

# Journalism and Communication

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**Degrees offered:** Bachelor of Science (BS) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Journalism; Master of Science (MS) and Master of Arts (MA) in Communication

**Undergraduate emphases:** Broadcast/Electronic Media, Print Journalism, Public Relations/Corporate Communications

**Graduate specializations:** Print, Photo, and Broadcast Journalism

## Undergraduate Programs

### Objectives

The undergraduate major in the Journalism and Communication Department, leading to the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism, is designed to prepare students for careers in a wide range of communication fields, through instruction in the philosophical groundings, theoretical perspectives, and hands-on applications of communications skills and practice. The curriculum integrates practical mass communications skills training with critical thinking skills, while helping students to understand the processes and effects of communication, as well as the relationships, roles, and interactions of mass communication with other social institutions.

With individual student objectives in mind, the Department of Journalism and Communication offers a flexible program of study having the following goals:

1. Provide students with theoretical and practical understanding of the workings of mass communication principles and practice.
2. Provide students with abilities and practical skills required to work in communications professions.
3. Provide students with a grounding in the philosophical, ethical, and legal frameworks of mass communication, as well as an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of mass communication in a democratic society.

4. Develop in students critical thinking and analytical abilities, facility in social science research methods, and strong written and oral communication skills, within a broad liberal arts context.

The Department of Journalism and Communication maintains professional studios and labs, designed to train students in various communications and journalism skills. These include the multi-media computer newsroom, a digital nonlinear video editing lab, a full TV studio, and a photographic darkroom. Students receive instruction in traditional journalistic basics, such as writing, information-gathering, reporting, and video production; in new technologies of online information gathering; and in critical skills of media literacy.

### Requirements

**Course Requirements.** Journalism majors must complete a minimum of 30 credits and a maximum of 36 credits in Journalism and Communication courses, while pursuing one of the three emphasis course sequences outlined below. Of the 120 semester credits required for graduation from Utah State University, Journalism majors must complete at least 65 credits in other departments within the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. In addition, majors must complete a minor/cognate area outside of the Journalism and Communication Department, selected with the approval of an advisor.

Therefore, the basic Journalism course of study is as follows: Journalism and Communication courses, 30-36 credits; University Studies courses, 30 credits; courses in the minor/cognate area, 18 credits; electives from outside the Journalism and Communication Department, 36-40 credits; **Total Credits, 120.**

**Major Status.** Students may apply for major status upon completion of a minimum of 60 semester credits, including the Journalism Premajor Core requirements, while maintaining a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Students may declare themselves as Journalism Premajors at any time after their admission to the University. Majors must maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA, both overall and in the major. Students whose GPA drops below 2.5 will be placed on probation and may be dropped from the major if grades do not improve within one semester. No Journalism and Communication class may be repeated more than once. All courses in the major must be taken for a grade (not *Pass-Fail*). Courses must be taken in sequence.

Students transferring from other institutions may be accepted into the major if they fulfill these requirements. Up to 9 transferred semester credits may count toward the major, if approved by an advisor.

**Premajor Core Requirements (9 credits).** The following courses are required for all majors, and must be completed prior to application for major status: JCOM 1000, 1110, and 2000. Prior to taking JCOM 1110, students must complete ENGL 1010, a language proficiency test, and a typing test. Majors must complete each of the premajor requirements with a C+ or better.

**Major Requirements (6 credits).** The following courses are required for all majors after acceptance into the department: JCOM 2110, 4000, and 4030. Premajor core and individual course prerequisites must be taken prior to taking these courses. Prior to taking JCOM 2110, students must complete JCOM 1110 with a grade of C+ or higher. Senior standing is required for enrollment in JCOM 4000. Junior standing or permission of the instructor is required for enrollment in JCOM 4030.

**Emphasis Areas.** Each student must select one of the following emphasis areas: **Broadcast/Electronic Media** (Requirements: JCOM 2200, 2210, and *either* JCOM 4210 and 4220 *or* JCOM 4230 and 5210); **Print Journalism** (Requirements: JCOM 2120, 3110, and 3120); or **Public Relations/Corporate Communications** (Requirements: JCOM 2300 2310, 3300, 5300, plus one upper-division JCOM skills elective).

**Other Communications Electives.** In addition to the Pre-major, major, and emphasis area courses listed above, students must select additional electives from courses in the Department of Journalism and Communication, to ensure a total of 30-36 credits completed in the Journalism and Communication Department.

### ***Journalism Minor***

Students may earn a minor in Journalism by completing a minimum of 18 JCOM credits. These credits must include JCOM 1000 and *either* JCOM 1110 or 2000. For the remaining 12 JCOM credits, students must select one of the following options: (a) JCOM 2120, plus nine JCOM faculty advisor-approved upper division (3000 or higher) JCOM credits; (b) JCOM 2200 and 2210, plus six JCOM faculty advisor-approved upper-division (3000 or higher) JCOM credits; or (c) JCOM 2300 and 2310, plus six JCOM faculty advisor-approved upper-division (3000 or higher) JCOM credits. The minimum GPA requirements for Journalism minors are the same as those required for Journalism majors.

### ***Financial Support***

In addition to general scholarships and other financial support opportunities available through the University and the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, the Department of Journalism and Communication awards various scholarships to juniors, seniors, and graduate students. For a listing of scholarships, deadlines, and application requirements, contact the Department of Journalism and Communication. In addition, many professional paid and unpaid internships are available through the department.

### ***Careers in Journalism and Communication***

Journalism majors often begin their careers in various media professions, such as newspapers, radio and TV broadcasting, and public relations, many serving as interns while still attending school. Upon graduation, they land jobs in a variety of capacities for both journalism businesses and other industries requiring workers with excellent communication and problem-solving skills. In recent years, USU journalism students have routinely swept state, regional, and national competitions in print and video journalism, multimedia and new technologies, and, increasingly, public relations.

This success translates into an excellent reputation for USU students among businesses hiring USU students as interns and hiring USU graduates for professional positions. Jobs held by recent graduates include newspaper and magazine reporter, photographer, graphic artist, and editor; radio and television reporter, an-

chor, and producer; public relations director and account executive; multimedia software designer for HTML, web pages, CD-ROMs, etc.; and public information officer for politicians, legislative and lobbying groups, sports teams, and colleges, as well as for environmental organizations and other groups in the business and public sectors. Training and expertise in communication, including writing and reporting, visual literacy, publication layout and design, computer graphics, and online applications, prove to be valuable add-on skills for graduates entering a variety of occupations or going on to graduate school and law school.

In addition to these kinds of opportunities enjoyed by undergraduates, master's degree graduates often return to communication careers in new capacities, or teach at the community college level in journalism and communication departments.

### ***Additional Information***

For further information about publications, curriculum, scholarships, faculty, and other program offerings, including USU's TV studio facilities; weekly newscasts and TV programs; the award-winning student news website, the Hard News Café; and the Media and Society Lecture Series; check out the Journalism and Communication Department's website:

<http://www.usu.edu/journalism>.

## ***Graduate Programs***

The Master of Science (MS) and the Master of Arts (MA) degrees in Communication combine professional practice and theoretical training, and are designed to fit individual student needs. Students may specialize in print, photo, or broadcast journalism. Application to the graduate program is made through the USU School of Graduate Studies.

### ***Objectives***

The master's program in Communication at Utah State University offers a two-track approach to graduate study, designed for the maximum individual flexibility in pursuit of the student's goals.

The Plan A, also known as the "Thesis Option" or "Media Research," is a course of study designed for students considering or planning to go on to a doctoral program. The Plan A option requires more coursework in theory and methodology, as well as in research tools, in order to provide grounding for advanced study at the PhD level, whether in communication or another discipline. This option also requires completion of a master's thesis, consisting of original research.

The Plan B, also known as the "Professional Option" or "Media Practice," is designed for students seeking the master's degree as a terminal degree, and planning to go from USU into the mass media professions, or into a teaching position at the junior college level. Typically, Plan B students are mid-career media professionals seeking retooling, refreshers, or credentials for community college teaching. The Plan B option requires a professional project, approved by a major professor, in place of the research thesis.

In either case, graduate students in Communication work closely with advisors throughout their programs to design coursework and a research or professional activity agenda, along with appropriate study in a cognate area outside of Communication, that will permit them to achieve their individual goals, within the core framework of Communication coursework, whether they include professional training or additional doctoral work.

### **Admission Requirements**

For admission to the graduate program in Communication, all students must complete the department's English Language Proficiency Examination, and must complete or demonstrate competency in the following Communication foundation courses: JCOM 1110, 3110, 4020, and 4030. Competency may be demonstrated through previous coursework or experience, and one or more of these requirements may be waived with permission of the graduate program coordinator. These credits do not count toward the graduate degree. In addition, other undergraduate courses may be required.

### **Degree Requirements**

Students may elect either the Plan A (thesis) or the Plan B (professional) option to fulfill the degree requirements of 30 semester credits as outlined below. Plan A is intended for students planning to continue graduate study, to teach, or to enter professions requiring research skills. Plan B is intended for students seeking a terminal professional degree. Selection of either the Plan A or Plan B option must be made in consultation with the student's advisor and filed with the graduate coordinator by the end of the first semester of study.

All students must complete core requirements in either plan. Students must, in consultation with their advisor, select an appropriate research tools class in research methods; the course need not be taught by the Journalism and Communication Department. To remain in good standing, all students must fulfill Graduate School requirements.

#### **Plan A: Media Research**

**Core Requirements (21 credits).** All students must complete the following courses: JCOM 6000 (3 cr.), 6020 (3 cr.), 6040 (3 cr.), 6400 (3 cr.), and 6970 (6 cr.). In addition, students must select an appropriate 3-credit Research Tools course (from any department), providing methodological training most appropriate for the student, in consultation with the advisor.

#### **Journalism and Communication Electives (6 credits)**

**Cognate Area (6 credits).** With advisor permission, students may include additional Journalism and Communication electives.

#### **Plan B: Media Practice**

**Core Requirements (18 credits).** All students must complete the following courses: JCOM 6000 (3 cr.), 6020 (3 cr.), 6040 (3 cr.), 6400 (3 cr.), and 6500 (3 cr.). In addition, students must select an appropriate 3-credit Research and Practice course, in consultation with their advisor. A Research Tools course (from any department), providing methodological training most appropriate for the student, must also be selected in consultation with the advisor.

#### **Journalism and Communication Electives (6 credits)**

**Cognate Area (9 credits).** With advisor permission, students may include additional Journalism and Communication electives.

### **Additional Information**

For more information about graduate studies in the Department of Journalism and Communication, contact the School of Graduate Studies or the Department of Journalism and Communication. Also, check out the departmental website at: <http://www.usu.edu/journalism>.

## **Journalism and Communication Faculty**

#### **Professor**

*Edward C. Pease*, journalism, media criticism

#### **Professor Emeritus**

*Nelson B. Wadsworth*, print journalism

#### **Associate Professors**

*Penny M. Byrne*, broadcasting, media law

*Brenda Cooper*, media criticism, gender and mass communication

*Michael S. Sweeney*, print journalism, media history

#### **Associate Professors Emeritus**

*Scott A. Chisholm*, media management, literary journalism

*James O. Derry*, international mass communication development

#### **Assistant Professors**

*Cathy Ferrand Bullock*, mass communication theory and research methods

*Emmanuel E. "Emeka" Nneji*, public relations

*Les A. Roka*, public relations

*Nancy M. Williams*, print journalism, Internet

#### **Video Lab Supervisor**

*S. Dean Byrne*, broadcast and electronic media

#### **Temporary Lecturer**

*R. Troy Oldham*, public relations, corporate communications

#### **Adjunct Instructors**

*Tim Vitale*, public relations

*Jay C. Wamsley*, print journalism

## **Course Descriptions**

Journalism and Communication (JCOM), pages 425-427