8.2 MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

The master of arts degree programs in the College of Communication and Information Sciences are designed to:

- Enable students to study communication from an individual, group, institutional, societal, or cultural perspective or combination thereof, using a variety of humanistic and social-scientific approaches
- Enable students to begin or continue preparation for professional careers in media and media-related fields, teaching, research, governmental agencies, and industry
- Enable students to specialize within one of the following academic departments: Advertising/Public Relations, Communication Studies, Journalism, or Telecommunication and Film
- Prepare students to continue their studies at the doctoral level

Admission Requirements

Graduate students in the College of Communication and Information Sciences must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School (see Admission Criteria) of The University of Alabama. Word processing proficiency is required in all writing and editing courses offered by the communication areas of the College (advertising/public relations, journalism, and telecommunication and film). Word processing proficiency is not a requirement for communication studies courses.

Each applicant must submit test scores from either the Graduate Record Examination general test or the Miller Analogies Test in support of the application. The Department of Advertising and Public Relations does not accept the Miller Analogies Test.

Applications for the fall semester should be submitted to the Graduate School by April 1. Applications for the spring semester should be submitted by November 1.

Admission into the Doctoral program with a BA Degree

Those who wish to apply for admission directly into the college-wide doctoral program after completing a BA must have majored in Communication and Information Sciences, must have shown superior aptitude at the undergraduate level, and must meet the Graduate School’s normal requirements for admission at the doctoral level. Qualified students begin this graduate coursework within a specific master of arts degree program of the College and complete their graduate degree as College-wide doctoral candidates.

To be admitted directly into the doctoral program, one must satisfy the following requirements:
- Hold regular admission status for a specific college MA program and for admission into
the PHD program

- Submit a statement of purpose indicating interest and commitment in graduate work through the doctoral level
- Successfully pass a comprehensive qualifying exam, upon completing 24 hours of graduate coursework for continuing with the doctoral degree
- Earn a certificate of completion, or equivalent, for the MA program, whereupon admission into the doctoral program becomes official

General Requirements for the MA Degree

In consultation with an advisor, the student selects a graduate major in one of the academic departments of the College. There are two options that students may choose for pursuing the master of arts degree.

Plan I, master's thesis. The student's curricular and research interests culminate in the completion of a traditional master's thesis. Students must take a minimum of 30 hours of approved graduate courses, of which 6 are specifically for the thesis. See departmental sections below for required and recommended courses.

Plan II, nonthesis option. Students must take a minimum of 30 hours of approved graduate courses. See departmental sections below for the specific nature of this option and its requirements.

Regardless of the option selected, each student must satisfy the following requirements:

- MC 550 Communication Research Methods (3 hours) or department-approved equivalent
- MC 551 Seminar in Communication Theory (3 hours) or department-approved equivalent
- Written comprehensive examination or equivalent, as specified by the student's departmental committee
- Final oral examination or equivalent, as specified by the student's departmental committee

Additional information can be found in the Degree Requirements section of this catalog.

8.10.4 COMMUNICATION STUDIES (COM)

COM 500 Introduction to Graduate Studies. One hour. The primary goal is to orient new graduate students to the expectations and procedures of graduate study in the department. Topics covered include developing the plan of study, thesis prospectus, comprehensive examination, and choosing advisors and committees.

COM 501 Introduction to Teaching Public Speaking. No hours. The primary goal of this course is to facilitate the instruction of COM 123 Public Speaking. Students enrolled in this course will provide lesson plans for their classes and discuss options for improving classroom learning.

COM 513 Communication and Diversity. Three hours.
Study and analysis of issues of diversity as they relate to groups in society and in communication fields. Emphasis is on the media's treatment of various groups in society. Approved as a communication and cultural diversity elective.

**COM 515 African American Rhetoric.** Three hours.
A historical-critical investigation of African American public discourse from the Revolutionary era to the present, exploring rhetorical strategies for social change and building community.

**COM 521 Political Communication.** Three hours.
An exploration of rhetorical, media, and cross-disciplinary theories and literature related to political communication as expressed in campaigns and institutional governance.

**COM 525 Gender and Political Communication.** Three hours.
Study of the impact of gender on political communication activities. Topics include gender differences in political messages and voter orientation, masculine ideals of leadership, women’s roles and advancement in the political sphere, and media representations.

**COM 536 Independent Study.** Three hours.
Prerequisite: Written permission.
Students who want to count this course toward their Plans of Study must complete the official request form and submit it for the approval of their faculty advisor and the Graduate Program Director.

**COM 541 Contemporary Rhetorical Theory.** Three hours.
A survey of major contributions to rhetorical theory from the 20th century up to the present.

**COM 545 Classical Rhetorical Theory.** Three hours.
A systematic inquiry into the development of Greek and Roman rhetorical theory during the classical period (ca. 480 B.C.E.–400 C.E.).

**COM 548 Seminar in Rhetorical Criticism.** Three hours.
An examination of various methodological perspectives of rhetorical criticism. Specifically, the course aims to familiarize students with both traditional and alternative critical methods and to encourage students to perceive the rhetorical dimensions of all manner of public discourse, ranging from speeches, advertising, film, popular music to discursive forms in new media and the Internet.

**COM 560 Group Leadership.** Three hours.
An advanced study of small-group behavior, examining in detail theories of leadership as they relate to problem solving in group situations.

**COM 561 Human Communication Theory.** Three hours.
A detailed review of selected theories of speech communication with a focus on the critical examination of the foundation of social scientific theories.

**COM 562 Theories of Persuasion.** Three hours.
A critical review of social-influence theories in the area of persuasion and human action.

**COM 563 Relational Communication.** Three hours.
Prerequisite: COM 220 or permission of the instructor.
Focused investigation of communication in close personal relationships, with primary emphasis on contemporary concepts and theories of romantic relationships and friendships.

**COM 567 Seminar: Public Address.** Three hours.
A topical consideration of individual case studies from public discourse, designed to probe problems of the nature of the audience, the ethics of persuasion, and the power of public advocacy in mass society. Topics may vary.

**COM 569 Communication and Gender.** Three hours.
Explores the role of communication in the construction of gender. Covers feminist theoretical approaches in communication and other disciplines, the intersections of gender with other marginalities, and the role of gender in various communication contexts. Approved as a communication and cultural diversity elective.

**COM 571 Seminar in Organizational Communication.** Three hours.
An introductory examination of historical and contemporary issues in organizational communication scholarship from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives.

**COM 572 Seminar in Organizational Communication: Assessment and Intervention.** Three hours.
Examines the theoretical issues inherent in the study of organizational communication, the primary factors requiring assessment and intervention, the impact of on-going changes and new information techniques, current challenges facing the organizational consultant, and the practical application of communication processes for improving organizations.

**COM 590 Internship in Communication Studies.** One to three hours.
Prerequisite: Written permission from the graduate program director.
Proposal for supervised field experience in communication studies must be submitted and approved.

**COM 595 Special Topics.** Three hours. Topics vary by instructor.

**COM 598 Practicum Project or Research.** Three hours.

**COM 599 Thesis Research.** One to three hours.