

# COMMUNICATION, MA

## Program Description

The Master's degree in Communication at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is designed for individuals who seek career advancement in communication positions, or who aspire to enroll in a doctoral program. Students in the Master's in Communication program can specialize in Organizational Leadership or Strategic Communication. Both tracks consist of courses designed to enhance students' knowledge of communication principles, theories, and research in the track topic area and develop proficiency as writers, researchers, and critical decision makers. The program is designed to provide students with a quality experience that will help them grow as individuals, scholars, professionals, and citizens.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates from this program will be able to:

- Apply knowledge and understanding of the history, underlying concepts, principles, and theories in the field of communication;
- Demonstrate proficiency in advanced writing, presentation speaking, and critical thinking at the Master's level;
- Show proficiency in scholarly methods of inquiry; and
- Gather, interpret, evaluate, and present data for the purposes of addressing communication problems, and/or advancing knowledge in the field of communication.

## For Additional Information

For more information on the Communication Graduate Program contact:

### Website:

<http://cla.tamucc.edu/communication/graduate/welcome.html>

### Campus Address:

Bay Hall 330  
phone 361-825-2316

### Mailing Address:

Department of Communication & Media  
College of Liberal Arts  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Drive, Bay Hall 330, Unit 5722  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412-5722

## Admission Requirements

In addition to the university admission requirements outlined for all graduate programs, the MA in Communication program requires:

A bachelor's degree in Communication or related field.

A grade point average (GPA) of no less than 3.0 on a 4-point scale.

Transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work undertaken at any regionally accredited colleges or universities.

Two letters of evaluation from individuals such as professors and employers who can attest to the applicant's potential for success in a graduate program of study. Letters of evaluation should specifically address the applicant's potential for successful career and motivation for graduate study.

An essay. Applicants must submit a 1-2 page (double spaced) essay describing educational and professional goals and the reasons for applying to the program.

A writing sample. Samples may include research papers, term papers, and class essays.

A comprehensive resume with current email address, telephone numbers, and mailing address.

International students must have their credentials evaluated by the Office of Recruitment and Admissions for their equivalent value according to standard university procedure and meet other admissions requirements specified in the graduate catalog.

### Application Checklist

Texas Common Application for Graduate Admission to the Office of Recruitment and Admissions with appropriate fee.

Official transcripts documenting all undergraduate and graduate coursework taken at any regionally-accredited college or university attended.

Bachelor's degree in Communication or related field.

Two letters of evaluation that address your potential for a successful career and your motivation for graduate study.

A 1-2 page (double spaced) essay describing your educational and professional goals and the reasons you are applying to the program.

Writing sample. Samples may include research papers, term papers, and class essays.

Comprehensive resume with email address, telephone numbers, and mailing address.

Provide a complete set of all application materials to the University Office of Recruitment and Admissions.

Office of Recruitment and Admissions  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5774  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412-5774

Department of Communication & Media  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5722  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412  
Attn: COMM Graduate Coordinator

For more information call: (361) 825-2316.

Deadlines for Applications

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Admission

Upon receipt of all admission materials, the Communication Graduate Admissions Committee will review the admissions materials. The committee may choose to admit, conditionally admit, or deny admission, based on evaluation of the admission materials (see description below). For full consideration of admission, assistantships, and scholarships, a completed admissions packet should be received by the priority deadline for the semester the student plans to enroll. The Communication

Graduate Admissions Committee will continue to review applications until the final deadline or until all spaces are filled.

Applicants must have a Bachelor's degree in Communication or a related field (e.g. Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, Journalism, English, History, Public Relations) from a regionally accredited university or, if an international student, have the equivalent of a U.S. accredited degree as determined by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Applicants must possess an overall grade point average (GPA) of no less than 3.0 on a 4-point scale.

#### Conditional Admission

Applicants who have received a Bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited university or, if an international student, the equivalent of a U.S. accredited degree, but who do not meet the admission requirements noted above may be conditionally admitted into the program. The Communication Graduate Admissions Committee will make the decision as to a student's conditional status. Students admitted conditionally must have a 3.0 GPA in their first 9 hours of graduate coursework approved by the Communication Graduate Advisor in order to continue in the program. The Communication Graduate Admissions Committee may also require the student to take relevant undergraduate leveling courses, particularly if the applicant's degree is from an unrelated field.

## Program Requirements

Admitted students will choose one of two degree tracks for the MA program in Communication: Organizational Leadership or Strategic Communication. The tracks share core coursework designed to enhance student knowledge of communication principles and theories and develop their proficiency as writers and researchers. Each track is a minimum of 36 hours and includes both required and elective courses.

With prior approval from the Communication Graduate Advisor, up to 6 hours of non-communication graduate level coursework can count as part of this 36-hour requirement. Each track is described in greater detail below.

### Organizational Leadership Track

The Organizational Leadership track focuses on principles, theories, and research of organizational communication and leadership. It is appropriate for individuals who are interested in working in leadership or management positions within a variety of organizations or who want to pursue a Ph.D. in organizational communication or a related area.

Students in the Organizational Leadership track must complete the four required core courses described above, two required Organizational Leadership track courses, four to six elective courses, and either the comprehensive exams or thesis exit requirement.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Core Courses</b>		
COMM 5301	Introduction to Communication Scholarship	3
COMM 5302	Seminar in Communication Theory	3
COMM 5303	Research Methodology	3
COMM 5304	Cultural Studies	3
<b>Required Track Courses</b>		
Select at least two of the following:		6
COMM 5306	Instructing and Consulting	
COMM 5307	Communication and Organizations	
COMM 5308	Communicating Leadership	

COMM 5314	Small Group Decision Making	
COMM 5330	International Leadership	
<b>Electives</b>		
Select 12-18 hours of electives from the following: <sup>1</sup>		18
COMM 5309	Seminar in Interpersonal Communication	
COMM 5310	Seminar in Intercultural Communication	
COMM 5311	Seminar in Persuasion Theory	
COMM 5312	Seminar in Gender Communication	
COMM 5331	Seminar in Nonverbal Communication	
COMM 5335	Advanced Crisis Communication	
COMM 5340	Public Relations Theory	
COMM 5346	Seminar in New Media	
COMM 5390	Special Topics in Communication	
COMM 5395	Thesis (Note: limit 3 credits hours.)	
COMM 5396	Individual Study	
COMM 5399	Internship	
<b>Exit Requirement <sup>2</sup></b>		
COMM 5395	Thesis	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

1

Students must complete 18 hours of electives (Comprehensive Exam Option) or 12 hours of electives (Thesis Option). Any of the remaining required course options not already taken or the courses listed may be taken for elective credit hours. Students are encouraged to take as many track courses as possible. With prior approval from the Communication Graduate Advisor, up to 6 hours of non-communication graduate level coursework can count as part of this 36-hour requirement.

2

All students are automatically assigned the comprehensive exam exit requirement. Students may apply to complete a thesis. Students allowed to complete a thesis must complete 6 credit hours towards the thesis (COMM 5395 Thesis (3,6 sch)) over a period of two semesters. (See Exit Requirement section below.)

### Strategic Communication Track

The Strategic Communication track focuses on principles, theories, and research of goal-oriented communication, particularly as it relates to communicating with the public. It is appropriate for individuals who are interested in working in public relations or marketing positions within a variety of organizations or who want to pursue a Ph.D. in public relations, persuasion, or a related area.

Students in the Strategic Communication track must complete the four required core courses described above, two required Strategic Communication track courses, four to six elective courses, and either the comprehensive exams or thesis exit requirement.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Core Courses</b>		
COMM 5301	Introduction to Communication Scholarship	3
COMM 5302	Seminar in Communication Theory	3
COMM 5303	Research Methodology	3
COMM 5304	Cultural Studies	3
<b>Required Track Courses</b>		
Select at least two of the following:		6
COMM 5311	Seminar in Persuasion Theory	

COMM 5335	Advanced Crisis Communication	
COMM 5340	Public Relations Theory	
COMM 5346	Seminar in New Media	
<b>Electives</b>		
Select 12-18 hours of electives from the following: <sup>1</sup>		18
COMM 5306	Instructing and Consulting	
COMM 5307	Communication and Organizations	
COMM 5308	Communicating Leadership	
COMM 5309	Seminar in Interpersonal Communication	
COMM 5310	Seminar in Intercultural Communication	
COMM 5312	Seminar in Gender Communication	
COMM 5314	Small Group Decision Making	
COMM 5330	International Leadership	
COMM 5331	Seminar in Nonverbal Communication	
COMM 5390	Special Topics in Communication	
COMM 5395	Thesis (Note: limit 3 credits hours.)	
COMM 5396	Individual Study	
COMM 5399	Internship	
<b>Exit Requirement</b> <sup>2</sup>		
COMM 5395	Thesis	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

1

Students must complete 18 hours of electives (Comprehensive Exam Option) or 12 hours of electives (Thesis Option). Any of the remaining required course options not already taken or the courses listed may be taken for elective credit hours. Students are encouraged to take as many track courses as possible. With prior approval from the Communication Graduate Advisor, up to 6 hours of non-communication graduate level coursework can count as part of this 36-hour requirement.

2

All students are automatically assigned the comprehensive exam exit requirement. Students may apply to complete a thesis. Students allowed to complete a thesis must complete 6 credit hours towards the thesis (COMM 5395 Thesis (3,6 sch)) over a period of two semesters. (See Exit Requirement section below.)

## Exit Requirements

Students must complete 36 graduate hours in Communication with a cumulative 3.0 GPA or higher. All students admitted to the program will automatically be registered for the Comprehensive Exam exit requirement.

- 1. Comprehensive Exam.** Students will take 12 hours of core coursework, 6 hours of required track coursework, and 18 hours of pre-approved electives. Students will also successfully complete examinations that cut across completed courses allowing students to demonstrate their abilities to analyze and synthesize material. The exams will be given during fall and spring semesters. Students should arrange to take the exams as close to the semester of course completion as possible. Exams are graded as “pass” or “fail”. If the student fails the examinations, the student will need to attempt the exams in a subsequent semester. The student must achieve a passing grade on all exam questions in order to graduate.
- 2. Thesis.** Students may apply to complete a thesis instead of comprehensive exams. This is an appropriate option for individuals who are interested in pursuing a Ph.D. or who want to work in an area

that involves research. To apply to complete the thesis, students must develop a thesis pre-proposal that the faculty will evaluate. Students who are approved to complete the thesis will take 12 hours of core coursework, 6 hours of required track coursework, 12 hours of pre-approved electives, and at least 6 hours of thesis work culminating in the thesis document. Thesis students will also defend a thesis in an oral examination to the appropriate graduate faculty. A majority of the faculty on the thesis committee must grade the thesis and defense as “credit” for it to be accepted to meet graduation requirements. If the student does not receive a “credit” score, the student has one year from the time of the first defense to complete the thesis satisfactorily and fulfill this requirement. Students must use the required College of Graduate Studies forms and meet the deadlines for thesis committee formation and scheduling of the thesis defense. The thesis must meet the College of Graduate Studies thesis formatting requirements in addition to those of their discipline. For CGS deadlines and forms, refer to the CGS website and/or CGS Masters Handbook.

## Graduate Degree Advising

Upon admission into the program, the student will be advised by a communication graduate faculty member. After the end of the second semester or 18 hours of completed coursework, a Faculty Advisor will help the student develop an initial degree plan. The degree plan outlines the prescribed graduate coursework and other requirement needed to complete the MA in Communication degree

The student is expected to meet with their advisor prior to registering for classes. The Faculty Advisor will work closely with the student to ensure that each student pursues the most advantageous course of study for his/her future goals.

## Transfer of Credit

In addition to the University's general policy on transfer of credit, the following regulations will apply to the MA in Communication program: Up to 9 semester hours may be transferred from a recognized institution of higher education if appropriate to the degree. However, only 6 hours of non-communication coursework will be accepted as part of this 9 semester hours. No course with a grade less than a “B,” and no course that has counted toward the earning of another graduate degree, will be accepted as transfer credit. Credit that is more than seven years old at the time of graduation will not be counted toward the MA degree. Acceptance of transfer credit will be determined by the Communication Graduate Advisor.

## Courses

### COMM 5301 Introduction to Communication Scholarship 3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)

This is a practical introduction to scholarship in the Communication discipline with emphasis in: reading and understanding academic source material; finding source material in scholarly literatures; writing academic research papers; editing and revising your own work; and presenting scholarship. Completing this course will prepare you to think, write, and present ideas as an advanced scholar in the Communication discipline.

**COMM 5302 Seminar in Communication Theory****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course represents an advanced treatment of theory in the Communication discipline. Theoretical traditions and theories discussed in this course are used by scholars to explain and/or interpret communication processes in such areas as interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, and media settings

**COMM 5303 Research Methodology****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course is designed as an intellectual and practical introduction to communication research at the graduate level, including epistemological, intellectual, and practical issues associated with qualitative, quantitative, and critical methods research.

**COMM 5304 Cultural Studies****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course examines theoretical approaches to cultural studies; focus on interdisciplinary research of media audiences and covering a range of methods and theoretical frameworks; concentration varies.

**COMM 5305 Basic Communication in Higher Education****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

**BASIC COMMUNICATION IN HIGHER ED** This course provides individual development in philosophies and practices unique to teaching basic oral communication. It is designed primarily for students who wish to teach public speaking in higher education. This course is required for all students serving as Graduate Teaching Assistants in COMM 1315.

**COMM 5306 Instructing and Consulting****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course will draw upon academic research in instructional communication to provide a foundation for aligning the instructional skills and knowledge necessary for achieving organizational strategic goals and objectives.

**COMM 5307 Communication and Organizations****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course surveys traditional and contemporary readings in organizational communication. Readings cover such topics as the relationship of communication and organizational structure, process, stakeholders, leadership, decision making, culture, and identity.

**COMM 5308 Communicating Leadership****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course focuses on the process of influence that takes place through communication to achieve goals or to produce change from a collective of people. This course will include instruction on the various approaches to leadership, process of leadership, and the role that leadership plays in a variety of contexts.

**COMM 5309 Seminar in Interpersonal Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This seminar focuses on terminology, key theories, and functions of interpersonal communication as it pertains to the formation and maintenance of relationships.

**COMM 5310 Seminar in Intercultural Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course explores the relationship between communication and culture through scholarly readings, discussions, and critiques in three subfields of Intercultural Communication: cultural communication, cross-cultural communication, and intercultural communication.

**COMM 5311 Seminar in Persuasion Theory****3 Semester Credit Hours**

This course investigates traditional and contemporary theories of persuasion and is an in-depth study of the major concepts of persuasive communication.

**COMM 5312 Seminar in Gender Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This seminar focuses on terminology, key theories, and cutting-edge research within the study of gender communication.

**COMM 5314 Small Group Decision Making****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course will focus on the theory and practice of small group decision making, by considering both effective work groups and small groups that have made faulty decisions.

**COMM 5315 Family Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

Overview of theory and research on communication in the family. Content focuses on definitions, frameworks, perspectives, theories, and outcomes tied to the study of communication processes within the family.

**COMM 5330 International Leadership****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

Introduces graduate and advanced students to the study of leadership in international and intercultural settings with the emphasis on the context of mediated communication.

**COMM 5331 Seminar in Nonverbal Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This seminar will educate students about the history, key theories, types and functions of nonverbal communication, or message with words.

**COMM 5335 Advanced Crisis Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

Examines crisis communication from the perspective of academic researchers and practitioners. Includes the analysis of crisis communication research, reviews the elements of an effective crisis communication plan, and centers on case study analysis of best and worst practices in crisis planning, prevention, and response.

**COMM 5340 Public Relations Theory****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

A discussion of theories of excellence in public relations and crisis communication through the exploration of models, roles, communication, media, ethics, and culture to serve as a foundation for professional practice.

**COMM 5341 Digital Filmmaking****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

**DIGITAL FILMMAKING** This course concentrates on the professional skills needed by a well-rounded independent filmmaker: writing, visualizing the script, producing, directing the actors, digital cinematography, sound, editing and postproduction.

**COMM 5343 Seminar in Television Studies****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

**SEMINAR IN TELEVISION STUDIES** This course is a critical study of television programming content, production practices, and audiences. Includes consideration of industrial, political, aesthetic, and cultural analyses of television.

**COMM 5344 Seminar in Film Studies****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

**SEMINAR IN FILM STUDIES** Investigation of selected topics in film through viewing, reading, and independent research. May be repeated when topics vary.

**COMM 5346 Seminar in New Media****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

Explores contemporary instances of new and emerging media platforms, especially as facilitated through digital media technologies, as they continue to disseminate more widely as portals of communication. Students will engage with specific issues in new media through the lenses of various cultural theories in order to gain a greater understanding of the scope of new media, its culture, and the relationships that exist between machines and humans, as well as those between society and technology.

**COMM 5390 Special Topics in Communication****3 Semester Credit Hours (3 Lecture Hours)**

This course is an intensive exploration of selected topics in communication study. May be repeated when topics vary.

**COMM 5395 Thesis****3,6 Semester Credit Hours (3,6 Lecture Hours)**

The thesis is independent research under the direction of a student's graduate committee, and to result in a completed thesis project, it should be taken in two separate semesters for a total of 6 credit hours dependent upon thesis proposal.

**COMM 5396 Individual Study****1-3 Semester Credit Hours**

This Individual Study course is designed to provide inquiry and research opportunities in an area of special interest otherwise not available in course offerings. Two individual study courses may be applied toward the degree with the approval of the student's Faculty Mentor.

**COMM 5399 Internship****3 Semester Credit Hours (2.5 Lecture Hours)**

Practical experience in the communication field through placement in an communication or media internship position. Students must have completed at least 6 hours of graduate coursework in communication and have a minimum GPA of 3.5 to apply for the internship course.