhood when I was taught to value and cherish learning and knowledge. Such a lifelong aspiration has made me focus on the quest for improvements through education.
A Bit About Me

Name: Rick Olsen

Degrees: B.A. from UNC Wilmington, M.A. from Pennsylvania State University, Ph.D. from Regent University

Teaching Area(s): Rhetoric, Popular Culture, Research Methods

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): I have three major research areas: 1) rhetoric and popular culture where I use rhetorical concepts to explain the popularity and potential impact of artifacts of popular culture such as SUVs and cell phone advertisements, 2) pedagogy or how to teach effectively, 3) The intersection of faith, communication and culture. Beyond that I sometimes partner with co-authors to do projects that interest me. Here’s an article in an online academic journal that blends interests 1 and 3:


[https://doi.org/10.3138/jrpc.21.3.001](https://doi.org/10.3138/jrpc.21.3.001)

Connecting the dots: Education is cumulative. There are lots of things I hope students keep in mind as they progress from COM 101 and 105 into the major. If I had to narrow it down it is that you must take the communication moment seriously. Whether it is a speech, a formal conversation, an essay or an email. The five canons matter in each of those situations and your credibility is at stake each time.

Teaching Philosophy: Learning how to learn is as important as learning itself. My role is to act as coach. The course content is our common challenge. I understand that my expectations are fairly high. View that as a compliment to what I see as your potential. I want each of you to succeed in mastering the course content. I hope you will look back with pride at having achieved positive changes within yourself through my courses.

Conversation Starters

- **What is a favorite research project you’ve published?** My analysis of SUV advertisements. Students brought in advertisements for extra credit and I spent most of a Fall Break sorting and taping them up all over my office in various group. I was seeing patterns but could not figure out what to call them. Then “relational dialectics” finally came to mind and I could not write fast enough. I also like that the argument I made years ago still rings true today.

- **What do you like most about teaching in COM?** I feel like our major is so fundamental to living a quality life. It is a practical skill but also a mind-expanding perspective on the world. It’s empowering for students to know that communication patterns can be changed to help co-create a better world.

- **What is a favorite restaurant in the area?** The one my wife wants to go to, this time.

- **What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member?** In high school I studied to be a forester and I was almost a geology major. Part of me wants to work with people, part of me wants to walk in the woods and estimate timber yield.

- **What are your hobbies or other outside interests?** Basketball and music. I play hoop at noon at the Rec Center and I’m in a band called The Schoolboys with four other faculty members. I guess I love being part of teams that play off each other.
A Bit About Me

Name: David Pernell

Degrees: B.A. in Communication Studies from UNC Wilmington, M.S. in Mass Communication from Middle Tennessee State University

Teaching Area(s): Broadcast Journalism, Studio Video Production, Media Law and Ethics

Connecting the dots: The concepts students first encounter in COM 105 and COM 200 are vital to success in the areas of journalism and video production. I often revisit the Five Canons of Rhetoric when discussing the importance of finding one’s focus when writing, planning, and producing a news story or video project. Before you shoot anything, you have to know what you’re shooting and the story you want to tell. The most common feedback I get from students is an appreciation for proper planning before starting a project. This concept is echoed in the Core Skills introduced to students early in our discipline.

Teaching Philosophy: My goal is to make every class applicable to real-world experiences and expectations so students can excel in their careers following graduation. My experience working in journalism and television production provide me with great insight into what employers want in their recruits. These insights serve as the foundation of all my courses.

Conversation Starters

- What’s a favorite research project you’ve participated in? In graduate school I did a content analysis of print ads for alcoholic beverages that featured animals. I found it fascinating how different species were used to represent human interests and personality traits as a means to sell alcohol. At first I was worried about limited content but there was no shortage of material, and this practice is still going strong today.

- What do you like most about teaching in COM? For me it’s all about the effective creation of messages. Regardless of the intent—to inform, to persuade, to entertain, etc.—we communicate with one another for a specific purpose. Helping students think more critically about the ways they construct messages to more clearly express themselves is my greatest pleasure, whether it’s through a television news story in Broadcast Journalism, or through talk shows and musical performances in Studio Video Production.

- What are your hobbies and other outside interests? Being a native beach bum born and raised in Kure Beach, I spend as much time at the beach as possible. Other interests include playing the drums and attempting to play the guitar (poorly), and hanging out with my three boys.

- What’s the best piece of advice anyone has ever given you? Not so much advice as a quote I often cite: “Even if you fall on your face, you’re still moving forward.” – Victor Kiam. Failure is part of the human experience, so we should embrace it. Often mistakes can serve as our most valuable learning opportunities. Being accountable for shortcomings and the drive to overcome mistakes are key to personal and professional success.
A Bit About Me

**Name:** Jeanne M. Persuit, Ph.D.

**Degrees:** B.S. in French – Technical Writing and Translation from Penn State University, M.A. in Corporate Communication – Advertising and PR emphasis from Duquesne University, Ph.D. in Rhetoric from Duquesne University

**Teaching Area(s):** Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), Graphic Design, Communication Ethics, Rhetorical Theory

**Scholarship & Creative Area(s):**

**Connecting the dots:** What makes people better strategic communicators (like those in IMC, PR, and advertising) is the ability to engage in theory-informed action, or what we call praxis. So, whether it is research, planning, execution, or evaluation of an IMC plan, you’ll need theory to guide your practice—and that’s pretty much everything from 105 and 200!

**Teaching Philosophy:** I teach my students to engage in a praxis approach to their work; in turn, my own teaching is grounded by Francis Bacon’s rhetorical theory: “The duty and office of rhetoric is to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will.” Good teaching persuades students to engage material in ways they had not previously considered; it is rhetoric of the highest order.

**Conversation Starters**

- *What do you like most about teaching in COM?* Our commitment to applied learning is one of my favorite things about teaching in COM. We get to put theory into practice, make mistakes, learn from those mistakes, and help the UNCW and local community while we do it. Our department celebrates our students’ successes and the good work that they do, and that is something to be proud of.

- *What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member?* I would be what I used to be before I went back to school for my Ph.D.—an integrated marketing communication practitioner. I used to work in-house (meaning, I worked for a company handling all of their IMC) but now I think I’d prefer to consult and help organizations and businesses find creative, ethical ways to promote their work.
A Bit About Me

Name: Stephen J. Pullum

Degrees: B.S. from Middle Tennessee State University, M.A. from the University of Tennessee, Ph.D. from Indiana University

Teaching Area(s): Communication Theory, Rhetoric of Faith Healing, Intercultural Communication, Nonverbal Communication

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): I am very interested in the critical analysis of the rhetoric of faith healing and “the rhetoric of extraordinary claims” (e.g. alien abduction, communication with the dead, demon possession, bigfoot, etc.) I have written several book chapters about these topics in addition to two books:


Connecting the dots: I expect students to be able to conduct research and write effectively, using the APA style manual. Students should not think that once they have finished their core courses in Communication Studies that they can forget what they’ve learned. I expect them to bring these same skills into my upper division classes. I believe that all students should graduate with the ability to express themselves well orally and in writing.

Teaching Philosophy: I believe that good teachers instill in their students a love of learning and expose them to a variety of different perspectives. They should equip their students with the skills to evaluate critically and respond intelligently in a world of confusing public discourse. Not to do so would be unjust. Without doubt, this is one of the reasons I enjoy, so much, teaching communication courses. My job is to teach praxis (things that are contingent), which leads to phronesis—the practical application of principles of communication. I want my students to be cosmopolitan communicators. If I can teach them to see the inherent logic of a communication episode—in short, to become “enmeshed,” to borrow the words of communication scholar Barnett Pearce—so that they will be able to negotiate their way successfully, then I have empowered them with one of the most important skills necessary for a happy and productive life.

Conversation Starters

• What is a favorite scholarship project you have encountered? Years ago I read an article by the rhetorical scholar Otis Walter titled “On the Varieties of Rhetorical Criticism,” which I have my students read in my Com 458 class. I love this article. I wish I had written it, in part, because of the central place among the liberal arts that Walter gives to rhetorical criticism. Among other things, he suggests, “Because speeches are a powerful force, man needs profound and searching insight into the speeches he hears—into their truth or falsity, their wisdom or stupidity, their profundity or emptiness, into their subtle greatness or disguised and hidden meanness. Since man needs such insights, he needs rhetorical critics.”

• What is a favorite restaurant in the area? I love Mexican food, and I love seafood. I frequently eat at places like Islands and Hieronymus.

• What are your hobbies or other outside interests? Outside of class, I am a very physical individual. I love playing tennis, kayaking, hiking, biking, and swimming. (I also love playing with my dogs).

• What’s the best piece of advice anyone has ever given you? One of the best pieces of advice I ever heard came in the form of a poem that I keep on my office door: “Guard Well Thy Tongue, It Stretches Far. For What You Say, Tells What You Are.” In other words, be careful how you talk. Your speech betrays volumes about you. And sometimes what you unconsciously say about yourself is not very flattering.
**A Bit About Me**

**Name:** Chadwick Roberts

**Degrees:** B.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi, M.A. from Ohio University, Ph.D. from Bowling Green State University

**Teaching Area(s):** Gender and Sexuality, Mass Media, Media Literacy, New Media, Popular Culture, Rhetorical Theory

**Scholarship & Creative Area(s):** Gender and Sexuality, Visual Culture, Critical Race Theory, Critical Discourse Studies, Media Literacy, Masculinity, New Media, Rhetorical Theory and Criticism


**Connecting the dots:** Know that all of the presentation and research skills you develop in COM 101 and COM 200 will quickly be put to use when you become a COM major. My courses emphasize critical thinking, group collaboration and presentation skills. The more comfortable you become with these the easier your upper level courses will be!

**Teaching Philosophy:** For me, education is an ethical undertaking. I work toward building not only writing and research competence, but also cultural literacy. My goal is to guide students into becoming what Bell Hooks calls “enlightened observers,” students who are not only socially conscious and politically engaged citizens, but protagonists in their own lives and communities.

**Conversation Starters**

- **What do you like most about teaching in COM?** I enjoy seeing students grow in their ability to think critically and communicate effectively and I believe COM is absolutely the best discipline for developing these skills. Watching students grow into strong and confident communicators is one of the most rewarding parts of my job. The second has to be collaborating with my colleagues in the COM department. I’m always drawn to those who encourage and bring out the best in me. You will find plenty of people like that among your fellow students and professors in the COM department. As Margaret Mead said, “never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” COM offers you the skills to change the world; the rest is up to you.

- **What advice do you have for graduating seniors?** I have lived in downtown Wilmington since I moved here 10 years ago. I would encourage you to take advantage of the thriving arts scene while you are here. See some live theater at Thalian Hall, attend an outdoor concert at Greenfield Lake, have brunch at The Basics or Dixie Grill. Bottom line: Downtown Wilmington is just as much fun before happy hour as it is after!
A Bit About Me

Name: Julie-Ann Scott-Pollock

Degrees: B.A. in English with a Creative Writing Emphasis and Communication with a Theatre Arts emphasis from Gordon College, M.A. in Communication with concentrations in Performance Studies and Storytelling, and Women’s Studies from the University of Maine, Ph.D. in Communication with concentrations in Performance Studies, Gender Studies, and Disability Studies from the University of Maine.

Teaching Area(s): Performance Studies, Storytelling, Qualitative Research Methods, Cultural Studies

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): My research focuses on identity and personal narrative as performance of daily life, or how we become who we are through the stories we live with and tell to others. I am especially interested in the experience of marginalized and stigmatized bodies.

I have published both traditional research articles analyzing the stories of research participants such as Narratives of Hyper-Embodiment: Stories of and through disabled bodies available here: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10462937.2012.654505, and accessible performance interpretations of others stories featuring Communication Studies students with accompanying theoretical essay, such as Crippling: A Performance Ethnography of Disability and Identity available here http://liminalities.net/11-4/cripping.html, as well as autoethnographic research (research that analyzes culture through my own experiences). My autoethnographic work tends to focus on my experience conducting research such as Narrative Performance Research: Co-Storying Almost Passing available here: http://dcqr.ucpress.edu/content/4/3/7 and She Was Here: Research as Resistance to Culturally Uncomfortable Identities that I co-authored with Hunter Houtzer, a student on a SURCA grant.

My book that comes out in Fall of 2017, entitled Embodied Performance as Applied Research, Art and Pedagogy, encompasses all of these areas.

Connecting the dots: As your future Qualitative Methods professor I am thankful you are learning how to structure a research essay around your questions about how we communicate in the world and use proper APA citation. The fundamental skills you learn about understanding your audience and adapting to a given context will be complicated and expanded on in every storytelling and performance course you take as we tell stories to different audiences in the community.

Teaching Philosophy: I work to empower students not only with skills and information, but with the realization that knowledge materializes through communication practices. For this reason, I move communication beyond the classroom by requiring students to apply theories and methodologies to create original performances for community stakeholders and conduct research studies that focus on issues that matter to them and questions they want to answer.

Conversation Starters

- What is a favorite scholarship project you’ve participated in? I only recently started writing nonfiction autoethnographic narratives as part of my research agenda at the urging of friends in my field, it’s allowed me to grow as a researcher and person. Narrative Performance Research: Co-Storying Almost Passing went through three rejections and 5 rounds of revision before it was published. When it finally came out it won the best Ethnographic Article of the Year from the National Communication Association. Throughout the long process I remember the words of my Ph.D. Advisor, “Do good work, take criticism as an opportunity to grow, and success will come.” She was right.

- What are your hobbies or other outside interests? When I’m not performing, researching, directing, or teaching, you’ll find me swimming or hiking with my husband who teaches Physics at UNCW and our three boys, Tony, Vinny, and Nico.
A Bit About Me

Name: Frank P. Trimble

Degrees: B.S. and M.S. in Speech Communication from Southern Illinois University with a focus in Organizational Communication, Performance Studies and Arts Administration

Teaching Area(s): Public Speaking · Performance Studies · Organizational Communication

Scholarship & Creative Area(s): Composing musical stage plays [scripts and songs], writing & directing creative non-fiction documentaries and educational videos, stage/screen acting, directing, and producing. Original works including Fly Wright! - The Story of Two Brothers, Beneath the Airlie Oak, and EXTRA! EXTRA! The Musical.

Connecting the dots: As a communication studies scholar and practitioner, customize your messages to suit each situation. Showcase professional speaking and writing as primary communication tools in combination with your specialty areas (knowledge, training, experience, skills).

Teaching Philosophy: Inspiration from others—YES. Motivation from others—NO. Collaborate with faculty, staff, and peers as partners in education. Take charge of your professional and personal development. Pursue opportunities. Create opportunities. Embrace opportunities.

Conversation Starters

- Favorite communication related website or other resource? www.quintcareers.com
- What’s the best piece of advice anyone has ever given you? There are always good jobs for good people.
- Favorite Superhero or TV Character? Johnny Quest
A Bit About Me

Name: David E. Weber

Degrees: B.A. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, M.S.Ed. from the University of Southern California, Ph.D. from the University of Denver, California State teaching credentials in elementary and adult education from California State University, Northridge

Teaching Area(s): Applied Organizational Communication (e.g., communication training, communication consulting, organizational development), Communication, Culture and Identity, Organizational research methods (e.g., ethnographic methods, action research), Rhetoric (applied rhetoric and rhetorical theory)

Scholarship & Creative Area(s):

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Communication and identity

Organizational and occupational culture ethnography.

Connecting the dots: As the COM 105 instructor, I hope that from this course every COM major carries forward a commitment to seeing and explicating worlds in terms of how communication constructs them. Collectively, the foundation courses (105, 200), the predicate courses in the core (101, 301, 305, 400), and one’s additional coursework, should ultimately generate within a student, quiet confidence in the value of knowing and effectively performing the primary social process: communication.

Teaching Philosophy: Development of the whole student calls for engagement by the whole person—whether student or teacher—in the adventure of learning. In that way do we (teachers and students) prepare one another to contribute to the repair of the world.

Conversation Starters

- What do you like most about teaching in COM? I like how comfortably communication straddles the humanities and social sciences. Consequently, one can, as a teacher of communication, walk several pathways in developing a personal connection to the discipline. I like how the teaching of communication can—after translation into a communication lexicon, and adaptation to communication perspectives—accommodate lessons learned in a variety of fields. We can mine and celebrate connections to social psychology, linguistics, cultural anthropology, literary criticism, philosophy, the visual and performing arts, political science, and sociology, among others.

- What’s the best piece of advice anyone has ever given you? “Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.” [Horace Mann] and “Love has brought a great many people to safety when competence was exhausted.” [Garrison Keillor]

- What would you have done if you weren’t a faculty member? I would love to do one of two things: Be a general-practice physician working all over the world (e.g., volunteer with Doctors without Borders); or be the guy who introduces the movies broadcast on cable shows like Turner Classic Movies.